

Majority of Companies Plan to Hire Recent College Graduates, According to CareerBuilder.ca Survey

TORONTO, April 23, 2015 /CNW/ -- For all of the celebrations around graduation season, it can also be a stressful time for college seniors, as many prepare to enter the workforce for the very first time. While this year's class will have ample job prospects, many may find a tougher transition to the working world than others.

According to a new survey from CareerBuilder.ca, 62 per cent of companies plan to hire recent college graduates this year; however, only 1 in 5 employers (19 per cent) believe academic institutions are adequately preparing students for roles needed within their organizations. The majority of employers say colleges are preparing students for "some roles, but not all," and 16 per cent do not believe they are preparing them adequately at all.

"Though 3 in 5 companies plan to hire recent graduates, the vast majority of companies do not feel students are adequately prepared for the work force," says Mark Bania, Managing Director of CareerBuilder Canada. "This finding underscores the need for companies to work with educational institutions to provide the training necessary for growing business needs."

The national survey was conducted online on behalf of CareerBuilder.ca of more than 400 employers.

Are new graduates ready?

When asked where academic institutions fall short in preparing students for the workforce, employers cited the following concerns:

- Too much emphasis on book learning instead of real world learning: 61 per cent
- I need workers with a blend of technical skills and soft skills gained from liberal arts: 38 per cent
- Not enough emphasis on internships: 25 per cent
- Entry-level roles within my organization are more complex today: 22 per cent
- Technology is changing too quickly for academics to keep up: 18 per cent
- Not enough students are graduating with the degrees my company needs: 13 per cent

When asked to name which skills they think recent college graduates lack for the workplace, most of these employers cited interpersonal or problem-solving skills:

- Interpersonal or people skills: 51 per cent
- Problem-solving skills: 45 per cent
- Teamwork: 41 per cent
- Oral communication: 40 per cent

- Creative thinking: 38 per cent
- Written communication: 35 per cent
- Leadership: 34 per cent
- Project management: 19 per cent
- Research and analysis: 15 per cent
- Maths: 13 per cent
- Computer and Technical: 8 per cent

Which degrees are most in demand?

When it comes to which degrees will lead to the most job prospects, business degrees top the list, with 31 per cent of employers naming it the most in-demand degree at their firms. Computer and information sciences degrees are also in high demand (20 per cent), followed by health professions and related clinical sciences (12 per cent) and engineering (12 per cent).

Where are the opportunities?

Customer service (33 per cent) and information technology jobs (30 per cent) top the list of position types employers are primarily looking toward new graduates to fill. Opportunities also abound in finance/accounting (24 per cent) and business development (23 per cent). Sales, marketing and public relations (17 per cent each) round out the top five job types.

What will these jobs pay?

More than one third of employers (35 per cent) who plan to hire recent college graduates will offer higher starting salaries than they did last year. The majority of employers (57 per cent) expect salaries to stay the same, and 8 per cent expect to offer lower starting salaries.

Expected starting salaries for recent graduates break down as follows*:

- Approximately \$25,000 or less – 19 per cent
- Approximately \$25,000 to \$40,000 - 38 per cent
- Approximately \$40,000 to \$50,000 – 30 per cent
- Approximately \$50,000 or higher – 17 per cent

These numbers, however, are not set in stone: The majority of employers (68 per cent) say they are willing to negotiate salary when extending job offers to recent graduates.

Where do benefits come in?

The majority of employers (84 per cent) who plan to hire new college graduates are willing to negotiate or provide new graduates with various perks. After salary, the most popular perks employers say they will negotiate are the following:

- Flexible schedules: 45 per cent
- Bonuses: 30 per cent

- Reimbursement for additional schooling: 29 per cent
- Paying for mobile phone: 27 per cent
- Relocation expenses: 17 per cent
- Reimbursement for commuting expenses: 17 per cent
- More holiday days: 17 per cent
- Telecommuting options: 16 per cent

**Percentages may add up to more than 100 due to rounding.*

Methodology

The survey was conducted among 402 employers in Canada. The interviews were conducted online by Redshift Research in January & February 2015 using an email invitation and an online survey. Results of any sample are subject to sampling variation. The magnitude of the variation is measurable and is affected by the number of interviews and the level of the percentages expressing the results. In this particular study, the chances are 95 in 100 that a survey result does not vary, plus or minus, by more than 4.4 percentage points from the result that would be obtained if interviews had been conducted with all persons in the universe represented by the sample.

About CareerBuilder.ca

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