

Role of Advertising in Teaching Soft Skills

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Advertising provides plenty of opportunities to the youngsters to be creative. This is a ubiquitous fact. It opens up the faculty of mind to unravel the creativity of an individual. Recently it has been realized that advertising has much more potential than what it had earlier. The buzz word today is 'Soft Skills' and it has been found that engineers and boffins possess enough technical skills but are found short of Soft Skills. If we teach Soft Skills by direct pedagogical methods, students may find it banal and insipid. Students show lackadaisical attitude to learn Soft Skills in a conventional manner.

The world of Advertising is charismatic and the myriad of ads can be used in the classroom to imbibe the following Soft Skills: Communication, Non verbal cues, Semiotics, Decision making, Courtesy, and Cross-cultural communication. One of the ways is the way copy writer twists the language to create an impact on the readers. The linguistic deviations and anomaly in grammatical patterns are put to the best use. The copy writers leap beyond the walls and change the category of words from verb to noun, adjective to verb, etc. They make extensive use of collocation to exert their rights. The students are taught these usages through the advertising.

There is abundant use of code mixing and code switching to reach to the larger audience. Communication becomes more effective and the large number of audience is involved. The colour scheme used on the ads denotes the ambience, for example the green colour used in Dettol soap adds freshness to the ad. The proximity used between son and the mother reflects the bonding of the relationship. While teaching the emotional appeals used in the ads, these facts are highlighted so as to imbibe the soft skills in subtle manner.

More than this, let me take an example of Idea mobile, the ad instills the corporate social responsibility of teaching rural population with the help of technology. Watching such ads, you get motivated to take up initiatives like this. TATA tea "Jaago Re" campaign opens up the eyes of the Indian youth to the stigma which has become rampant in the society. Watching such advertisements help in imbibing values that can be cherished and without being cognizant, students learn the much desired soft skills.

Teaching through advertising can be an invigorating experience for students as well as for the pedagogue.