

4 soft skills that will make any administrative professional indispensable



by Megan Trzcinski

Effective administrative professionals are the backbone of any organization. In a position that could have you ordering office supplies one day and helping put on events and meetings the next, good administrative professionals need to have a wide variety of skills, both technical and non-technical. The soft skills are often the ones that can propel an administrative assistant from “good” to “indispensable,” and four of the most important ones are highlighted below.

1. Being a connector.

The best administrative professionals know the ins and outs of their organization and its employees. Whether you are supporting one person or managing the front desk, it’s important to be able to connect colleagues with one another to fix problems quickly and collaborate across an organization. This saves companies money and time - something every organization wants.

Make it a point to understand and learn the business. Network within the organization so you understand the different teams and the managers that oversee them. Understand who the subject matter experts are on particular topics, and know how to reach out to them when their help is needed. Offer other teams support and volunteer to help with various projects. You can get to know people and teams that way. Developing these relationships can help you better connect the right people with each other, and help the organization communicate and operate more efficiently and effectively.

2. Levelheadedness.

Administrative professionals are usually juggling many tasks at once, interacting with demanding people and dealing with last minute changes, often with little support. The best professionals know how to stay calm and manage their emotions no matter the situation. Having a calm presence in an organization when others are stressed or busy is a skill those around you will be grateful for.

3. Self-awareness.

Being self-aware is a key skill for administrative professionals when you're interacting with different

personalities and may need to change how you communicate from one person to the next. As the face of an organization or group, which administrative professionals often are, knowing how you're coming across to others is so important. What tone is right for your organization? Think about how you want to be perceived and what you hope people say about you. Then, reflect on if that is how you're coming across, and what changes you might need to make.

4. Listening.

Administrative professionals are in a unique position where they interact with a lot of different people throughout the day, both inside and outside their organization. They have conversations with different groups of people daily, which can provide them and their company with valuable insight and information if they're listening and aware of what's going on around them.

Proactively loop in the relevant parties when you hear or notice something that may be of interest to them. Whether it's an employee issue, a certain client or customer calling in or a possible new vendor that walked into the lobby, be the eyes and ears of the organization to help the overall business.

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