Finding "good" employees is always a challenge for any business. Knowing what defines "good" is equally as challenging. Many applicants want to know what a potential employer is looking for in a candidate. Well, we'll try to answer that question for you. First, you must understand the difference between the requirements for a job and what makes one a good employee. The requirements are usually skills or experiences that will allow you to perform the duties of the job. For example, if you applied for a job as an airline pilot, you must first have the ability and certifications to fly a plane. There may be many people who qualify for the job, and the employer may receive tons of completed applications from qualified individuals. The true goal of the employer is to (1) make sure the candidate is who he or she states they are in the application and (2) find out if the candidate has a few important personal characteristics. This is the goal of the personal interview. Below are 5 of the most important characteristics sought by most employers.

**Enthusiasm**

Enthusiastic individuals have a positive attitude in the workplace and are worth their weight in gold. Enthusiastic people work hard, learn quickly and aren't discouraged by setbacks. More importantly, they create a positive atmosphere in the workplace, improving morale and encouraging others around them to work hard as well.

**Strong Work Ethic**

Having a good work ethic in the modern workplace refers to being professional, diligent and caring about your work and the people you work with. It is important to complete your work on time, not waste the time of your colleagues, send professional emails without typos, offer your help to others when they require it. Again, having a positive attitude lends tremendously to perceptions of your work ethic.

**Initiative**

Having initiative is recognizing and doing what needs to be done before one is asked to do it. To be successful, one must have initiative. Having initiative doesn’t mean that a person needs to be pushy or obnoxious; it means that a person can see what has to be done and can take the personal responsibility to make things happen. One who possesses initiative doesn’t allow circumstance or environment to get in their way and doesn’t make excuses for their inability to complete a task. In other words, one doesn’t allow the roadblocks of life to bring one to a full stop, but rather works to come up with a solution to the problem.

**Reliability**

Arriving to work on time and not taking sick days when you are not really sick are qualities of a reliable employee. Businesses can lose money and moral within the company can suffer from unreliable employees. We encourage everyone to eat healthy, stay away from junk food, get plenty of rest and exercise. These things will keep you feeling great mentally and physically and help make you a more reliable person in all aspects of life.

**Great Communication Skills**

Almost every job will require a significant level of interaction with co-workers. Employers look for people who can express themselves clearly and accurately, both in writing and in speaking. Being capable of listening, learning, and follow instructions are also valued assets. These characteristics signal to the employer that you are emotionally mature or that you have a high emotional quotient (EQ).

These are all qualities to highlight in your CV and to demonstrate in an interview. It's also important to work on these qualities in your existing employment, as they'll make you a better (and in all likelihood, a happier) employee.