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FINANCE STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVE OF WORK-RELEVANT COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Today English is one of the most important and demanded language not only in the world but in Ukraine. Knowledge of English is useful for self-development and self-improvement. On the other hand English is necessary in such areas of activity like Business, Economics and Finance.

Skills audit in the field of Finance continues to be a potent research agenda as it presents rich opportunity to compare prioritization of skills, competence evaluation, training approaches, and practical applications. One key stakeholder whose perspectives on these subjects commonly explored is employers. The subsequent discussion synthesizes findings of recent studies on employer viewpoints in relation to work-relevant skills in finance practice and suggested ways to address the gap.

A number of studies report employer complaints about the lack of communication aptitude among new graduates entering the workplace.

Many companies need employees who can communicate with partners and clients all over the world. Very often, that means finding employees who speak English. English gives a wider choice of employment, because more and more companies start cooperation with foreign partners and firms. Very often employers encourage employees to know English skills as a result their salary is higher than usual. According to research conducted on the results of the analysis of job search portals rabota.ua, ua.jooble.org and headhunter.ua, the salary of finance specialists who speak English is a few times higher the salary of those who do not have the same knowledge, in particular, the knowledge of English makes it possible to earn in Ukraine 3-6 times more.

Having analyzed vacancy positions in Ukraine of finance specialist without work experience with knowledge of English the range of requirements were identified. They are as follows: upper-intermediate or advanced English skills, both oral and written; fluent written and spoken English; good business English writing skills; fluent English (for analyzing documents in English); good English communication skills; excellent written and spoken English; very good command of English; English proficiency at intermediate / upper intermediate level; well-developed writing skills in English, etc.

General English language courses may cover varied topics in speaking and writing, but neglect targeting specific work-relevant skills. In our research we tried to identify the skills that are critical to the functions of financiers in different career levels- staff, manager, and partner. In particular, we found that entry-level financiers mainly function as receivers, gatherers, and processors of information; thus, fundamental communication skills, such as demonstrating respect, active listening, building trust, building relationships, and using information technology are critical to their work. Managers, on the other hand, focus on leadership and organizational functions, such as teaching important skills providing performance feedback, providing motivation, creating group synergy, and expressing encouragement. Finally, partners focus on

advanced leadership and organization skills, including making convincing presentations, negotiating, building rapport, and being persuasive. These insights, informed by employer knowledge, provide a comprehensive guide in designing a more specific communication course customized for future finance professionals.

Knowledge of English for future finance professionals is needed in order to perform such duties as: preparation of the financial models, presentations, business plans; financial and industry analysis; evaluation of new investment opportunities; communications with corporate clients to ensure effective project execution, etc.

Therefore, universities that train specialists in finance should take into account the needs of employers who require not just experts in finance, but graduates who will be able to establish business contacts with foreign partners in a foreign language environment.

Practical implication of these findings call for the implementation of a specialized communication course for finance majors. The mentioned course shall aim to develop competence in interview, writing, listening, reading, and communication technology as applied in the professional context.