

Public Abstract

First Name:Yu-Hsien (Sharon)

Middle Name:

Last Name:Wu

Adviser's First Name:Daniel

Adviser's Last Name:Turban

Co-Adviser's First Name:

Co-Adviser's Last Name:

Graduation Term:SP 2008

Department:Business Administration

Degree:PhD

Title:Social Skill in the Workplace: What is Social Skill and How Does It Matter?

Social skill is becoming increasingly important in today's workplace because organizational structures are becoming flatter with more service-oriented positions. Strong social skill can facilitate interpersonal interactions, which can in turn lead to effective job outcomes. Although the change in organizational structures and the importance of social skill have heightened awareness of social skill in organizational outcomes, little is known about what social skill is and its role in influencing work outcomes. In this study, I provide some insight into the definition and measurement of social skill and how social skill influences job and career success outcomes. Based on my review of the social skill literature, I defined social skill as a learnable social behavior used to achieve social goals. Further, I proposed an integrated social skill framework that theorized social skill as a higher-order construct with three sub-factors: social presentation, social scanning, and social flexibility. I conducted three studies to develop a measure of social skill and examine the antecedents and outcomes of social skill. The results, based on over 400 employees, show that personality factors, such as self-monitoring and extraversion, have a positive effect on social skill. The findings also suggest that social skill successfully predicts the number of mentors, mentoring received, social support, organizational citizenship behavior, and job performance. Finally, the findings indicate that social skill should be operationalized as a higher-order construct. The study provides both theoretical and practical implications for researchers and organizations interested in the development of social skill.