

## The employability attributes candidates are struggling with most

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The most employable candidates have seven key attributes, according to a recruiter with more than 25 years' industry experience who has just published a book on the topic.

The "most important" of the seven attributes is a **thirst for knowledge**, Est10 founder and managing director **Roxanne Calder** writes in her new book, *Employable*.

**Dependability** is also critical because it translates to accountability and trustworthiness. Employers value this trait because it gives them "peace of mind", and it's good for business.

The third attribute is **resilience**, which Calder says "is a must-have for anyone I employ in my business".

Next comes **interpersonal nous**, which is how an individual relates to others. "Employers love to hire people who have a natural gift for building strong interpersonal relationships. That's because these people make the working environment better and their manager's life easy!"

The fifth attribute is **self-awareness**. "Ever since emotional intelligence entered the lexicon of our everyday working lives, self-awareness has become mainstream – its relevance and prominence increasing."

The "heart" of all the attributes is **self-confidence**, because it impacts all the others and "when you are confident, others will choose to put confidence in you".

And the "powerhouse" attribute is **optimism**, because it acts as a booster for the other attributes, and studies show that it can speed up candidates' job hunt by two months, says Calder.

Candidates currently struggle the most with self-awareness and resilience, Calder tells Shortlist. "The self-awareness piece comes into play in helping you understand yourself better and it helps with unravelling the impact you have on other people, which then falls on your interpersonal skills."

Resilience is also a pain point, as jobseekers tend to conflate surviving a difficulty with resilience.

"The resilience piece is critical because that will get you through a hurdle, it will get you through a challenge, it will get you through an obstacle. But if you ask people for examples, they'll say things like, 'I went through COVID'. Well, we all did and just because you weathered that doesn't mean that you are resilient.

"Sometimes you have no choice, and so you just weather the storm and you get battered by it. But *how* did you cope with it? Did you have any silver linings? Did you learn from it? Did you adjust and change? That's what resilience is about."

## Highlighting key attributes to employers

Recruiters play a "crucial role" in helping candidates demonstrate the seven attributes to prospective hiring managers, but this is only possible if candidates choose to accept guidance, says Calder.

Candidates are more likely to seek feedback if they have a relationship with the recruiter, she adds, and "you can usually read if people want feedback", but the simple alternative is to just ask.

"If I see something special in somebody, I will always say, 'can I give you some feedback?'.

"They will say yes or no, and then I can gauge how much feedback I can give."

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