

The Integration of Soft Skills in the Hybrid Workplace: Empowering Students for Success in a Dynamic Work Environment

The objective of this session is to raise attendees' awareness of the importance of acquiring digital soft skills necessary for hybrid roles because such skills may not be incorporated into the curriculum. The presenter aims to present practical opportunities for developing these skills based on a comprehensive framework to enhance students' adaptability, ethical decision-making, digital collaboration, and empathy in virtual settings. The practical suggestions offered in the session include:

1. **Preparing Students for Hybrid Workplaces:** Focusing on traditional milestones such as job interviews and resumes, tailored for hybrid work environments by conducting regular workshops on specific soft skills such as digital collaboration, empathy, and ethical decision-making. Students can also be offered personalized coaching sessions to help them identify and develop their soft skills.
2. **Incorporating Digital Soft Skills:** Integrating digital soft skills into educational programs to help students improve their collaboration, empathy, and ethical decision-making in hybrid workplaces (Walker & Venker Weidenbenner, 2019). Simulation-based learning (SBL) can be implemented to provide students with realistic, hands-on experiences in a controlled environment.
3. **Exploring Innovative Technologies and Teaching Methods:** Investigating new technologies and pedagogical approaches to enhance digital soft skills (Czymoniewicz-Klippel & Cruz, 2023). Students need to be introduced to various digital collaboration tools, for example, Microsoft Teams, Slack or Trello.

Olivera Jovovic is an Academic English teaching professional with more than 15 years of experience as an instructor, researcher, curriculum developer and teacher trainer. She teaches at University Canada West in Vancouver, Canada.