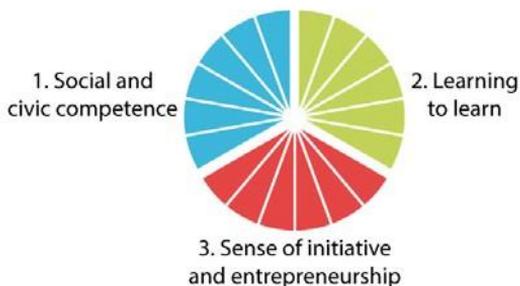




## Soft Skills make the difference

Everyone is talking about soft skills, but what exactly is meant by them and why are they so important?

To help the labor force to understand the concept of soft transversal skills, short examples from different perspectives will be delivered to illustrate their relevance. Based on recommendations of the European Commission, the Janus+ project consortium defined the three most important competence categories - from the perspective of trainees, apprentices, employees and job seekers:



These competences consist of several elements, which are described below, in order to make the concept of soft transversal skills more tangible.



**Social and civic competences** include personal, interpersonal and intercultural skills and cover all forms of behaviour that individuals need to participate in an effective and constructive working environment.

**In what way do social and civic competences lead to employment or improved performance?**

**Demonstrating a good attitude** is one of the most important soft skills because it reflects the willingness of an individual to achieve things. This is directly connected to success in the daily working life and also in job interviews.

Another important social and civic competence is **self-confidence**. Being confident allows employees or trainees to make decisions, present themselves as well as their companies in a proper way and lay the foundation for their future careers.

In direct relation to the self-confidence of an applicant for a new position stands her or his **self-awareness**. Being self-aware means that the applicant is able to identify his/her strengths but also weaknesses in order to fulfill required tasks.

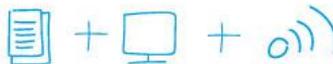
The key competence **“Learning to learn”** summarizes skills that lead to the ability to manage personal and professional development.

**In what way do Learning-competences increase opportunities on the labour market and improve the way of working?**

It is indispensable for success in the working life to be **trainable**. A high level of this skill means that the employee or trainee participates in the process of life long learning, which is necessary to guarantee individual progress.

The **ability to seek advice, information and support** is central for trainees, job seekers but also for already employed individuals. It is very important to be guided in order to get the right direction to learn and improve skills.

An individual in a professional working environment has to be **able to critically reflect** on made experiences, in order to improve the performance or recognize opportunities.





**Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship** is the ability to turn ideas into action through creativity, innovation and risk taking as well as the ability to plan and manage projects.

**In what way does the sense of initiative and entrepreneurship lead to improvement or individual progress?**

**Creativity** is central to the development of innovative and unique solutions in various situations during the professional career. In other words this skill describes the ability to think out of the box.



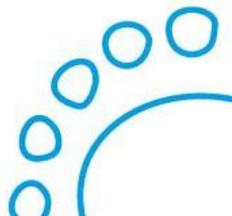
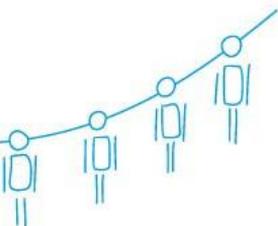
In relation to creative implementations it is always necessary to **stay critical**. A critical thinker is able to make reasonable judgments that are logical and well thought out, which is at the end of the day equally important as creativity.

The ability to work in a team or to **be a team player** is in a modern working reality an indispensable skill. Learning from others through cooperation and recognizing the individual and professional benefits of working in a team is necessary to develop an effective working style.

### Key Take-Away



In an increasingly competitive working reality where hard skills of job applicants are often not significantly varying, soft skills make the difference. In other words, it appears that hard skills get you the interview, whereas soft skills get you the job.





## ABOUT JANUS+

In order to succeed in today's economy, modern society and personal lives, transversal soft skills are considered as essential and complementary to formal skills. These soft skills, while important, are not always recognized. They are also not subject to any certification, and therefore difficult to value. During the project duration, tools will be developed which enable five countries from South, North and East Europe (Austria, France, Ireland, Romania, Spain) to share experiences and best practices to integrate the teaching, learning and assessment of several transversal soft skills.

**Janus+** aims at promoting better integration and assessment of transversal soft skills to develop a comprehensive medium and long-term employability and thus fight against dropouts and unemployment.



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