

TASK 2: AGREE OR DISAGREE – SKILLS VS QUALIFICATIONS

The Question

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

Write about the following topic:

Nowadays employers tend to think social skills are more important than good qualifications. Do you agree or disagree?

Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience.

Write at least 250 words.

The Approach

- 1 Read the title and underline the key words
- 2 Copy the title at the top of your page
- 3 Identify the type of question – agree or disagree
- 4 Decide on your argument – agree or disagree
- 5 Plan, including three strong reasons for your opinion

The Plan

- 1) Introduction
 - Set the scene – rewrite the question in your own words
 - Give your opinion
 - Say what the essay will do – that it will give reasons for your opinion
- 2) Reason 1 + explanation/ example
- 3) Reason 2 + explanation/ example
- 4) Reason 3 + explanation/ example
- 5) Conclusion
 - State opinion again
 - Perhaps make a statement about the future

 - A qualification can be learned and gained, social skills maybe not
 - Working in a team, positive environment
 - Customer service and satisfaction

The Answer

In a highly competitive marketplace where unemployment levels are high and people are over-qualified, applicants for new jobs need to show they are different from the rest. In such a situation, it may well be a person's social skills that **set them apart from the crowd** and are considered most valuable to

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employers. This essay will provide three strong arguments as to why employers might value social skills over qualifications.

Firstly, social skills are often something that cannot be taught. They are **innate** or **acquired** throughout a person's upbringing. Thus, if an employee does not have them initially, they may not be able to learn them later, whereas they may be able to gain a qualification at any time.

Secondly, in most cases an employee will be required to work with others as part of a team. In an office, for instance, people will need to be able to **liaise with** each other and often within a small space. Therefore, it is vital that everyone gets on well and has the social awareness needed to build a friendly and positive **atmosphere**.

Finally, employees are often **'the face' of a company**; they deal with the customers and work to build new relationships with them. A qualification might not necessarily aid them with this whilst social skills would be key.

In conclusion then, social skills are something that are necessary within the workplace in order to maintain an effective and happy working environment. Although qualifications are important and can show an individual's **aptitude**, they do not show a person's ability to communicate and create good working relationships, which **undoubtedly** are the most essential skills.

Useful Vocabulary

Set somebody apart from the crowd = make somebody stand out/ different, make them able to be noticed by others

innate (adj) = natural, you are born with it

acquire (v) = passive, natural, unconscious learning

liaise with (v) = communicate, work together with

atmosphere (n) = feeling in the environment

the face of a company = what the general public sees of the company, their appearance

aptitude (n) = intelligence

undoubtedly (adv) = without question