

Original Paper

Soft Skills Needed by Marketing Majors upon Graduation

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Abstract

Are marketing students graduating with the skills business professionals demand? This paper will examine the soft skills needed by marketing majors upon graduation. A literature review was performed of 51 studies from recent years analyzing key skills mentioned in literature by marketing professionals. This study found that the most frequently mentioned soft skills included adaptability, analytical reasoning, collaborating with diverse individuals, communication (written and verbal), critical thinking, creativity, detail orientation, interpersonal skills, leadership, problem solving, professionalism, public speaking/presentation skills, resilience, teamwork and time management. This paper will discuss the major skills needed by marketing students and will make recommendations for future research on hard skills and digital marketing.

Keywords

marketing soft skills, collaborating, communication, creativity, professionalism, teamwork

1. Introduction

For decades researchers have questioned whether the content and skills we teach marketing and business majors reflect the skills demanded by business and marketing professionals. Chonko et al. (1996, pp. 54-55) indicated that “business complains that business graduates:

- do not perform adequately in the areas of oral and written communication.
- are not people-sensitive and, therefore, find it difficult to get along with others who have different needs, goals, and workstyles.
- do not know how to recognize common themes in business situations.
- have not learned how to see the relationship among things that seem very different.
- cannot tolerate ambiguity and bring order out of seeming confusion.
- are not capable of the type of thinking that comes from the many ways to look at the world”.

It seems as if things have not changed much since the 1990s. The National Association of College and Employers (NACE) has for years indicated that we need to train students in career readiness. Career readiness consists of the workplace skills gained through educational experiences (NACE, 2022). In the NACE 2022 report they indicated that students upon graduation should be competent in: ability to generalize, analytical skills (qualitative), analytical skills (quantitative), asking questions, competence in a discipline, communication skills-written and verbal, global/cultural awareness, creativity, critical thinking, cross-functional competence, decision making leadership, team-based decision making, learning to learn, understanding process versus fact, translating the general to the specific, organization basics, and technological competence. NACE (2022) lists Communication, critical thinking, equity and inclusion, leadership, professionalism, teamwork and technology as the top career readiness competencies. Furthermore, The Chronicle of Higher education in July 2022 indicated more job postings have cited specific soft skills such as writing, communication and attention to detail over having a college degree (Blumenstyk, 2022). In a recent article, LinkedIn indicated that in a CNBC survey 93% of employers want to see soft skills listed on a resume (Malinsky, 2022; “The Most Valuable Soft Skills”, 2022).

While it is desired that marketing students obtain these general skills, they also should have specific skills desired by business professionals. “From the education institutional perspective, work readiness ensures that all marketing graduates have achieved at least a minimum standard in specific business-related learning goals including effective skills in communication, teamwork, ethics, and the ability to integrate the various business disciplines” (Greenacre et al., 2017, p. 67). Clearly, marketing students need experiences with these skills before they graduate. This paper will examine the question, “What soft skills should marketing students have upon graduation”.

2. Method

This paper will conduct a literature review focusing on soft skills needed by marketing majors in 2022. Fifty-six articles from 2017-2022 were analyzed to determine the most common skills that are mentioned in literature from academics studying desired skills and from practitioners from sources such as Marketing Education Review, the Journal of Marketing and the Journal of Marketing Education. LinkedIn articles were assessed as well as articles from popular business press such as Forbes and Harvard Business Review to ensure that construct validity was established. Popular job posting sites such as Monster.Com and Indeed.Com were also analyzed. Five of the articles/papers were eliminated due to lack of relevancy (e.g., one paper focused on courses needed by marketing students versus skills) leaving 51 articles in the review.

3. Soft Skills

Soft skills are core skills that are relevant to all professions. Soft skills are common, non-technical skills that relate to how a person works (Anderson, 2020; Kovacs & Zarandne, 2022; Mackenzie, 2021). “Soft skills are more about behavior and thinking, personal traits and cognitive skills. They’re typically more difficult to measure, but they can also help a person thrive in a variety of roles and industries” (Anderson, 2020, p. 4).

This definition will be used in assessing soft skills required of marketing majors.

3.1 Marketing Graduate Desired Soft Skills

The most frequently mentioned softs skills (mentioned in at least 5 pieces of literature) included adaptability, analytical reasoning, collaborating with diverse individuals, communication (written and verbal), critical thinking, creativity, detail orientation, interpersonal skills, leadership, problem solving, professionalism, public speaking/presentation skills, resilience, teamwork and time management. (see Table 1).

Table 1. Most Frequently Mentioned Soft Skills

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptability/Flexible (Bortz, 2022; Champlain, 2022; Delong & Elbeck, 2018; Duggal, 2022; Ferell & Ferell, 2020; Goodman, 2022; Kovacs & Zarandne, 2022; Malinsky, 2022; Steimer, 2019; Van Nuys, 2020; Yeoh, 2019)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analytical Reasoning (Anderson, 2020; Bortz, 2022; Doyle 2020; Duggal, 2022; Ferell & Ferell, 2020; Graham et al., 2020; Kovacs & Zarandne, 2022; Mackenzie, 2021; Malinsky, 2022; NACE, 2022; Raska & Keller, 2021)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborating with diverse individuals/Multicultural awareness (David et al., 2021; Goodman, 2022; Hartley et al., 2019; Mackenzie, 2021; Steimer, 2019; Yeoh, 2019)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication. (Blumenstyck, 2022; Champlain, 2022; Delong & Elbeck, 2018; Garner et al., 2019; Goodman, 2022; Graham et al., 2020; Doyle, 2020; Duggal, 2022; Mackenzie, 2021; Malinsky, 2022; NACE, 2022; Raymond et al., 2021; Riley & Nicewicz, 2022; Rohm et al., 2018; Singh, 2022; Smith, 2022; Yeoh, 2019)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creativity (Chen, 2022; David et al., 2021; Dollar, 2017; Doyle, 2022; Duggal, 2022; Garner et al., 2019; Kovacs & Zarandne, 2022; Mackenzie, 2021; McCoy, 2021; Rohm et al., 2018; Steimer, 2019; Sy, 2021; Yeoh, 2019)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical thinking (Hain & Ritz, 2021; Kovacs & Zarandne, 2022; Mackenzie, 2021; NACE, 2022; Raymond et al., 2021; Raska & Keller, 2021; Rohm et al., 2018; Thompson et al., 2021; Yeoh, 2019)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detail oriented (Blumenstyck, 2022; Bortz, 2022; Kovacs & Zarandne, 2022; Mackenzie, 2021; NACE, 2022; Streiff, 2022)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpersonal/People (Champlain, 2022; Doyle, 2022; Mackenzie, 2021; Kovacs & Zarandne, 2022; Van Nuys, 2020; Yeoh, 2019)

- Leadership (Bortz, 2022; Champlain, 2022; Ferrell & Ferrell, 2020; Garner et al., 2019; Mackenzie, 2021; NACE, 2022; Saeed & Rashidi, 2017; Thompson et al., 2021)
- Oral Communication-(NACE, 2022; Garner et al., 2019; Mackenzie, 2021; Raska & Keller, 2021; Thompson et al., 2021)
- Problem Solving (Bortz, 2022; Chen, 2022; Garner et al., 2019; Hain & Ritz, 2022; Kovacs & Zarandne, 2022; Mackenzie, 2021; NACE 2022; Saeed & Rashidi, 2017; Smith, 2022; Sy, 2021; Thompson et al., 2021; Yeoh, 2019)
- Professionalism (Black et al., 2021; Delong & Elbeck, 2018; Ewing & Ewing, 2017; Mackenzie, 2021; McQuerry, 2018; NACE, 2022; Raymond et al., 2021; Raska & Keller, 2021; Wilson et al, 2013; Yeoh, 2019)
- Public Speaking/Presentation Skills (Doyle, 2020; Garner et al., 2019; Heisler, 2019; Kovacs & Zarandne, 2022; Steimer, 2019; Thompson et al., 2021)
- Resilience (Doyle, 2022; Dwivedi, 2020; Kovacs & Zarandne, 2022; Purcell, 2020; Smith, 2022)
- Teamwork (Bortz, 2022; Delong & Elbeck, 2018; Garner et al., 2019; David et al., 2021; Kovacs & Zarandne, 2022; Mackenzie, 2021; NACE, 2022; Riley & Nicewicz, 2022; Raymond et al., 2021; Raska & Keller, 2021; Rohm et al., 2018; Schlee & Karns, 2017; Thompson et al., 2021)
- Time Management (Kovacs & Zarandne, 2022; Mackenzie, 2021; Malinsky, 2022; Rampton, 2022; Schlee & Karns, 2017; Sing, 2022; Steimer, 2019; Yeoh, 2019)
- Written Communication (Blumenstyeck, 2022; Bortz, 2022; Doyle, 2022; Duggal, 2022; Ferrell & Ferrell, 2020; Forbes Expert Panel, 2021; Garner et al., 2019, Mackenzie, 2021; NACE 2022; Raska & Keller, 2021; Rohm et al., 2018; Yeoh, 2019)

Many studies and articles have been published on the most desirable skills marketing students need to have upon graduation (Champlain, 2022; Ewing & Ewing, 2017; Forbes Expert Panel, 2021; Garner et al., 2019; Davide et al., 2021; Doyle, 2020; Duggal, 2022; Kovacs & Zarandne, 2022; Mackenzie et al., 2021; Raska & Keller, 2021; Raymond et al., 2021; Rohm et al., 2018; Schlee & Karns, 2017; Singh, 2022; Smith, 2022; Thompson et al., 2021; Wilson et al., 2013; Yeoh, 2021). Adaptability, analytical reasoning, communication in both oral and written forms, creativity, problem solving, professionalism and the ability to work in a team were the most frequently mentioned skills for business and marketing students.

3.1.1 Most Frequently Mentioned Skills

Adaptability. Adaptability is the ability to adjust to new conditions or circumstances (Bortz, 2022; Champlain, 2022; Duggal, 2022; Ferrell & Ferrell, 2020; Kovacs & Zarandne, 2022; Yeoh, 2019). Adaptability is crucial in today's technological environment where marketing professionals need to constantly learn new technologies and understand the plethora of social media sites (Anderson, 2020; Ferrell & Ferrell, 2020; Champlain, 2022; Duggal, 2022, Hartley et al., 2022; Schlee & Karns, 2017;

Key et al., 2019; Raska & Keller, 2021; Schlee & Karns, 2017; Singh, 2022; Steimer, 2019; Sy, 2021; Thompson et al., 2021). The Covid 19 pandemic forced many of us to be flexible at how we perform our jobs or work as students (Smith, 2022).

Analytical reasoning. “Analytical reasoning is a person’s ability to identify patterns within a group of facts or rules and use those patterns to determine outcomes that could be or must be true. Skills like creative thinking and attention to detail can help with identifying patterns’ meanings and deciding what to do next” (Indeed Editorial Team, 2022, para. 2). Analytical reasoning has been identified as a desirable skill for business and marketing students. Many of the activities used in class and for projects such as case studies, discussions and client-based projects facilitate students’ ability to demonstrate their analytical skills (Anderson, 2020; Bortz, 2022; Chen, 2021; Doyle, 2020; Duggal, 2022; Ferell & Ferell, 2020; Graham et al., 2020; Kovacs & Zarandne, 2022; Mackenzie, 2021; McCoy, 2021; NACE, 2022; Raska & Keller, 2021).

Collaborating with diverse individuals/Multicultural awareness. The ability to work with others from diverse backgrounds (race, ethnicity, age, gender, learning styles, sexual identity, geographic regions) is a growing necessity in today’s society (David et al., 2021; Hartley et al., 2019; Mackenzie, 2021; McQuerry, 2018; Yeoh, 2019). Students need the opportunity to work with others who have dissimilar backgrounds to them. Instructors can facilitate this in class or online by asking students to answer some questions on their background/interests on the first day of class to ensure students are getting to know others. Online discussions and group assignments focused on communicating about how marketing products and promotions can meet the different needs of segments helps to facilitate this interaction as does group work with a diverse group of people.

Communication. The ability to communicate clearly in both written and oral form is a highly desirable skill (Bortz, 2022; Champlain, 2022; Doyle, 2022; Duggal, 2022; Ferell & Ferell, 2020; Garner et al., 2019, Graham et al., 2020; Mackenzie, 2021; NACE 2022; Kovacs & Zarandne, 2022; Raska & Keller, 2021; Raymond et al., 2021; Rohm et al., 2018; Singh, 2022; Smith, 2022; Thompson et al., 2021; Yeoh, 2019). Students should be prepared to document their performance in both oral and written communication. Having evidence of papers, projects and visual presentations assists recruiters and employers in the hiring process. Virtual portfolio applications and platforms such as LinkedIn can be used to display examples of student success in communication.

Creativity. Similar to NACE (2022), creativity was also ranked as an extremely important skill for marketing majors (Chen, 2022; David et al., 2021; Dollar, 2017; Doyle, 2022; Duggal, 2022; Garner et al., 2019; Kovacs & Zarandne, 2022; Mackenzie, 2021; Rohm et al., 2018; Steimer, 2019; Sy, 2021; Yeoh, 2019). Creativity involves using one’s imagination to generate new ideas. In marketing, students have a multitude of opportunities to demonstrate their creative abilities in class developing marketing plans, promotions, advertisements and in sales presentations.

Critical thinking. Critical thinking is the ability to carefully examine facts, arguments, and all evidence to and make connections between ideas (Bloom, 1956; Bonwell & Eison, 1991). Critical thinking has been indicated as a highly desired skill and outcome of education and marketing students upon graduation (Kovacs & Zarandne, 2022; Mackenzie, 2021; NACE, 2022; Raymond et al., 2021; Raska & Keller, 2021; Rohm et al., 1018; Thompson et al., 2021; Yeoh, 2019). Providing students with assignments in class that clearly demonstrate their critical thinking skills will benefit students when searching for a position in the business world.

Detail Oriented. Being able to pay close attention to fine points and specifics assists students both at school and in the workplace (Bortz, 2022; Kovacs & Zarandne, 2022; Mackenzie, 2021; NACE, 2022; Streiff, 2022). At school, students must pay attention to syllabus, exam and assignment details in order to succeed in a course. This skill can be developed by highlighting important minute aspects of a course for students. Students then can articulate their experiences with being detail oriented when applying for jobs.

Interpersonal skills. Interpersonal skills are the ability to interact well with others (Champlain, 2022; Doyle, 2022; Forbes Expert Panel, 2021; Mackenzie, 2021; Kovacs & Zarandne, 2022; Van Nuys, 2020; Yeoh, 2019). Marketing is about finding the needs of your customers and getting them what they need. Being able to communicate effectively with and persuade customers is essential for figuring out their needs and wants.

Leadership. NACE and many studies have indicated that the ability to lead is a preferred skill (Bortz, 2022; Champlain, 2022; Ferrell & Ferrell, 2020; Garner et al., 2019; Mackenzie, 2021; NACE, 2022; Thompson et al., 2021). Students should be given opportunities in class to lead group projects and encouraged to document any leadership experience they have at work or through volunteering.

Problem solving. Problem solving is being able to find solutions to complex issues (Bortz, 2022; Chen, 2022; Garner et al., 2019; Kovacs & Zarandne, 2022; Mackenzie, 2021; NACE 2022; Smith, 2022; Sy, 2021; Thompson et al., 2021; Yeoh, 2019). Students can exhibit their problem-solving abilities through class activities, projects and assignments and should document their activities for their resumes and job hunting.

Professionalism. Professionalism refers to the conduct or behavior of a person in a specific field of work (Ewing & Ewing, 2017). This includes behavior such as listening, actively participating, expecting ambiguity, working well with others, timeliness and understanding social/work norms (Black et al., 2021; Ewing & Ewing, 2017; Mackenzie, 2021; McQuerry, 2018; NACE, 2022; Raymond et al., 2021; Raska & Keller, 2021; Wilson et al., 2013; Yeoh, 2019). Professionalism has been found to be an important factor leading students from their career in education to the workforce. “Learners will be more likely to succeed in a corporate context if they experience daily interactions throughout a curriculum that approximate a professional environment” (Ewing & Ewing, 2017, p. 132). It is important, therefore, that instructors establish a professional expectation in the classroom whether it is online or face-to-face.

Public Speaking. As previously mentioned, good oral communication is a sought-after skill (Doyle, 2020; Garner et al., 2019; Heisler, 2019; Kovacs & Zarandne, 2022; Thompson et al., 2021). Students should be able to manage both interpersonal communications (e.g., interactions with other students or the professor) and with public speaking and presentation skills (such as giving a presentation in class or to a client).

Resilience. Resilience is the ability to deal with difficult circumstance or failure or and persist (Doyle, 2022; Dwivedi, 2020; Kovacs & Zarandne, 2022; Purcell, 2020; Smith, 2022). Self-awareness, mindfulness, acceptance and flexibility facilitate the development of resilience. Instructors should encourage students and help them develop a plan when they encounter difficulties during the course of a class.

Teamwork. The ability to work with others in a team has been a well-documented skill required for success (Bortz, 2022; Garner et al., 2019; David et al., 2021; Kovacs & Zarandne, 2022; Mackenzie, 2021; NACE, 2022; Raymond et al., 2021; Raska & Keller, 2021; Rohm et al., 2018; Schlee & Karns, 2017; Thompson et al., 2021). While some students are resistant to group projects, emphasizing the importance placed by the profession on this skill will benefit students in the long run.

Time Management. The ability to plan, schedule and use time wisely is an important skill for students to develop (Kovacs & Zarandne, 2022; Mackenzie, 2021; Rampton, 2022; Schlee & Karns, 2017; Singh, 2022; Yeoh, 2019). In class, we can encourage students to plan out their semesters writing down due dates in calendars. We can also give students mini-deadlines to assist them in dividing up workload into smaller portions so that they are not rushing to do as assignment right before it is due.

We can help build students skills in analytical reasoning, attention to detail, communication (oral and written) critical thinking, problem solving, professionalism and teamwork by using client-based projects in our classes (Johnson, 2014; Raska et al., 2021; Thompson et al., 2021). Client based projects create a situation where students work in teams to complete a project for a real company. During the project, students must communicate in a professional manner with the client both in oral and written communication to solve a problem and/or complete an analysis. This gives students the opportunity to demonstrate many of their abilities and skills in marketing through real-life application.

3.1.2 Less Frequently Mentioned, but Still Important Skills

There were 11 skills that were mentioned less frequently, but were still deemed important: aptitude to learn, dependability, decision making, ethics, initiative, negotiation, organization, strong work ethic and working independently (See Table 2).

Table 2. Less Frequently Mentioned Soft Skills

- Aptitude to learn (Duggal, 2022; McCoy, 2021)
- Dependability (Mackenzie, 2021; NACE, 2022; Smith, 2022)
- Decision Making (David et al., 2021)
- Initiative (Bortz, 2022; Kovacs & Zarandne, 2022)
- Multitasking (Kovacs & Zarandne, 2022; McCoy, 2021; Schlee & Karns, 2017)
- Negotiation-(Doyle, 2022)
- Organizational (Kovacs & Zarandne, 2022; Mackenzie, 2021; Yeoh, 2019)
- Persuasion (Barker, 2018; Steimer, 2019)
- Storytelling (Booker, 2019; Dollar, 2017; Goodman, 2022)
- Strong work ethic (Bortz, 2022; DeLong & Elbeck, 2018; Goodman, 2022; Mackenzie, 2021)
- Working Independently (Mackenzie, 2021; Malinsky, 2022; Schlee & Karns, 2017)

Aptitude to learn. Duggal (2022) stresses the importance of a graduate demonstrating the ability to learn in the ever-changing field of social and digital media. New platforms, tools and apps are continuously being invented and anyone working in this field must be able to learn quickly.

Dependability. A graduate should be able to demonstrate being reliable in performance and attendance (Mackenzie, 2021; NACE, 2022; Smith, 2022). In today’s labor market this is especially true. “Against a backdrop of historic quitting rates and a tight labor market, dependable employees are tremendous assets to companies” (Smith, 2022, para. 6).

Decision Making. David et al. (2021) indicate that strategic decision making is an essential skill for students to develop. One commonly used tool used by business and marketing professors is to conduct a SWOT analysis examining the internal strengths and weaknesses of a company and the external opportunities in threats. A SWOT allows students to analyze the information and make decisions about what an organization should do.

Initiative. Initiative involves being proactive and not just following directions (Bortz, 2022; Kovacs & Zarandne, 2022). Companies want employees with a demonstrated capacity for showing initiative. Students should be prepared to give examples when they have taken initiative such as on a team project when they initiate group communication.

Multitasking. Multitasking involves managing multiple tasks and priorities (Kovacs & Zarandne, 2022; Mackenzie, 2021; Schlee & Karns, 2017). Schlee & Karns (2017) found that multitasking abilities were associated with higher salary jobs. Students who take more than one course a semester will have assignments and exams in different classes and will need to learn to prioritize their tasks.

Negotiation. The ability to discuss and resolve an issue between at least two parties (Doyle, 2022). Doyle (2022, para. 14), “negotiation is an undervalued skill in marketing. From negotiating with clients

on budgets, timelines, and expectations, to working with designers and vendors, the ability to drive a hard bargain is a big part of success as a professional marketer”.

Organizational. Organizational skills include the ability to coordinate activities and resources (Kovacs & Zarandne, 2022; Mackenzie, 2021; Yeoh, 2019). In a Delphi study of 12 HR managers and 15 Marketing Managers, Yeoh (2019) found that organizational skills ranked in the top 7 skills desired by managers. Organizational skills provide the foundation for meeting deadlines and time management (Kovacs & Zarandne, 2022).

Persuasion. Persuasion is the ability to influence others and their attitudes (Barker, 2018; Steimer, 2019). In marketing, this is important as individuals sometimes have preconceived notions about a brand or company. Good interpersonal skills and storytelling are often part of persuading people.

Story Telling. Storytelling involves connecting a brand/company to consumer emotions (Booker, 2019; Dollar, 2017; Goodman, 2022).

Storytelling marketing means using a narrative to communicate a message. The aim is to make the viewer feel something—enough that it’ll inspire them to take action. Storytelling in marketing helps consumers to understand why they should care about something, and it works to humanize your brand (Booker, 2019, para. 4).

Strong Work Ethic. A strong work ethic consists of showing up to work, being on time, performing well at one’s job and striving for improvement (Bortz, 2022; Mackenzie, 2021). A strong work ethic encompasses dependability, a willingness to learn and initiative. A strong work ethic is associated with professionalism.

Working Independently. While working in a group is a necessary skill for survival in marketing, being able to demonstrate the ability to work by oneself is also necessary (Mackenzie, 2021; Schlee & Karns, 2017). Working independently in a team can be assisted by the use of team that assign tasks and hold students accountable for a specific portion of a project (Johnson & Horn, 2019).

4. Conclusion

This paper has evaluated practitioner and academic literature for the most common skills needed by marketing majors. The analysis concluded that the most frequently mentioned softs skills included adaptability, analytical reasoning, collaborating with diverse individuals, communication (written and verbal), critical thinking, creativity, detail orientation, interpersonal skills, leadership, problem solving, professionalism, public speaking/presentation skills, resilience, teamwork and time management.

Other skills such as aptitude to learn, dependability, decision making, initiative, multitasking, negotiation, organization, persuasion, storytelling, work ethic and working independently were also found to be important, but were not mentioned as frequently in literature. Instructors should ensure that activities and assignments are done in class that will allow students to develop and master these skills.

While it is important that instructors provide students with opportunities to work on these skills, it is even more crucial that professors highlight for students the skills they are exhibiting and encourage them to document the work for their portfolios.

5. Future Research

While this paper has focused on soft skills for marketing majors, students also need to be aware of the hard skills (ability to do a specific task that require specialized knowledge (Anderson, 2020)). Business and marketing specific skills such as branding (Chen, 2022; Sy, 2021), content creation (Kovacs & Zarandne, 2022), customer relationship management (Kovacs & Zarandne, 2022), marketing management analytical decision strategies (Schlee & Karns, 2017), project management (Champlain, 2022; Ferrell & Ferrell, 2020; Mackenzie, 2021), sales & sales Management (Anderson, 2020; Kovacs & Zarandne, 2022; Mackenzie, 2021; Saeed & Rashidi, 2017), Quantitative skills (He et al., 2022), research aptitude (Champlain, 2022; Duggal, 2022; Ferrell & Ferrell, 2020; Kovacs & Zarandne, 2022; Thompson et al., 2021) and visual marketing (Champlain, 2022; Ferrell & Ferrell, 2020) need to be obtained by students by the time they graduate. Future research should examine these hard skills in more detail.

In today's world of digital and social media, hard skills are ever changing and students will need to know new apps, tools and platforms (Anderson, 2020; Champlain, 2022; Duggal, 2022; Hartley et al., 2022; Kelly, 2017; Key et al., 2019; Mackenzie, 2021; Schlee & Karns, 2017; Raska & Keller, 2021; Singh, 2022; Thompson et al., 2021). Digital and social marketing skills need to be developed by students before they look for jobs so that they can demonstrate their abilities. Future research needs to identify the tools and applications that students should know upon graduation from college.

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