

## 'People Skills' – Hereditary or Learned?



This question is always hotly debated. Some people think 'people skills', often called 'soft skills', cannot be learned or acquired or, if so, only to a certain basic extent; whereas, absolute agreement can be found in the fact that these skills significantly affect people's jobs, security and personal success. Without a doubt each of us is blessed with certain per-

sonality strengths and talents. Moreover, the imprint we get in our childhood is of great importance.

**BEITRAINING**<sup>®</sup> is convinced that all humans have the ability to develop, grow and change themselves. By defining 'people skills' as the sum of one's abilities and capabilities, we can apparently see where our own boundaries and possibilities are.

**Abilities**, the raw potentials, are something you were born with or are something you have gained via imprinting as a result of your upbringing, education and/or environment. Some people have the potential for analytical thinking, creativity or intuition, which are not thought of as skills to be learned explicitly. They are, to a varying degree, already in us. Throughout our entire life these skills can be sharpened or improved with training and practice provided the motivation to do so is part of the formula.

**Capabilities** are skills we can learn and practise. This includes presentation, sales and leadership techniques. If there is a certain basic ability, it is much easier to gain these skilled capabilities.

**An example:** Having a musical talent makes it easier to learn to play the piano, whereas someone without musicality will experience difficulties learning this skill. Musicality is the ability; playing the piano is the capability. Generally, everyone is able to learn to play the piano, but for a career as a concert pianist, musicality is necessary.

Sales is a learned capability. Everyone can learn to sell if several selling steps are recognised and implemented over and over again. A person with the ability to empathise will benefit because he/she can put himself/herself in the customer's place, recognising the needs and motives. However, sales competence is learnable to a high rate.

### How to gain 'people skills'

- **Learn the techniques and methods.**

e.g. the steps of the selling process, communication models, presentation techniques, methods for organisation planning.

- **Change your thinking processes.**

It is possible to expand your skills by thinking positively and visualising your goals. In doing this, even fear, for instance the fear to talk in front of an audience, can be overcome.

- **Train, train, train!**

Remember all the capabilities you have learned through training throughout your life – things which are a matter of course for you now: reading, writing, driving a car, riding a bicycle. In the same way, you can overcome boundaries in any other areas.

**Conclusion:** Certain abilities alleviate the need to acquire certain capabilities. Abilities, however, can be sharpened and increased through training, whereas capabilities can be simply learned. It pays to invest in your own development and in the development of your employees.

To explore and expand the capabilities of you and your people, ask to be invited to a free **'Entrepreneur Status Workshop'** from **BEITRAINING**<sup>®</sup>.

### Quotation of the month:

*"Talent comes from the motivation to practise over and over again."*

*Malcolm Gladwell, author of 'Outliers - The Story of Success'*

### **BEITRAINING**<sup>®</sup> now close to the French border

With the opening of a Regional Training Centre in Saarbrücken, Germany (near to France), **BEITRAINING**<sup>®</sup> is again enlarging its network.



**Joachim Berendt** is the owner and manager of **BEITRAINING**<sup>®</sup> Saarland. After studying business administration and metallography, Joachim Berendt worked for international groups before he changed position, becoming the CEO of small- and medium-sized companies. There he achieved particular business success in his 15 years as CEO in the area of successful restructuring and rebuilding of medium-sized companies.

As the owner of the Regional Training Centre Saarland, he will be providing support for small- and medium-sized businesses by delivering 'people skills' training with the objective of improving company results long-term.



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