



Why Are Research Skills Important?

Soft skills are increasingly becoming the hard skills for today's youth. While your technical skills may get your foot in the door of opportunities, your people skills are what open most of the doors to come. Your work ethic, your attitude, your communication skills, your emotional intelligence and a whole host of other personal attributes are the soft skills that ensure your holistic development.

What Are Soft Skills?

Soft skills are character traits and interpersonal skills that enable someone to interact effectively and harmoniously with other people. Soft skills characterize one's relationship with other people. They enable you to work well with groups, solve problems, manage your time, and take personal responsibility for your work.

Why Are Soft Skills Important?

Soft skills are more critical today than ever as they equip you with meaningful ways to remain competitive and be productive. If you are a high school student, these skills will allow you to stay on the top of the class, will give you a confidence boost and will enhance your personality, which means better chances of admission to a good college. If you are in college, these skills will enable you to build your profile and again, they will polish your personality and set you apart from the candidates while applying for your dream job. If you are a working professional, you need these skills to be on top of your work, manage time efficiently, take decisions that'll benefit your company, manage your team, maintain a pleasant work culture and stand out in whatever it is that you do.

For the purpose of this guide, we will focus on Research Skills.

What Are Research Skills?

In simple language, Research Skills can be described as being able to provide in depth information, detailed analysis and suitable advice on a given topic after researching extensively on that topic. It includes formulating the problem statement, referring to good sources, and explaining your findings and observations in the form of a report.

Why Are Research Skills Important?

Research Skills enable people to identify a problem, collect informational resources that can help address the problem, evaluate these resources for quality and relevance and come up with an effective solution to the problem.





These skills not only equip individuals to write better research papers, but also teach them all about the problem solving skills required to tackle issues in the workplace.

How Can I Develop Research Skills?

- 1. Define your objective clearly:** Before you jump into the process of research, you need to first identify the goals and objectives of the research and define them. Only when you have clarity on the objective, you should proceed with the research. To get that clarity, ask yourself questions like - what are the research gaps? Why is it necessary for me to do this research? What am I trying to achieve?
- 2. Explore:** Once you are clear about the aim of your research, get ready to do some serious reading. Do a targeted online and offline search – read appropriate papers, articles, books, trusted blogs, and reports and get a thorough idea about the concerned area. Extra knowledge can never hurt anyone, therefore read as much as you can!
- 3. Jot down your key findings:** Do not leave this step for the end, because it is impossible to remember everything you read. Therefore, write all the pertinent things down as and when you find them, so that in the end you can refer to them and your research notes are complete.
- 4. Talk to experts:** Whenever you are conducting research, it is extremely important to find area experts and talk to them. These people will be able to provide you insights that you won't find in any research journal and will assist you in putting your key findings together to arrive at a conclusion.
- 5. Cast a wider network:** Never miss an opportunity to meet someone new. It is not easy to find area experts, and they are very critical to any research, therefore the wider your network, the easier it will be for you to reach out to these experts.
- 6. Develop a habit of organizing information:** During any research, you will have to collect and recycle information and stockpile contacts, therefore the next step is to learn to organize everything, so that you can find it when you need it. Organizational skills are usually beneficial in various ways, but they help a great deal while conducting research – be it for a school project or to solve a problem at workplace. So start with baby steps – reference everything you write, maintain separate files or folders for separate sections, carefully label the files etc. Think of it this way – if you were to forget everything you read or learnt while researching about a topic, you should be able to understand it again just by navigating through your files and findings.





- 7. Do not indulge in plagiarism:** Whatever you read during a research, wherever you read it from, if you are noting it down, do not forget to mention the source too. If you do not reference a certain item, it is considered to be your original work. However, if someone can prove that you have copied that information from them, and haven't cited them, you will have to face serious consequences as plagiarism is a crime in most countries. Therefore, refrain from copying anyone's thoughts and findings and whenever you use them in your research, reference them!

Research Skills are essential at every phase of your life – be it school, college or workplace, but it doesn't have to be tedious or difficult. Planning in advance and staying organized can make any daunting research task easier. Take the time you need, be thorough, and enjoy the process of research!







