

## Use of One Act Plays for Developing Soft Skills

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### Abstract

*This paper is an attempt to show how One Act Plays can be used for developing Soft Skills. Soft skills are important for those who aspire to become part of business world. In Indian Universities, certain undergraduate courses like B.com, BBA, etc., are the most sought after courses of study. There is a dire need to develop and hone the conversational and soft skills of the students who choose management courses aspiring to become successful entrepreneurs. This paper seeks to present how one act plays can be used to hone/shape the soft skills of the students. One act plays are more appealing to the contemporary youths than full length*

*plays for convenience's sake. One act plays present life like situations through the conversation of the character involved. By imbibing characters reaction in the Plays students unconsciously develop soft skills to become successful entrepreneurs in business world. By teaching soft skills through one act plays the students can better their interpersonal relationship in business too.*

### Introduction

Soft skills are life skills. Soft skills are important for those who aspire to become part of the business world. In Indian Universities and colleges, certain Undergraduate courses like B.com, BBA, etc., are the

most sought after courses of study. There is a dire need to develop and hone the conversational and soft skills of the students who choose management courses aspiring to become successful entrepreneurs. Soft skills include communication skills, courtesy, flexibility, positive attitude, interpersonal skills, etc., Of these said skills, developing interpersonal skills that include other professionalism, team work, work ethic, time management skills, coping with pressure, self confidence, critical thinking and problem solving is of foremost importance for aspiring entrepreneurs. This paper seeks to present how one act plays can be used as a strategy to teach soft skills, especially for developing their interpersonal skills needed for future entrepreneurs.

### **Objective of the Study**

The aim of the study is to use staging of the play as a pedagogic technique to teach B.com/BBA students to develop their interpersonal skills for successful entrepreneurship.

### **Hypotheses**

1. Stage of play involves multi-tasking that requires interpersonal relationship and cooperation.
2. Play will develop the participants' soft skills in an implicit and interesting manner.

### **Research Questions**

1. Can interpersonal skills be developed in a controlled environment like classroom?
2. If, yes whether pedagogic skills are available to teach them?
3. How will staging of play be useful as a pedagogic technique to teach soft skills?

### **Discussion**

Soft skills are needed to interact with the external world of conglomerate customer for a successful businessman. One has to interact and communicate in order to gain acceptance in the modern world of intensive competition. Soft skills help to build social relationships. These skills, mainly the interpersonal skills form the core of anyone involved in management and business. They develop positive self esteem which helps in defining a businessman's role in the society. If an individual involved in management cannot communicate or work as a team, then he/she will feel alienated and withdrawn. Interpersonal skills form an indispensable part of the life of an entrepreneur.

Customary classrooms do not provide ample scope or space for the students. In a teacher-centred classroom, the students become

passive listeners. Passivity blunts the students' ability to develop the necessary interactive soft skills, i.e., interpersonal skills need for learner-centred activities become essential to develop the much needed skills. Teacher-centred classroom make the students conscious of their shortcoming and does not provide the atmosphere for mastering the interpersonal skills naturally.

One act plays can be used effectively to enable the students since enacting the plays can develop their communicative skills unconsciously. A trained memory is the great asset a student can develop to be successful in life. When the students are involved not only in parroting the conversations in the plays but also in stage managements, their socially acceptable traits like self awareness, self-regulation, empathy and self-motivation develop unconsciously.

A successful entrepreneurs needs to be good at planning, organizing, staffing, heading, controlling and motivating the co-workers or his team mates. Rehearsing and staging one-act plays provides the right opportunity and platform to develop these opportunity and platform to develop these skills since these skills involve all the skills that come under soft skills or interpersonal skills.

There are many problems faced by working personnel like lack of communicative ability, failure to communicate ideas while involving in team work and management, organizing, leading and other management skills. Training the students in managing and staging one act plays offers enough scope for the students even within the classrooms to acquire these managerial skills effectively.

Staging a one-act play involves the back stage or preparatory activities like selection of the play, casting and rehearsal. The production of the play involves stage management, costume selection; make up, lights arrangement, promotion, seating of audience, and above all stage performance. All these activities can be turned into a learner-centered activity once the students are divided into groups to take care of each activity. Then the groups' responsibility and roles can be reshuffled to provide enough scope for all the students to learn all the skills.

Learning the language skills through literature is the main purpose of using one-act plays as a pedagogic tool. Students can memorize the conversations in the play and play their roles. This will enhance their communication skills. Hearing other characters' conversations will develop their listening and cooperative skills.

The students learn the need to empathize with the other characters and learn the importance of listening which is an essential component of interactive skills. Rehearsing the play enables the students to become fluent and spontaneous in conversation, and this will boost their morale, confidence and positive attitude. These are the basic skills needed for aspiring entrepreneurs, while playing different roles, some characters are vigorous speakers, some active listeners and some flexible passive participants relying on their body language to express their emotions.

To stretch the experience of the learners a little further, it is not a mere assumption that acquiring language skills (communicative skills) are no small task. Wordplay precedes character. One can win or lose a situation by the proper use or misuse of words. Words can be ironic,

deceptive, artful, innovative, ambiguous, equivocal, suggestive, crafty or plain (straightforward). Words are used for thought transference. The learners by playing out situations as presented in the one-act plays can learn the nuances of vocabulary. This will further boost their confidence when they meet people in real-life situations. Learning the proper usage of words will enhance their wit, intelligence, inventiveness and understanding since words can be figurative, funny, literal, gainful or painful.

Thus teaching soft skills or interpersonal skills by involving the students in one-act plays makes learning a learner-centered one. Further entrepreneurs acquire the work ethic, team work and management skills by allowing them to choose the roles according to their ability. Enacting one-act plays keeps the

students engaged and active. The teacher can help in choosing the right one-act plays for the future entrepreneurs. Involving the students in one-act plays also provides maximum speaking practice while enacting real life contexts.

### **Summation**

Staging of plays involves interpersonal relationship irrespective of the roles the participants play. The interesting nature of the activity increases the participatory involvements of the students by thus increasing learners' interest by better results.

The out of the text learning experience give greater weight age to learning, which is students-centric, then teaching which is teacher centric. One-act plays are more appealing to the modern youth since it is less time consuming. By imbibing characters' reaction in the plays, the students unconsciously

develop soft skills to become successful entrepreneurs in the business world. By learning soft skills through out one-act plays, the students can better their interpersonal relationship in business too.

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