

RECRUITING TRENDS 2011-2012

41st Edition



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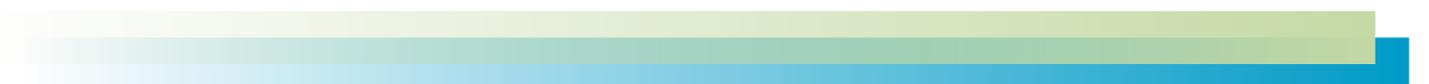


RECRUITING TRENDS 2011-2012

**A Michigan State University Publication
prepared by
The Collegiate Employment Research Institute
and
The MSU Career Services Network**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The college labor market continues to expand opportunities but at a more moderate rate than last year. Total hiring across all degrees will expand by 4 percent this year. The expansion is coming from a strong push at the Bachelor's degree level, which will increase by approximately 7 percent, according to the 4,200 employers seeking full-time talent. Last year's market was influenced by a group of employers who sprinted ahead of more cautious organizations. This year's market appears to be broader and a little deeper and shows a more consistent pattern of growth across industry sectors as well as by company size.

Uncertainty has lessened somewhat among these employers and is reflected in a higher intention to hire college students, approaching the optimism of the 2007-2008 college labor market. More confidence is leading more employers to increase their hiring targets. Still one-third have decided to cut their hiring goals for this year.

Nearly 40 percent of employers will be hiring candidates from all majors, seeking the best talent regardless of field of study. Computer science majors are still in strong demand in nearly every sector, and the supply of graduates will not be sufficient to fill all available positions. Accounting, most engineering disciplines, finance, and supply chain are expected to do well this year. Some of the strongest growth will be among marketing, advertising, and public relations; sales positions are increasing as well as related services to extend employer brands. Nursing, clinical laboratory scientists, human resources, chemistry, statistics, and mathematics are just some of the majors that will see more opportunities this year.

Even with this improved job outlook, the competition will be fierce. Employer demand falls short of the supply of graduating students.

Professional and scientific services, manufacturing, finance and insurance, retail, and information services are all improving their hiring situation this year. No sector appears stronger than agriculture/food processing with an increase in hires of approximately 14 percent. While nonprofits expect to hire slightly more talent this year, concern over the lagging economy may stifle hiring later in the academic year. It is too early to tell how education will do, but school administrators are hoping to maintain current hiring levels. Major weakness has been reported in the government sector, especially among state and local government agencies. Their losses have been partially masked by hiring at the Federal level, but they are still having jitters about future budget reductions.

Starting salary levels are not predicted to change because 70 percent of employers have no intention of raising salaries. However, bonuses and commission-based salaries are creeping back.

The best job seeking strategies still depend on connections between faculty, students, career services professionals, alumni, parents, and hiring staff in organizations.

This year's college labor market is moving very fast. Most companies will complete hiring by the end of fall term. Students who have started their job search early are flexible, and can best express their skills and abilities by demonstrating how they add value to the organization. Students with these qualities will be in the best position to seize opportunities in this job market. The best advice to students remains:

**BE FOCUSED, BE DIRECTED &
BE CONNECTED**

MEET THE COMPLETERS

We generated this convenience sample of employers through the combined efforts of approximately 150 colleges and universities across the country that invited their employers to participate in the survey (see p. 47). Invitations were sent to thousands of employers who have been actively recruiting full-time and internship talent during the past twenty-four months. The following key characteristics of the sample are provided so that readers can determine how applicable the survey results are to their campus employer base.

Company Size

Average size (all respondents)	8,230
Very small 1-8 Employees	10%
Fast-growth 9-100 Employees	34%
Small 101-500 Employees	23%
Midsize 501-4,000 Employees	18%
Large > 4,001	16%

Key Economic Sectors

Professional and Scientific Services	21%
Manufacturing	14%
Nonprofit Organizations	10%
Education	9%
Finance and Insurance	8%
Government	7%
Retail	5%
Health and Social Assistance	5%

Key States

Colorado	6%
California	5%
Wisconsin	5%
Ohio	4%
Illinois	4%
Michigan	4%
Florida, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, New York, Pennsylvania, Texas	3%

Active Recruiting by Region

Global Recruiting	4%
U.S. Recruiting	23%
Northeast	7%
Mid-Atlantic	9%
Great Lakes	16%
Upper Plains	10%
Southeast	10%
South-Central	8%
Southwest	8%
Northwest	5%

Active Recruiting by Institution

Two-year colleges	19%
Four-year public colleges and universities	59%
Four-year private colleges and universities	47%
For-profit education institutions	9%
Advanced degree institutions	32%
Historically Black colleges and universities	11%
Hispanic-serving institutions	8%

THE STATE OF HIRING, 2011-2012

Economic fluctuations still affect hiring.

Last fall, you may recall, the college-recruiting season was ablaze with activity and confidence. After a slow summer, the fall job reports, a small increase in consumer spending, and advanced manufacturing orders provided confidence that the economy was getting back on track. Two months later wine had turned to vinegar as the economy soured for the next ten months. This fall seems like a replay with more positive job reports for September and October, a surge in consumer spending, and a calming of the European financial crisis. On visits to most campus career fairs this fall, the venues were packed; employers were eagerly engaging with college students. However, the enthusiasm was more tempered than last year, an attitude consistent with other labor market reports that have been forecasting more cautious optimism.

Office Depot's Small Business Index revealed a higher level of uncertainty among small employers with only 42 percent expecting growth in the near future (a 16% decrease from last year). Because of this uncertainty, 79 percent do not expect to add staff in the near future.

Manpower Employment Outlook for the third quarter reveals a "positive but careful" outlook. The labor market should make modest, positive gains during the next few quarters as "the demand for labor trumps economic uncertainty." In fact Manpower warns employers against waiting for the right talent to arrive when it is time to hire.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) provides monthly updates for nonfarm employment statistics by economic sector at the end of each month. Reports from 2011 do not bear witness to strong gains in new positions except during the past two months. Professional job growth has appeared modest despite the trends. In the following key sectors

- **Retail** has grown consistently. Motor vehicle dealers, food and beverage stores, general merchandise stores, and building materials are leading this sector. Clothing

stores have increased staffing significantly over the past three months.

- **Professional Services** reports consistent gains each month. Computer design is driving this sector. Accounting and management consulting continue to add staff. Demand for legal services still appears to be shrinking though the decline appears to be slowing down.
- **Health Services** have shown strong growth this year, up nearly 43 percent over the past three months. Although these gains are being boosted by more hiring at hospitals, social assistance programs have reduced their staff.
- **Manufacturing**, after impressive gains in 2010, increased hiring much more slowly this year. Year over year, however, was positive. Leading sectors include food, primary metals, fabricated metals, machinery, and electrical.

The BLS U-6 Report, a broader measure of unemployment, is rarely published for the public. The statistics include discouraged workers who have quit looking for work and those who work half time but desire full-time employment. These numbers remain stubbornly high, ranging between 16-20 percent depending on the reporting period. The U-6 report provides a sense of how difficult the situation may be for our recent graduates and experienced alumni who are seeking work or are misaligned with the workplace.

Other sources you might want to keep an eye on include

Moody's Analytics Job Forecast

Shadow Government Statistics
(for data seldom reported or massaged for political purposes)

Global Creativity Index

EMPLOYER OUTLOOK ON THE LABOR MARKET

Employers are more optimistic about the college labor market than at any time since 2007.

How do employers hiring new college talent this year view the labor market? This report focuses on responses from (1) 3,700 employers hiring for full-time positions who provided information on their hiring intentions and (2) intern and co-op managers who responded to specific questions about their programs. Our effort to collect information from employers was facilitated by more than 150 colleges and universities around the country who contacted employers and personally asked them to participate in the survey. These valuable partnerships have gathered a large, geographically broad, and diverse mix of employers tapping colleges and universities for talent.

Employers are now more optimistic about the college labor market than at any time since 2007. Overall employers rated the market at nearly 2.4, a rise of four-tenths over the year (fig. 1). In most cases employers are even more optimistic about their own sectors (fig. 2).

The United States is still looking for positive, sustained economic news. The signs suggest we may witness modest improvement. With consumers tentative about future spending (dipping into savings for purchases made during the past several months), the economy will continue to sputter. With a new election cycle starting we can expect a lot of rhetoric but probably little action that will result in incentives to invest in innovative small companies where most of our job growth will materialize. Students approaching graduation may finally be able to play their baby-boomer card: some companies face a precipice unless they begin hiring workers to replace those retiring (hence the Manpower prediction). Still the accelerating loss of state and local government jobs and K-12 education positions will give all of us a sober reminder that we are nowhere near getting the economy back on track.

SURVEY RESPONDENTS	
Hiring full-time employees	4,300
Internship and co-op programs	800
Hiring short-term season and project staff	400
Seeking experienced talent	860

Figure 1. Employer perceptions of the strength of the college labor market in their sector

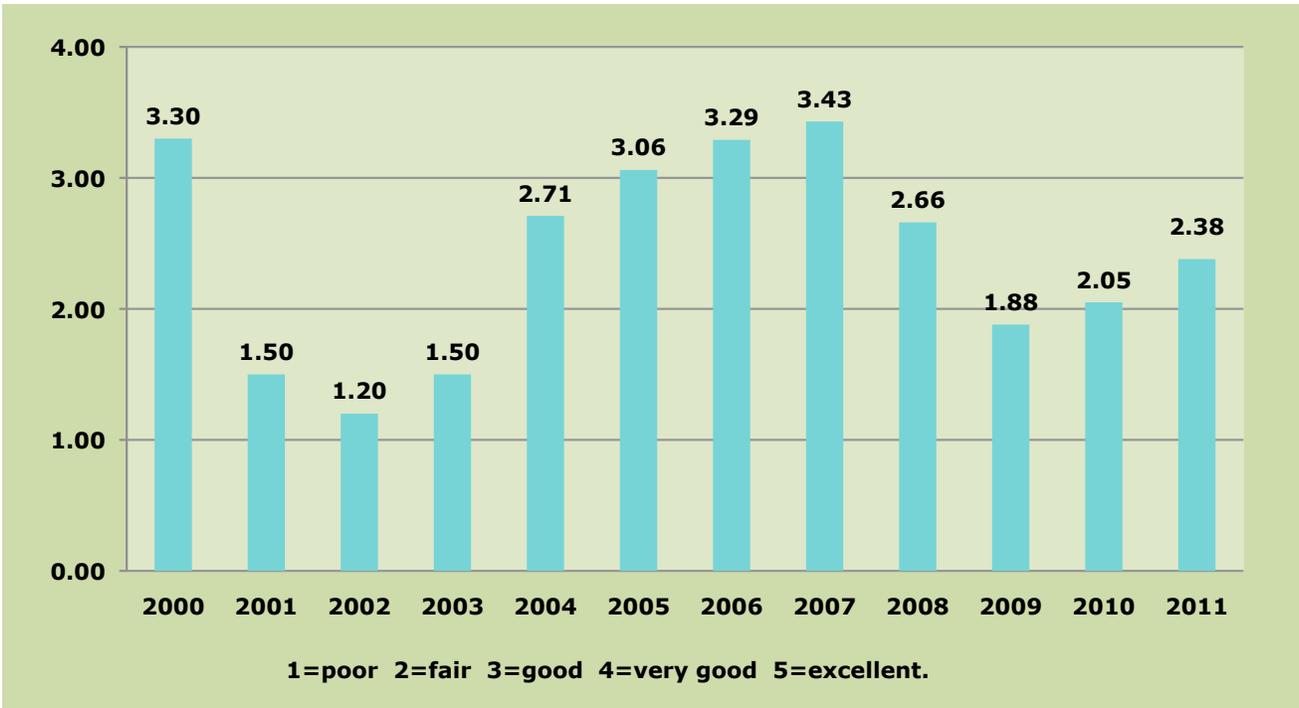
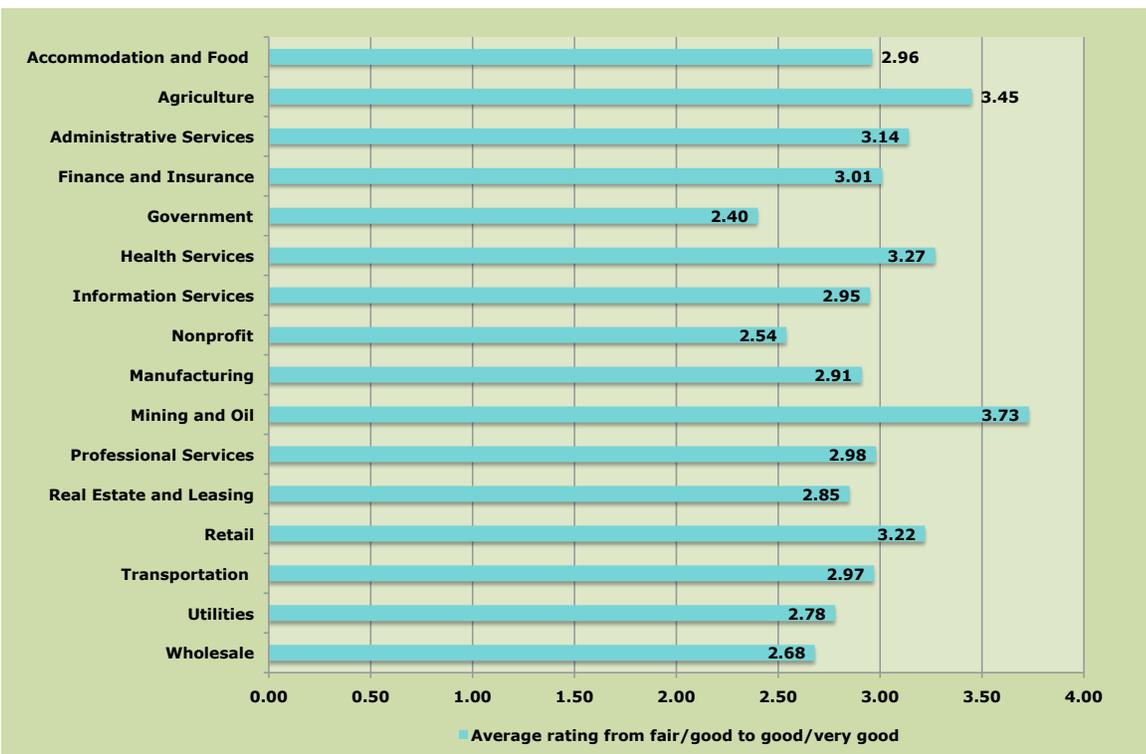


Figure 2. Employer perceptions of the strength of their economic sector



EMPLOYER HIRING INTENTIONS

Employers are less uncertain about committing to hiring targets.

Forty-two percent of employers reported they had definite plans to hire college graduates during the 2010-2011 academic year. This figure is 10 percentage points higher than last year and approaches the high of 47 percent in 2007. Approximately 20 percent of employers have made preliminary hiring targets for the next year that include new college graduates. An additional 29 percent (a drop of 6%) have entered the recruiting season uncertain about hiring intentions as they monitor uncertainty in the economy. Only 8 percent of employers indicated they would not be hiring this year, a noticeable drop from last year.

Comparing the intentions of employers who hired new graduates last year (78%) to those who did not (22%) revealed that uncertainty has ebbed somewhat for both groups (fig. 3-4). Several interesting observations emerged

- Employers who hired are more confident that they will definitely hire (51%) than those who did not (12%).
- Both groups demonstrated uncertainty; however, the level dropped 6 percentage points for those hiring (25%) and remained relatively the same in group not hiring (41%).

- A small segment of employers who did not hire last year will not hire this year (24%), a slight reduction from last year (32%).

DIRECTION OF HIRING PLANS

Even with the increase in employers hiring this year, we cannot assume employers will be increasing their hires over last year. Across all degree levels, approximately 31-46 percent of employers apparently will be increasing their hiring targets from last year. Those employers decreasing their hiring targets remains at slightly more than one-third of employers hiring at each degree level.

HIRING BY DEGREE LEVEL SHOWS MIXED RESULTS.

At the bachelor's degree level employers increasing hires exceeded those not hiring by 16 percent (fig. 5). The MBA and Master's degree markets are both split again this year with slightly more employers decreasing their hiring. The labor situation for Associate's degree holders and Ph.D.s shows that a few more employers will increase hiring than decrease hiring.

Figure 3. Hiring intentions of employers who hired last year

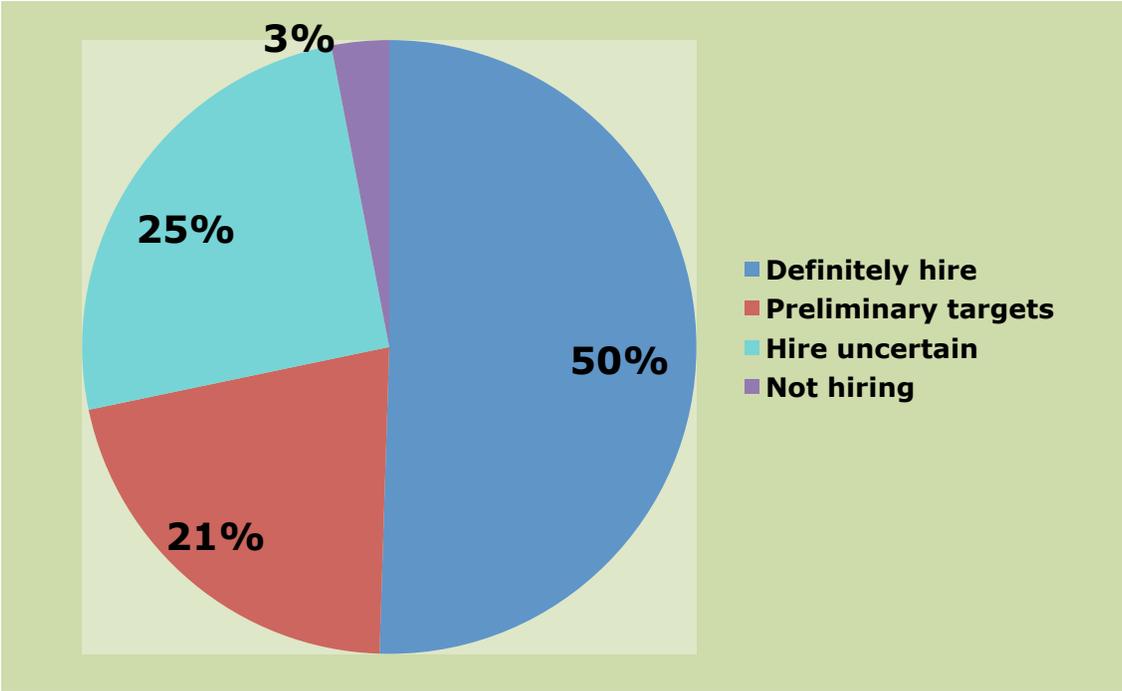
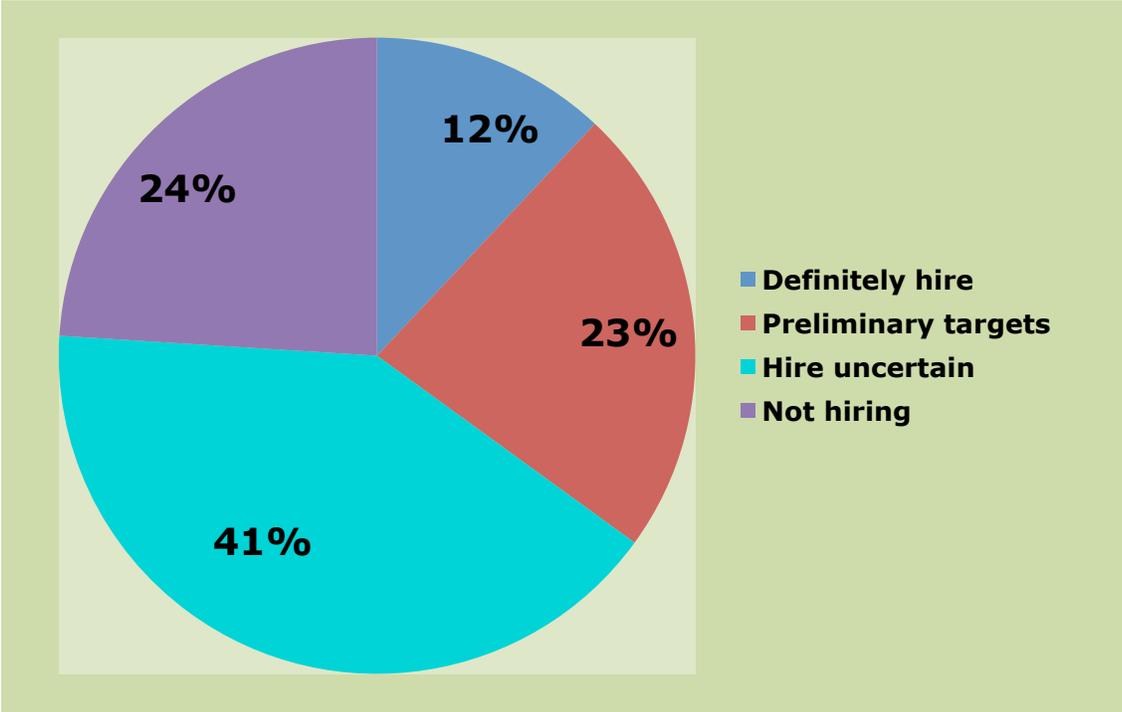
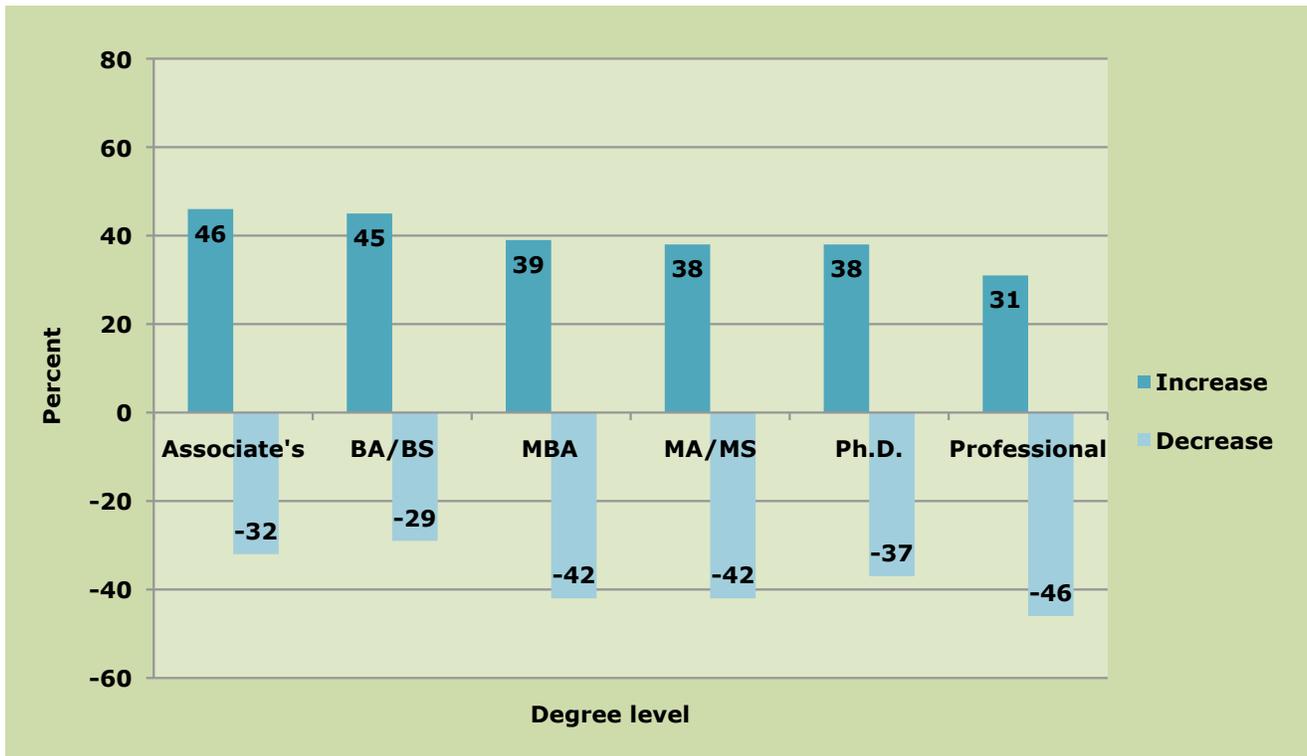


Figure 4. Hiring intentions of employers who did not hire last year



Only 8% of employers indicated they would not be hiring this year, a noticeable drop from last year.

Figure 5. Employer increases or decreases in hiring, 2011-2012



COLLEGE HIRING

Hiring targets for Bachelor's degree holders are expanding moderately.

Approximately 3,231 employers provided complete hiring information for the analyses in this report. These companies represent 106,000 job opportunities across all degree levels. (Nearly 79,000 or 74% of the total estimated hires are at the Bachelor's degree level). Overall, the college labor market is expanding at a very modest 4 percent from last year. This market has more moderate expectations, especially at the Bachelor's degree level, than the more exuberant market of last year. Bachelor's degree holders and MBAs will both experience a 5-7 percent increase this year while Associate's degree and Master's degree holders will remain relatively constant at last year's level. Employment opportunities for advanced degree candidates appear to be expanding this year (table 1).

Hiring for Bachelor's degree holders is moderate but still aggressive. Last year the labor market for these graduates was jerked into life by a group of large and small organizations that dramatically increased their hiring targets. This year the market better reflects the middle of the distribution: 26 percent will keep hiring at the same level as last year. Twenty-seven percent will add one or two staff; 17 percent will decrease their hiring targets by one or two positions. The ends do play an important role this year: they nearly balance each other in gains and losses of positions.

In other words, organizations expecting to hire a large number of new employees are being offset by organizations lowering their targets or suspending recruiting this year.

Hiring for MBAs is bifurcated. Slightly more employers are reducing their hiring targets (42%) than those planning to increase theirs (39%). Despite this imbalance, the total available positions for MBAs will be 6 percent higher this year. This marks the third straight year of steady expansion in opportunities. Yet, keep in mind that the supply of new MBAs exceeds the number of available positions and will keep competition fierce.

While total hires per organization (across all degree levels) appeared to hit the projected targets made in the 2010-2011 report (33 hires per company), the average hires per company at the Bachelor's degree and MBA levels fell slightly short of our prediction. This year's targets are comparable to last year's and are expected to remain unchanged, with the Bachelor's degree level at 26 and MBAs at 8.

Though companies are hiring and adding positions to their payroll, the pace of hiring and number of positions have changed somewhat from last year. Comparing projections and actual hiring information, interesting patterns emerge among companies' hiring patterns (table 2).



Hiring for BA/BS degrees is expected to increase by 7%.

Table 1. Comparison of college hiring between 2011 and 2012 (all respondents)

Degree	Number of employers	Average number of hires (2011)	Average expected hires (2012)	Change year over year (%)
Associate's	884	10.8	10.8	No change
Bachelor's	3,020	24.5	26.2	6.9
MBA	791	6.2	6.6	6.4
MA/MS	1,007	8.7	8.6	-1.0
Ph.D.	321	6.6	7.4	12.0
Professional	222	6.6	7.3	11.0
Total	3,231	31.5	32.8	4.0

Table 2. Hiring patterns for 2011

Degree	Hiring target	Number of positions	Increase or decrease (%)
Bachelor's	Increasing	29	39
	No change	32	n.a.
	Decreasing	16	-33
MBA	Increasing	9	100
	No change	11	n.a.
	Decreasing	3	-58
MA/MS	Increasing	13	70
	No change	7	n.a.
	Decreasing	5	-48
n.a. not applicable			

HIRING BY COMPANY SIZE

Despite economic conditions, companies appear to have put out the welcome mat for college-educated workers.

This report always strives to obtain a diverse sample of employers based on company size. For the last few years we have stressed the importance of fast-growth or second-stage companies that have successfully emerged from the start-up phase and are accelerating hiring. With the expansion of schools assisting with this project we are capturing start-up activity that particularly influences hiring at the advanced degree level. These smaller companies are balanced by medium and large ones typically more visible on campus during recruiting season.

Despite economic conditions organizations seeking college-trained employees appear to have put out the welcome mat. There are a few troubling signs, however. Small companies still struggle as shown in the Office Depot index. Midsize organizations are still contracting, but job loss appears to be bottoming out for some for-profit companies (second- and third-tier suppliers). With the loss of stimulus funds local and state agencies and public education have had to decrease their staffing. This decrease has offset the gains being made by midsize for-profit companies. Based on comparisons of projected hires and actual hiring figures, the following synopses describe the situation for each type of organization (fig. 6).

Very small establishments (< 8 employees) capture small single-proprietor establishments (e.g., insurance agency, law firm, public relations firm, or consulting business) and start-up companies. These establishments expect to increase their hiring across all degree levels. Total hires will increase on average from 1.1 hires last year to 4.5 hires this year. Most of this hiring will take place at the Bachelor's degree level with strong increases at the Associate's degree and Ph.D. levels.

Fast-growth (second-stage) companies (9-100 employees) have consistently been top performers over the past ten years and represent 34 percent of respondents. While not

all companies in this segment can be considered fast-growth, hiring expectations are positive across all degree levels except in Professional Services. These organizations will hire on average 7 individuals, a 35 percent increase over last year. More specifically, companies plan to increase hiring by 19 percent at the Bachelor's degree level and 54 percent at the Ph.D. level.

Small companies (101-500 employees) appear to be slightly improving their hiring though it can be described as cautious. Hiring increases are expected at the Bachelor's and Master's degree levels and for MBAs while targets will be lower for other degrees. These companies expect to hire on average 11 individuals this year, essentially no change from last year.

Midsize companies (501-3,999 employees) still struggle with economic challenges. Even though they will be hiring on average 43 individuals, this represents a 3 percent decline from last year. Hiring for Bachelor's degree holders and MBAs are both projected to be down 3 percent. Hiring will improve slightly for Ph.D. and Professional degree holders.

Large companies (>4,000 employees) will increase total hiring by 6 percent, a continuation of the modest growth in hiring begun last year. Average hires per company will be on average 123, about 11 fewer hires than last year. While hiring will improve across all degree levels, the exception will be Master's' degree holders, whose hiring prospects are expected to drop by 6 percent. Most hiring is concentrated at the Bachelor's degree level and will increase by 9 percent. However, these companies only expect to hire on average 97 individuals compared to the 103 projected last year. (Companies reported actually hiring 89 Bachelor's degree holders last year.) After enjoying a strong gain (up 13%) in positions last year, MBA degree holders will have to deal with only a 1 percent increase this year.

[Fast-growth companies will increase hiring for BA/BS degrees by 19% and Ph.D. degrees by 54%.]

The decline in Master’s degree level opportunities reverses the gains made last year.

Figure 7 represents the year-over-year hiring projections by organization size. To accommodate historical data company survey returns are separated into quartiles. Large companies experience slow to moderate growth or decline

consistently over the past decade. Smaller companies are more volatile but tend to consistently provide opportunities for Bachelor’s degree holders. The chart also illustrates how weak the Bachelor’s degree labor market has been for much of the decade, despite the growth in opportunities between 2004 and 2007.

Figure 6. Employer hiring intentions by company size and degree level

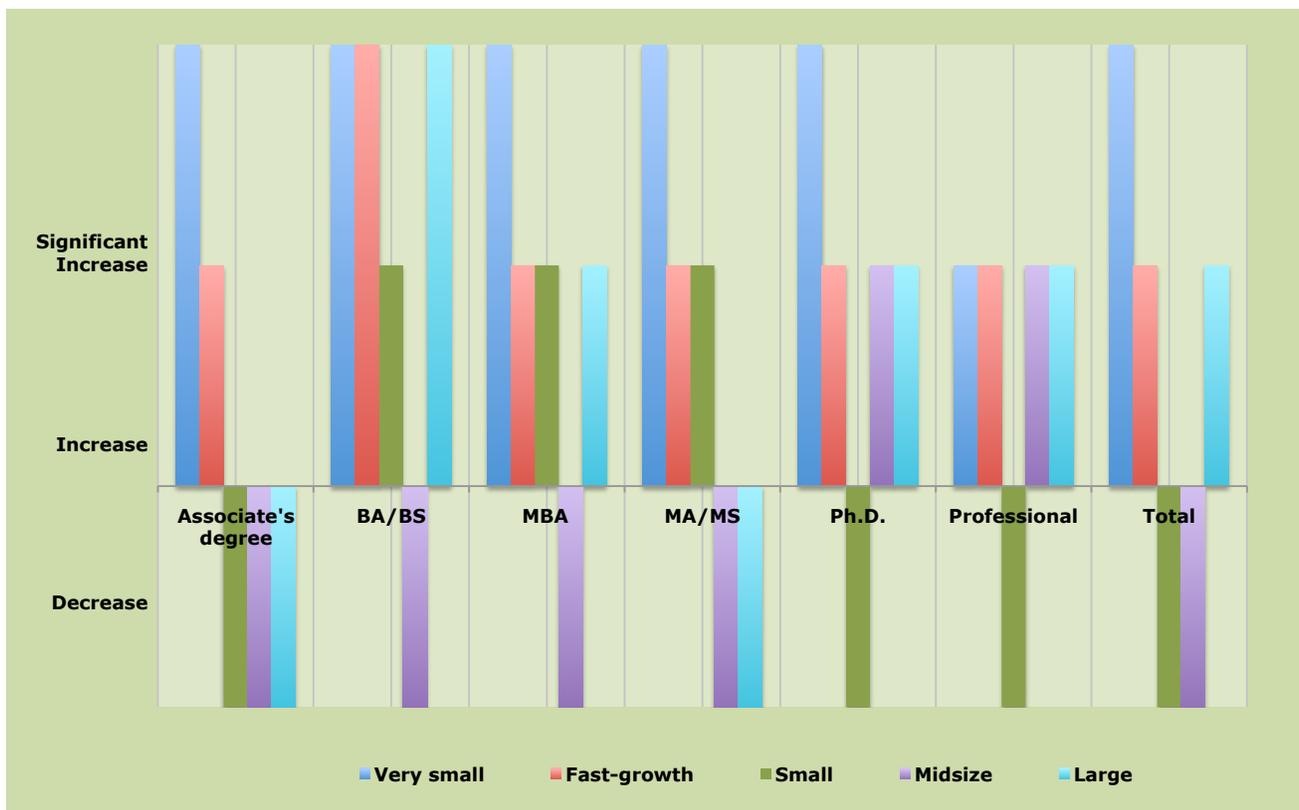
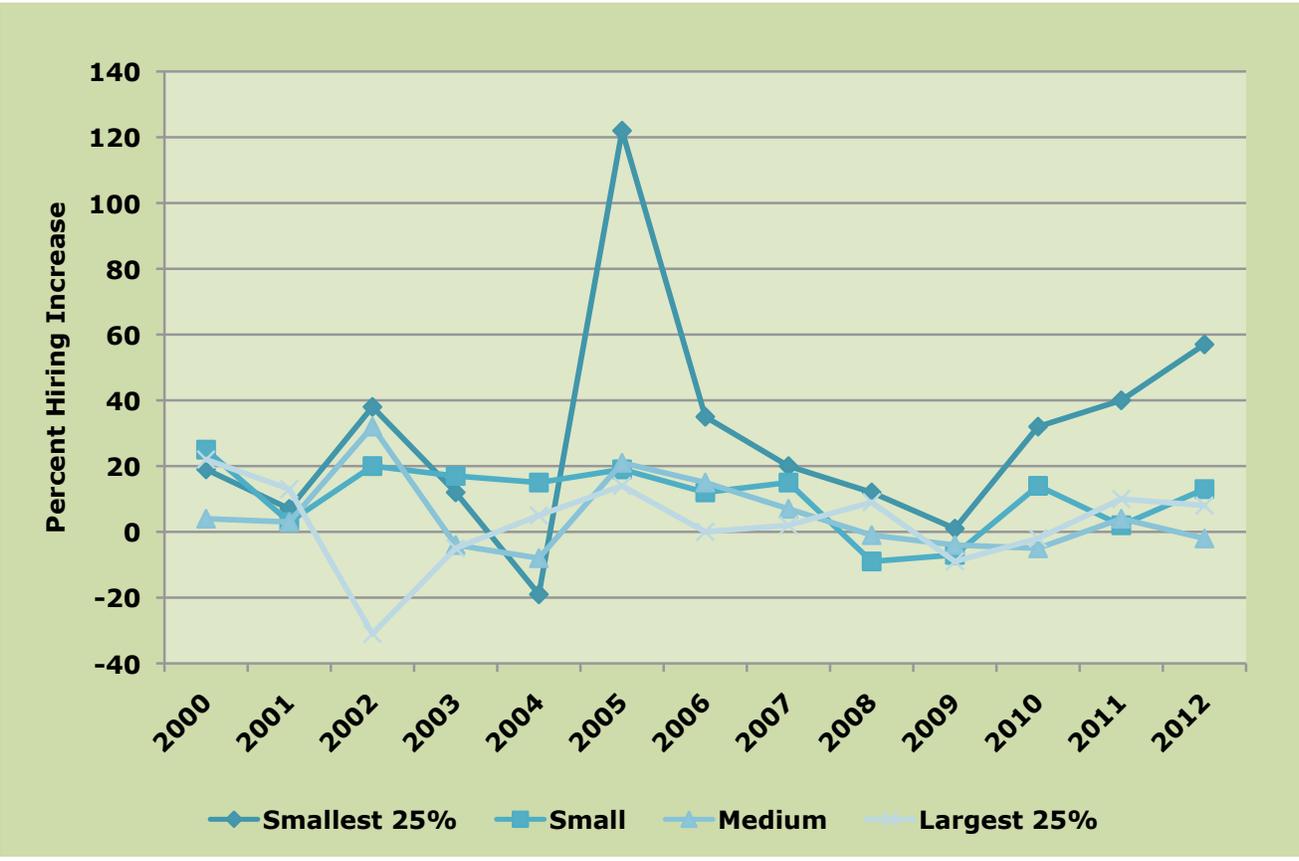


Figure. 7 Year-over-year hiring projections by company size, 2000-2012



HIRING BY ACADEMIC MAJOR

Available positions still fall short of supply.

Though hiring trends may appear to be favoring engineering, computer science, accounting, and other selected business majors, other majors are faring well. Employers seeking agriculture and science graduates are reporting some of the strongest growth. Slightly more than one-third of employers remain committed to selecting talent from all academic majors for open positions. While growth for other majors may be more modest, more opportunities will be present this year. Competition will remain strong, however, because available positions for many majors fall short of the supply of graduates leaving college.

This year we captured new data pertaining to academic majors (table 3). The new data allow us to determine the types of majors that internship/co-op hiring managers will be seeking for their talent pools and identify employers seeking specific majors from one discipline. For example, this year 19 percent of employers seeking only business majors are targeting these graduates. Similarly, 24 percent of employers seeking engineers are doing the same.

Several themes emerge from the review of requests for specific academic majors and employer hiring intentions

- Employers emphasize fit; in other words they seek candidates who have the skill package best suited for the company and are willing to look broadly for this talent.
- Employers place a lot of caché on a candidate's flexibility. In other words, candidates willing to take on new assignments, shift to another job, adjust work to suit client or project requirements, or travel have an edge over their competitors.
- Employers are seeking engineering, computer science, selected science, accounting and finance majors. This solid growth in opportunities is typical of a sound labor market.

- Employers are demonstrating slightly greater demand for academic training that bolsters their company's Internet presence and maximizes marketing, sales, and branding efforts.
- Employers still seek entrepreneurial acumen and creativity. Demand is steady but not as strong as the past two years.

Most Requested Majors for Bachelor's Degree Holders

All Majors
Accounting
Finance
Marketing
Computer Science
Programming
Management Info. Systems
Computer Info. Systems
Electrical Engineering
Economics
Human Resources
Information Systems
Communications
Public Relations
Mathematics



Slightly more than 36% of employers will select talent from all academic majors.



- Employers in service-oriented companies now bring a broader perspective to what defines a quality candidate. They seek candidates who have a blend of technical and soft skills (now referred to as “boundary crossing”).
- Employers will be seeking a broad mix of majors for their internship/co-op talent pool.

The figures and discipline descriptions in table 4 must be interpreted a little differently from other sections. Respondents were asked to identify all the academic majors they actively seek this year — a list with more than 110 majors organized under four broad categories (business, technical, liberal arts and sciences, and health). The change in hiring percentages does not reflect the change in hiring for a specific major. Rather, it reflects the overall hiring for the companies seeking a particular major. Each major can have a different mix of possible employers, which leads to

widely different percentage changes within a disciplinary field. Information in this section suggests trends rather than actual numbers being hired. For example, companies seeking Bachelor’s degree holders in computer science intend to increase hiring by 7 percent (averaging 44 hires per organization), of which 66 percent have fewer than 500 employees.

The respondents from each industry and subsector reported an increase in hiring this year for Bachelor’s degree holders (table 5). In social services, the terminal degree for many jobs is a Master’s degree, but hiring is still increasing for Bachelor’s degree holders. In primary and secondary education, schools are unable to project their hiring needs until near the end of an academic year. The data for these subsectors therefore serve as proxies for hiring intentions.

Table 3. Employers targeting specific academic majors

Major	Seeking 100%	Seeking 76-99%	Seeking 51-75%	Seeking 26-50%	Seeking 1-25%
Agriculture and Natural Resources	13%	54%	16%	7%	9%
Business	19%	8%	10%	23%	40%
Computer Science	9%	5%	5%	19%	61%
Education	23%	12%	6%	13%	46%
Engineering	24%	14%	14%	20%	27%
Health	16%	8%	8%	8%	53%
Humanities	7%	5%	5%	26%	59%
Science	8%	2%	4%	16%	75%
Social Sciences	10%	4%	7%	22%	57%

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Table 4. Full-time employers and intern/co-op managers seeking majors, by academic discipline and organization size

BA/BS	Employers seeking (#)	Intern managers seeking (%)	Actively seeking full-time (%)	Hires per company (%)	Change 2011-2012 (%)	Employ <500 (%)	Employ >500 (%)
All Majors	1,705	40	37	32	8	69	31
All Technical	1,246	23	27	21	6	60	40
All Business	1,182	26	26	31	6	63	37
All Liberal Arts	586	18	12	32	4	75	25
Agricultural and Natural Resources	719	18	16	41	9	59	41
Business (specific majors)	2,233	52	50	33	6	62	38
Computer Science (specific majors)	1,308	43	26	43	7	66	34
Communications	1,642	36	37	32	7	61	39
Education	519	10	12	57	NC	71	29
Engineering (specific majors)	1,634	32	38	30	9	57	43
Health	526	11	12	54	4	62	39
Humanities and Social Science	1,175	36	24	38	4	70	30
Science	892	19	20	46	9	57	43
Social Services	562	15	12	56	1	70	30

Table 5. Hiring for Bachelor’s degree holders by industry and subsector

Subsector	Employ > 500 (%)	Hiring increase (%)	Jobs per company (average #)
Agriculture and Natural Resources	41	9	
Agribusiness		9	85
Plant and Crop Sciences		7	110
Food Safety		17	72
Fisheries and Wildlife		2	96
Environmental Sciences		5	60
Agriculture, Food, and Environmental Sustainability		7	94
Humanities (Arts and Letters)	70	4	
English		7	57
Performing and Visual Arts		7	55
History		7	54
Criminal Justice		11	55
Political Science		6	50
Psychology		11	42
International Relations		12	49
Business	62	6	
Accounting		4	33
Finance		3	36
Supply Chain		11	45
Marketing		8	87
Human Resources		12	55
E-commerce		7	86
Communications	61	7	
Advertising		16	33
Public Relations		11	34
Telecommunications/Broadcasting		1	43
Computer Sciences	66	7	
Computer Science		7	37
Programming		1	38
Information Systems		12	39
Multimedia Design/Web Design		9	40

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Table 5. Continued

Subsector	Employ > 500 (%)	Hiring increase (%)	Jobs per company (average #)
Engineering	43	9	
Bio-systems		7	93
Chemical		13	64
Civil		13	55
Computer		5	59
Electrical		9	42
Mechanical		9	43
Physical and Biological Sciences	43	9	
Biology		14	88
Chemistry		11	73
Mathematics		8	74
Statistics		14	78
Actuarial		3	125
Environmental Science		7	73
Health Sciences	62	4	
Nursing		1	68
Clinical Laboratory Science/Medical Technician		5	117
Administration		3	106
Food Science/Dietetics		1	134
Therapy		2	78
Social Services	70	1	
Family and Community Services		2	79
Primary and Secondary Education	71		
Elementary		-9	80
Middle School Math and Science		1	81
High School Math and Science		No change	75

HIRING BY INDUSTRY

Professional Services opportunities are expanding for the second year in a row.

The BLS monthly report, The Employment Situation, captures the growth in new positions by firms and establishments across the United States. Several sectors have already been highlighted for their year-over-year performance. Classifying respondents by their North American Industrial Classification codes, comparisons can be made between actual labor market behavior and job forecasts from the survey respondents. It is important to remember that the new college labor market is a small sliver of the national labor market. The college market can be trending in a different direction in some sectors than the national figures might suggest should be happening.

The BLS jobs figures continue to portray sluggish job growth. Periods of solid (not spectacular) growth are followed by periods during which employers are adding few jobs. This cycle has been repeating for much of the past twenty-four months. Fall projections for September and October have turned upward again and reflect the level of jobs anticipated when the economy is growing between 2-3 percent of GDP. Our picture continues to show the college labor market actually expanding across most sectors (although some sectors have a small number of respondents). In our leading sectors of Manufacturing, Retail, Finance, Professional Services, and Health, only Manufacturing has slipped from last year's strong expansion. Concern remains for Government, Education, and Construction, which have lost opportunities this year.

Several forces are motivating employers to hire college students. Among the smaller group, a core segment actually creates new positions as business expands. For larger companies, the reasonable explanation continues to be that most positions these employers are attempting to fill have been unfilled for some time. With baby boomers finally beginning to retire, employers can no longer delay hiring if they expect to maintain a seamless workforce.

HIRING CHANGES IN KEY ECONOMIC SECTORS

Most sectors are continuing to strengthen. Problems do exist but the overall outlook is good for most sectors. In reviewing these summaries, it is important to keep in mind that some sectors only had a small number of survey respondents (e.g., Agricultural Production, Mining and Oil, Utilities, Entertainment, and Hospitality), making broad generalizations difficult. Other sectors are well represented (e.g., Professional Services, Manufacturing, Financial Services, Nonprofits, Education, Health, and Government).

Key Economic Subsectors

IT/Service	+14
Engineering Services	+8
Accounting	+2
Advertising, Public Relations, and Marketing	+3
Insurance	+7
Financial services	+6
Hospitals	+6
Food Processing	+14
Chemical Manufacturing	+16
Machinery	+21

Construction is enjoying a modest rebound: total hiring is expected to be up 4% over last year.

Agriculture and Natural Resources. Production Agriculture, Forestry, and their support-services companies expect to hire 15 Bachelor's degree holders this year, a 40 percent increase over actual hiring last year. When combining this figure with Food Processing, the picture for the food sector (broadly defined) is very positive.

Mining and Oil. Energy Exploration continues to be a growth sector. These companies expect to hire on average 19 Bachelor's degree holders this year, an increase of 7 percent.

Utilities. Total hiring in the utilities sector is expected to be up slightly from last year. Hiring for Bachelor's degree holders is expected to be the same as last year, averaging 9 per company.

Construction. Construction is enjoying a modest rebound with total hiring expected to be up 4 percent over last year. Hiring for Bachelor's degree holders will improve by 6 percent, averaging 16 hires per company. Companies in this sector represent nonresidential building, heavy (civil engineering) construction, and specialty trade contractors.

Manufacturing. After teasing us last year with a strong increase in employment, manufacturing expectations are tempered this year as the economy faltered during much of 2012. This year companies expect on average 22 hires per company, of which 16 will be Bachelor's degree holders. Hiring at this degree level will be down 1 percent this year, essentially unchanged from last year. Several manufacturing sectors are performing well and others are contracting their targets (table 6).

Retail. Retail appears to be surging with three years of steady increases in hiring targets. Total hires are expected to improve by 15 percent, averaging 43 hires per company. Most of the hiring will occur at the Bachelor's degree level: hiring targets are up 25 percent and on average 36 hires per company are expected.

Transportation. Railroads, freight carriers, freight logistics support, and even the airlines will keep hiring positive for Bachelor's degree holders. A 20 percent increase in positions at this level is expected and on average 29 hires per company. Associate's degree holders should also expect opportunities to improve this year.

Information. This sweeping sector, which encompasses publishing, telecommunications, broadcasting, Internet service, and web content providers, often fluctuates in its hiring projections. Last year we expected a modest increase in opportunities. This year improvement will be even stronger with an anticipated 36 percent increase in opportunities across all degree levels. Hiring for Bachelor's degree holders is expected to increase by 23 percent, with bigger gains at the MBA and Master's degree levels.

Finance and Insurance. This sector continues to stir and shake. The banking sector expects on average 26 hires per

Increase or Decrease in BA/BS Hiring By Sector

Agriculture and Natural Resources	+76%
Mining and Oil	+7%
Utilities	+1%
Construction	+7%
Manufacturing	-2%
Wholesale	+12%
Retail	+25%
Transportation	+20%
Information	+23%
Finance and Insurance	+8%
Leasing and Real Estate	+9%
Professional Services	+5%
Administrative Services	+22%
Education	-1%
Entertainment And Arts	>99%
Hospitality	+13%
Nonprofit Organization	+3%
Government	+4%

Table 6. Hiring in manufacturing subsectors, 2011-2012

Sector	Change in BA/BS hiring (%)	Hires per company (average)
Food Processing	14	14
Printing and Related Activities	30	58
Chemical	16	21
Primary Metals	19	23
Machinery	21	16
All Other Manufacturing	5	14
Computer and Electronic	-32	21
Electrical Equipment	-19	15
Aircraft	-33	28
Fabricated Metals	-11	2
Surgical Equipment	-22	4

company. After several years of contraction the banking segment will increase hires by 4 percent this year. However, MBA hiring among banks continues to trend down. Other segments of this sector also expect to expand opportunities: credit intermediation will increase hiring by 34 percent; mortgage and nonmortgage loan brokerage, 9 percent; financial services, 6 percent; and insurance, 7 percent.

Professional Services. The most important sector for college hiring encompasses accounting, engineering services, computer services, management consulting, scientific research, advertising, and marketing services, to name a few subsectors. This sector often portends the overall labor market for new graduates in any given year. This year total hires will be down slightly, averaging 17 per company (table 7). At the Bachelor's degree level, hiring is expected to grow by 6 percent (averaging 12 hires per company) while advanced degree holders will experience a decline in opportunities. Hiring for MBAs, however, will remain the same as last year.

Education. Education is always difficult to predict at this time of year because most secondary schools will not know their hiring needs until next spring. We received a strong response from school districts and additional representation from education-delivery organizations (tutoring and education consulting). Education organizations expect to hire 69 individuals on average across all degree levels. At

this time respondents indicated that positions for Bachelor's degree holders will be down slightly from the number they hired for this fall.

Health. The health services sector seems to be perking up. For several years health organizations have reined in hiring. This year they expect to make a total hire of 55 individuals (up 11%) per organization across all degree levels. This increase is being led by a 22 percent improvement in hiring for Bachelor's degree holders and improvement at the Ph.D. and Professional degree levels. While hiring at the Master's degree level will remain the same, hiring for MBAs is expected to fall by 23 percent and for Associate's degree holders by 5 percent.

Nonprofit Organizations (NPO). NPOs play an important role in college hiring. Responses from this sector ranked third among all sectors (10% of the total response). Despite the troubled economy, NPOs remain resilient at least for hiring at the Bachelor's degree level, which is expected to increase by 3 percent. Total hiring in this sector, however, will remain at last year's target at the Associate's degree, Master's degree and Ph.D. levels. MBAs will enjoy a slight increase in opportunities.

Government. Overall government hiring will be down 3 percent across all degree levels with the largest declines being reported by state and local agencies and offices. Hiring among federal agencies has minimized the job loss in this

Hiring in Health is up 11% per organization across all degree levels.

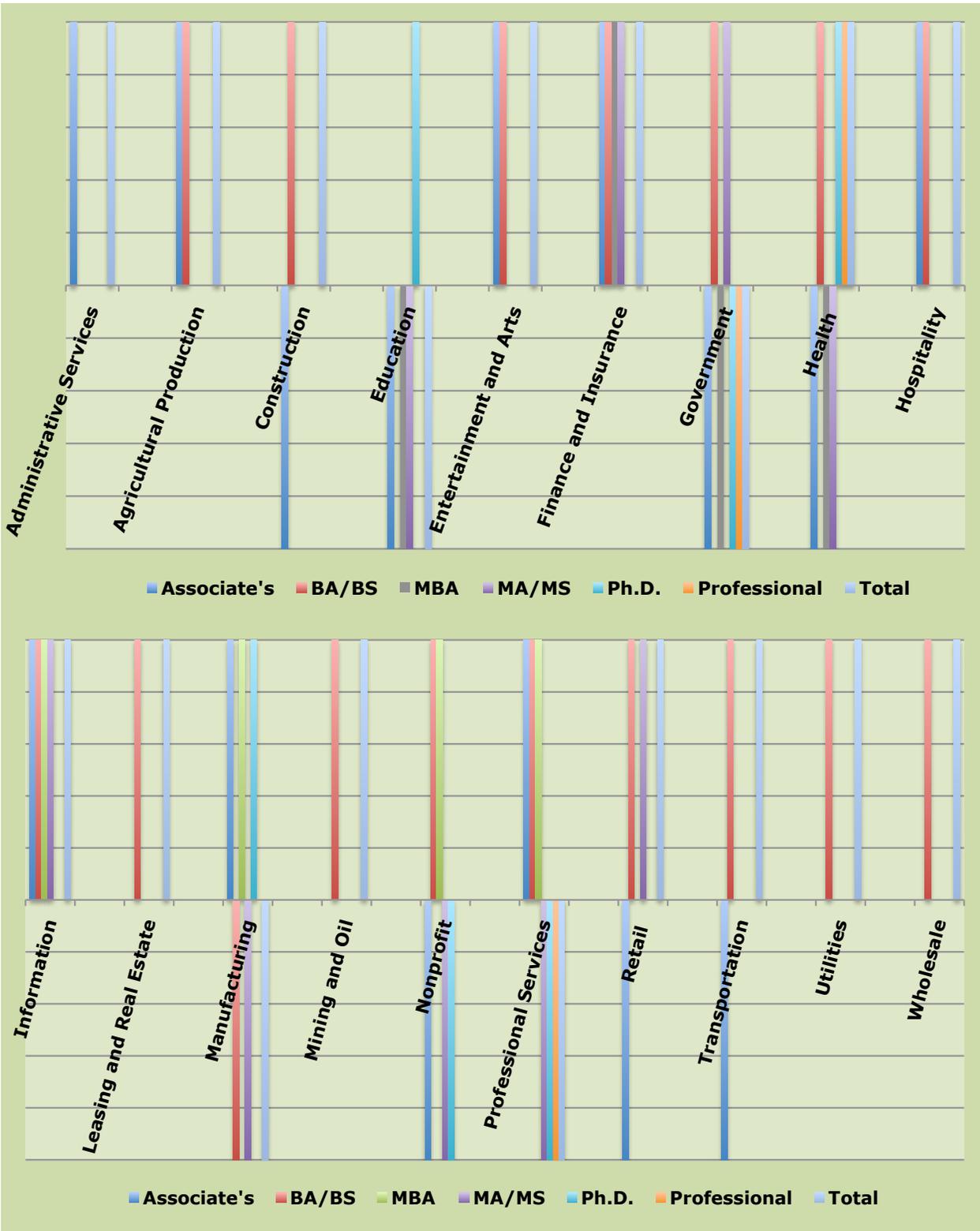
sector as many key agencies are still hiring. Average total hires are expected to be 112 individuals per organization. Hiring at the Bachelor’s degree level is expected to increase by 4 percent with 85 hires on average per company. Except for Master’s degree holders (up 21%), other degrees are expected to be in less demand this year.

Several sectors with small response rates also expect improvement in hiring (fig. 8). Entertainment and Arts report an increase in total hires of 41 percent, averaging 43 hires per organization. Food and Lodging is also reporting a gain of 13 percent in total hires this year with organizations recruiting 17 hires per company.

Table 7. Hiring in professional services by subsector

Subsector	Change in hiring (%)	Hires per company (average per year)
Legal Services	-41 (BA) -23 (Law)	6 (BA) 4 (Law)
Accounting (CPA Firms)	2	24
Engineering Services	8	9
Design Services (Interior, Industrial, Graphic)	-35	5
Computer System Design and Services	14	11
Management Consulting	24	19
Scientific Research	-5	4
Other Scientific and Technical	16	23
Advertising, Public Relations, and Marketing	3	12
Marketing Research	50	11
All other Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	-12	8

Figure 8. Increase or decrease in hiring, 2011-2012



HIRING BY REGION

The Southern and Great Lakes regions will experience double-digit growth in job opportunities.

The college labor market, especially for Bachelor’s degree holders appears to be strengthening across the country (table 8, fig. 9-10). Corporations and companies that hire globally maintained the modest growth shown last year; however the average number of hires per company is down noticeably. Companies that recruit talent throughout the United States continue to improve hiring with a modest increase that also raises the average number of hires per company to 77. The best news is the improvement in

hiring for Bachelor’s degree holders throughout all the regions except the Northwest. The Southern regions will experience double-digit growth, along with the Great Lakes (its second year of double-digit growth). Average BA hires per company remained about the same except for a large jump in the Southeast. The Northwest is not as positive. With a much smaller representation of employers than the other regions, this result may not reflect the exact conditions throughout these states.

Table 8. Hiring prospects by region

Region	Hires per company (average)	Number of employers
Global	79	172
USA	77	703
Northeast	24	367
Mid-Atlantic	23	476
Great Lakes	19	812
Upper Plains	14	527
Southeast	37	494
South-Central	30	361
Southwest	22	975
Northwest	29	214

Figure 9. Regional change in hiring prospects, 2011-2012

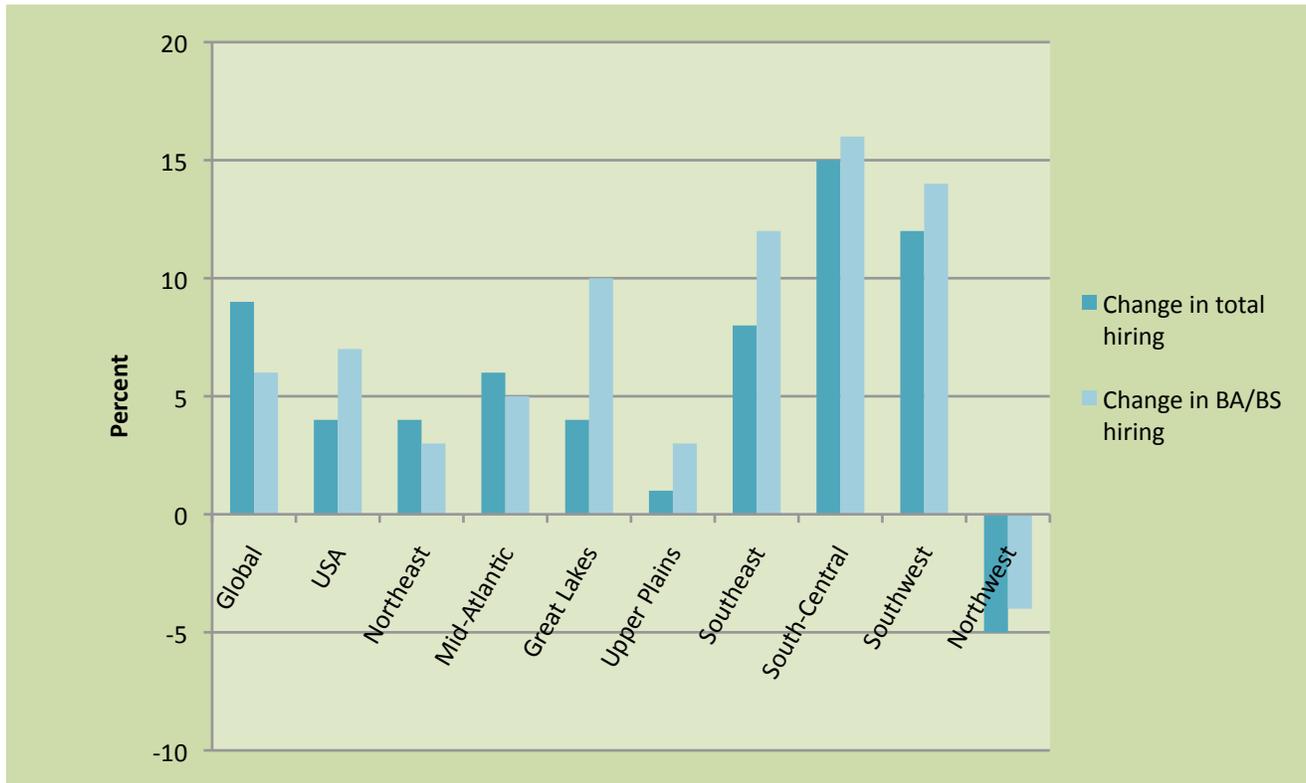
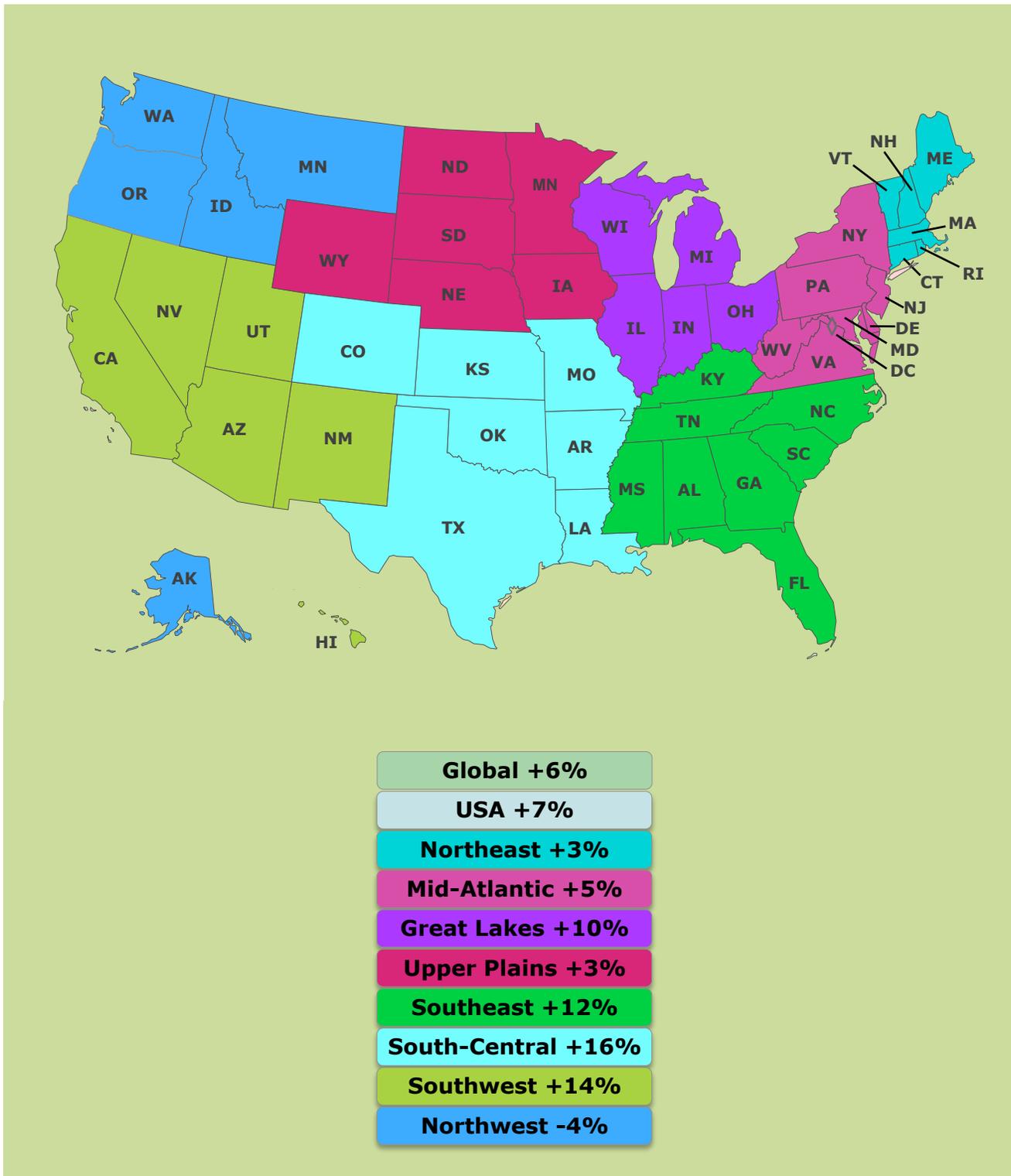


Figure 10. Hiring Prospects for BA/BSs by Region



RECRUITING STRATEGIES AND HIRING

Social media provide increasingly important tools for recruiters.

Multiple strategies are available for organizations to recruit talent. We gave respondents an expanded list of options, including alumni associations and alumni working for the organization, and asked them to indicate which strategies they use. Most use multiple methods: very small companies use an average of eight methods; large companies, ten methods. Comparing these results with the past several years revealed recruiting trends.

Internship programs emerge as the top strategy used by most employers (not including posting to college and organization web sites).

Social media is now used by 36 percent of employers (up 10% from last year), indicating we have left the early-adapter phase. Social media will soon be the core recruiting strategy as more organizations quickly adopt various media options.

Alumni working for a company are effective and important means for identifying and recruiting talent from their alma mater.

Career fairs appear to be the method of choice for quickly reengaging the college labor market if companies have been sitting on the sidelines the last several years.

Like last year, the change in hiring by recruiting strategy shows how one strategy or a group of strategies demonstrate a great degree of change (table 9). This year, however, the strategies cluster around the same rate of growth.

Last year these strategies clustered in four groups. By repeating the factor analysis with the expanded list, the results remained the same, but the associations were stronger. Recruiting strategies emerged from a comparison of the methods employers are using to find new talent.

Arranged Events (career and job fairs, interviews, campus information sessions). About 2,961 employers employ at least one of these methods. Medium and large Manufacturing, Professional Services, and Finance companies use these methods most often.

Agent Connections (faculty, alumni employees, other employees, internship programs). About 3,393 employers employ at least one of these methods. Fast-growth and large Professional Services companies use these methods most often.

Key Recruiting Strategy

Campus-oriented internships	66%
Career fairs	62%
Campus information visits	48%
Faculty	44%
Interviews	40%
Organization driven	
Alumni working for company	49%
Employee referral	44%
Social media	36%
External agents	
National job aggregator	50%
Advertisements	28%
Local and state job boards	26%

Table 9. Changes in recruiting strategies

Strategy	BA/BS hires per year	Change in hiring 2010-2011 (%)
Campus oriented		
Internship programs	28	7
Career fairs	39	6
Resume referral	33	7
Campus interviews	47	7
Faculty	38	6
Organization driven		
Alumni connections	39	5
Employee referral	33	7
Social media	38	7
External agents		
National web aggregates	26	5
Local/state job boards	37	8
Advertisements	39	8

Situational Methods (advertisements, consultants, local/state job boards) mainly accommodate small and midsize companies. Large companies generally eschew these methods.

Internet resources (campus recruiting, recruiter web sites, social media) are becoming ubiquitous. Nearly all companies use campus recruiting.

CHANGES IN RECRUITING TRENDS

While one recruiting method ascends in popularity, another descends. The challenge facing education institutions and recruiters is how to leverage new recruiting methods without making old ones obsolete.

Social media are rapidly expanding as key recruiting tools: a recruiter working with an iPad in hand is not unusual anymore. Social media permit recruiters to reach more students and remain in contact. The challenge for career-services offices is how to leverage social media so that college agents and the human resources agents can work together.

Career fairs are becoming most popular for companies trying to quickly regain presence in the college labor market. The telling relationship, however, is between the rapid growth of internships and career-fair participation. Does this relationship suggest that career services need to shift focus from the back-end (full-time hiring process) to the front-end (preparing students to engage professionally in internships)?

Internships have steadily increased over the last decade and are now the major source of talent for all organizations. The challenge for education institutions is to ensure that each internship meets academically rigorous standards and teaches students how to work and behave professionally. This institutional oversight means that both paid and unpaid internship programs and students will need scrutiny and require accountability so that programs and students meet established outcomes. A shift in this direction will affect the entire college-to-work transition currently in place.

The biggest asset a college or university has in the employment game today is its alumni. Companies are using alumni to target, court, and mentor talent. Few campuses seriously coordinate activities between alumni associations and career services because they each have competing, misaligned agendas. The challenge for education institutions is to include alumni willing to assist and mentor current students and work with career services to improve recruiting overall. By doing so, the institution gains from alumni who make a lifetime commitment to the institution's goals. This kind of collaboration raises an important question: are education institutions willing to invest the time and resources necessary for building these relationships so that recruiting services can improve?

Table 10. Recruiting by type of education institution

Education Institution	Employers actively recruiting	Hires per company (average)	Change in hiring from previous year (%)
Two-year institutions	543	12 Associate's 17 BA/BS	9 Associate's 16 BA/BS
Four-year institutions			
Public	2,848	27	7
Private	2,265	32	7
For-profit	400	26	19
Graduate-degree institutions	1,436	34	6
Historically black institutions	528	89	5
Hispanic-serving institutions	386	105	4

TARGETED RECRUITING BY INSTITUTION

Private and public four-year institutions, followed by institutions offering advanced degrees, are where employers focus recruiting efforts (table 10). Very large corporations and government agencies also focus on institutions that serve minorities. Nearly all these institutions have not changed hiring targets this year.

The exception applies to companies recruiting from for-profit institutions training students with specific skill sets. These companies expect to increase hiring by 16 percent and focus on healthcare, computer and IT services; advertising and direct marketing; social advocacy; and business and professional services. The companies are mostly located in the Midwest, Southwest and West Coast rather than other regions. These companies are also heavy users of social media for recruiting (51%) and maintain presence at off-campus job fairs, especially fairs targeted by skill set.

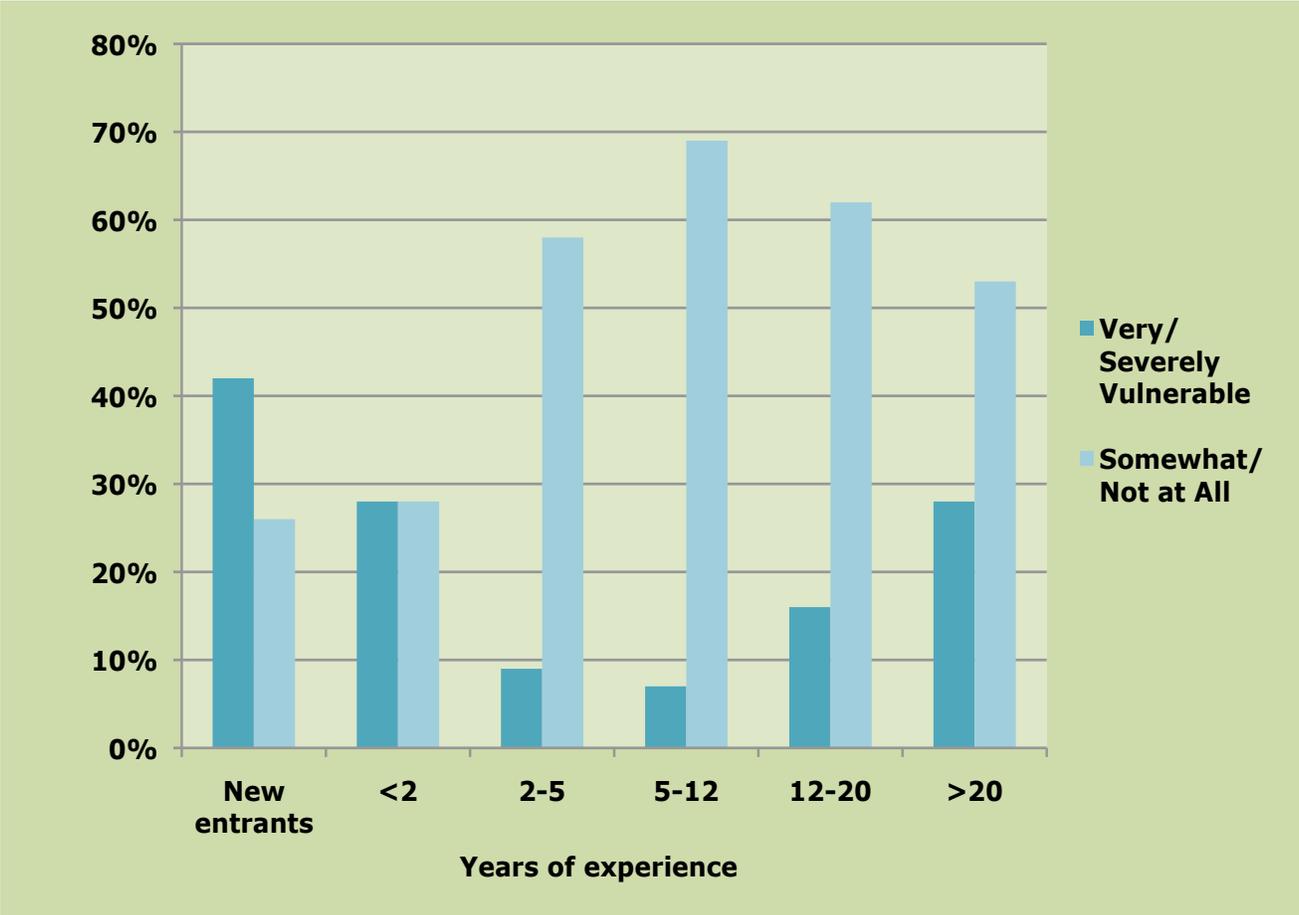
VULNERABILITY TO THE LABOR MARKET

Since the recession started in 2008, we have asked whether young adults will have long-term career problems if they do not become engaged in the labor market, or whether

the start of their career is being derailed by disruptions in the economy. Stability in the early stages of one's career is important to long-term productivity and job satisfaction. Not until the second or third job out of college do graduates find their education really kicks in as increased responsibilities draw upon a deeper set of skills, knowledge, and judgment. Vulnerability in the workplace refers to the certainty of advancing beyond an entry-level job.

Over the past two years nearly 60 percent of respondents considered new college graduates to be severely to very severely vulnerable to disenfranchisement in the current labor market (fig. 11). This year's response moderated noticeably: only 42 percent believe first-time entrants are severely vulnerable. The situation has also improved somewhat for recent entrants who have two years or less experience: only 28 percent are perceived to be severely vulnerable to disenfranchisement (28%). Older workers, including those facing retirement, are also vulnerable to job disruptions: respondents indicated 28 percent are severely vulnerable, about the same as last year.

Figure 11. Vulnerability to the labor market



POSITIONS FILLED

Accounting and computer science top the list again this year.

Employers target new hires for a broad range of positions within their organizations. Until 2008 nearly one-half of the companies responding to the survey filled marketing and sales positions, but hiring declined thereafter. Moreover, companies traditionally placed accounting, engineering, and computer science positions at the top of the hiring list. Changes in the economy, however, have altered the mix of positions companies are currently filling.

This year companies hiring talent for marketing and sales positions jumped from last year's low of 29-37 percent. This increase is a hopeful sign that the college labor market has returned to a solid footing. Accounting and computer services are once again at the top of our list, but except for engineering design services, companies can fill the majority of the available positions with talented candidates from almost any academic major.

Positions to Fill

Accounting	24%
Computer services	21%
Business services	21%
Marketing	19%
Sales	18%
Administrative services	18%
Management training	16%
Human resources	15%
Information management	15%
Customer service	14%
Engineering design	13%
Financial services	11%
Media (Advertising and Public Relations)	11%

STARTING SALARIES

Employers do not expect to increase starting salaries this year.

Since 2008 employers have held starting salaries at the same level. This year 77 percent indicated they would not raise salaries. The number of employers raising salaries increased slightly (20% of respondents). They plan to raise salaries 5 percent on average. Only 3 percent indicated they would lower starting salaries by 12 percent on average.

Bonuses are back, sort of! Signing bonuses absent from the recruiting scene for the past four years have emerged again. Five percent of employers expect to offer signing bonuses this year. As this number grows, we anticipate signing bonus competition in the next few years. Performance bonuses at the end of the first year of employment surged this year to 18 percent (up 13%). Commission-based salaries are also appearing again: 9 percent of employers indicated salary was partially or entirely based on commission.

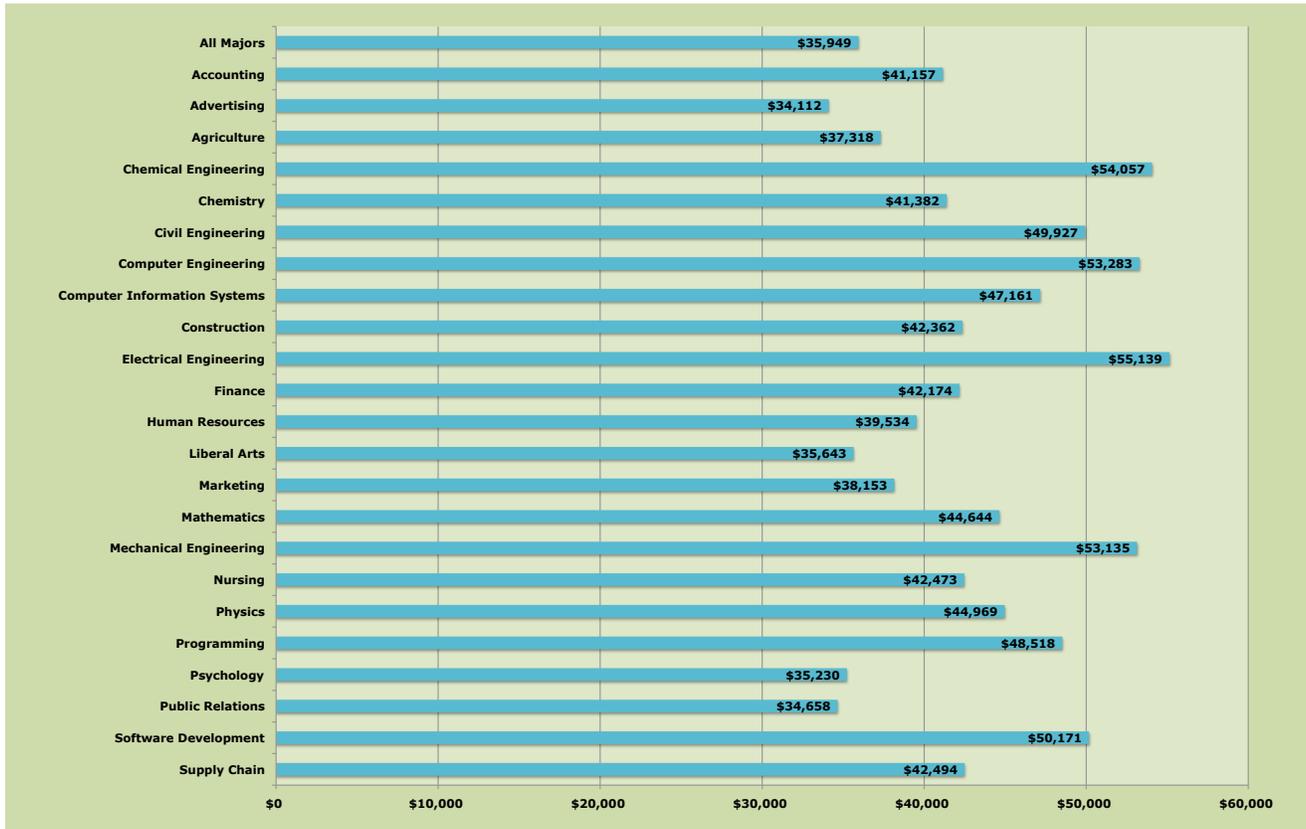
The average salary for an Associate’s degree holder across all majors ranges from \$34,000 to \$42,000, depending on program of study. For Bachelor’s degree holders, the figure ranges from \$35,000 to slightly more than \$50,000, depending on academic program (figure 12). Engineers and computer science graduates receive starting salaries at the high end of the range. The average salary for Bachelor’s degree holders working for companies seeking “all majors” rather than “targeted disciplines” is \$35,960, slightly lower than last year.

(A more detailed report will be available from WWW.CERI.MSU.EDU in January, 2012.)

Salaries for Selected Degrees, 2011-2012

Associate’s Degrees	
Business	\$34,028
Computer Science	\$39,544
Engineering	\$42,200
Health Sciences	\$34,082
Nursing	\$38,304
Advanced Degrees	
Law	\$62,368
MS Accounting	\$50,708
MBA	\$59,251
MS Computer Science	\$60,263
MS Engineering	\$62,166
MA Human Resources/ Labor Industrial Relations	\$52,801
MA Social Science	\$42,678
Pharmacology	\$66,391
Ph.D. Business	\$60,618
Ph.D. Engineering	\$74,662
Ph.D. Science	\$74,622

Figure 12. BA/BS salaries for selected majors, 2011-2012



SHAPING COLLEGE HIRING

Employers are adding not only a solid number of jobs but also needed depth and breadth.

Last year's story was about a group of employers clustered far out on the positive end of the distribution curve. This group shot out rapidly, leaving everyone else behind or essentially lagging with an average of one hire per company. This powerful group does not appear this year: some companies failed to sustain their growth or had trouble and curbed hiring completely. This year the tails are more balanced with the top 5 percent increasing hiring for Bachelor's degree holders by 38; the bottom 5 percent are decreasing hiring for these degrees by 32.

The real story emanates from the numbers surrounding the mean. Here 17 percent of employers are slicing off one or two positions from last year; 26 percent are holding targets at the same level as last year; and 27 percent are adding one or two positions this year. The juice in the labor market is coming from employers close to the center who are adding a solid but unspectacular number of jobs compared to the comparable loss side of the mean. In other words, the shape of college hiring is kind of boring. The good news is that the labor market seems to be widening and deepening compared to the more superficial one of last year.

When does the action start? Like last year, the 2011-2012 college recruiting season got off to a fast start with many career fairs over-subscribed and employers eager to meet prospective candidates. Last year 35 percent of respondents wanted to wrap up their hiring within the first term (by January 1, 2012). This year the number rose to 41 percent. By all appearances this labor market appears to be developing very quickly. Hiring will also improve in the spring when 23 percent expect to conclude their hiring. Summer of 2012 will see another 17 percent conclude hiring with

Leading the Charge

Fall 2011

Manufacturing
Machinery
Electrical Equipment
Auto/truck
Finance
Accounting
Computer Design

Spring 2012

Fast-growth Companies

Summer 2012

Education
Agricultural Production
Accounting
Scientific Research

Later

Midsized Companies
Education
Government
Nonprofits



About 41% of employers wanted to wrap up their hiring during the first term.



the remaining 18 percent continuing into the fall of 2012. By season companies and specific sectors will finish hiring for Bachelor's degree holders.

Fall 2011. Companies will increase hiring by 12 percent, averaging 32 hires per organization. Manufacturing (machinery, electrical equipment, and auto/truck), Finance, and Professional Services (accounting and computer design services) will lead the charge.

Spring 2012. Companies will increase hiring by 14 percent, averaging 21 hires per organization. Fast-growth companies will take the lead. Manufacturing (food processing, primary metals, and aircraft) and Professional Services (engineering services and scientific research) will follow closely behind.

Summer 2012. These companies will keep hiring targets at the same level as last year, averaging 18 hires per organization. Education, Agricultural Production, and Professional Services (accounting and scientific research) will lead at this time.

Later. Companies in this group expect to decrease hiring by 10 percent but still hire 25 candidates per organization. More midsize companies appeared in this group than expected. The education, nonprofit, and government sectors are represented in this group.

INTERNSHIPS AND CO-OPS

Most paid interns earn between \$10 and \$15 per hour.

Inviting internship and co-op program managers to take part in the survey has made our understanding of internship recruiting activities and intentions much richer than last year. Approximately 3,000 (71%) of respondents indicated their organization would be seeking interns and co-ops during the academic year. This number does not include organizations that support training for student teachers, clinical rotations for nursing and other health practitioners, and practicums for social work and other fields. After adjusting for multiple entries from the same organization, we estimate between 65-68 percent of respondents will seek interns and co-ops this year.

More than one-third of respondents plan to increase their intern recruiting targets; only 3 percent said they would reduce them. These employers plan to recruit an estimated 55,000 interns and co-ops.

The average number of intern/co-op hires per organization is 21. The range is very wide, from one to three thousand interns. Thus the large tail influences the average. The median number of interns/co-ops is five, and the most common number of interns is two. When the numbers for intern recruiting intentions are examined by economic sector, a consistent pattern emerges. The average number of hires across nearly all sectors hovers around 20 with Information Services at the high end of 36 and Wholesale and Accommodations (Food and Lodging) at the low end with 8 and 12, respectively. Both the median of 5 to 6 intern hires and the mode of 2 intern hires are constant for all sectors.

In the 2007 Trends survey, employers reported whether they offered paid, unpaid, or a combination of both internships. Three-quarters of employers said they offered paid internships while 10 percent offered only unpaid internships. Employers were then asked what they expected would happen with paid and unpaid internships

over the next five years: increase, decrease, or become more mixed. They expected that they would increase paid internships (62% would), increase unpaid internships (7% would), or offer both paid and unpaid internships (32%). These projects suggested more organizations would begin offering both forms of internship. Being mixed, it was difficult to determine the potential growth in paid and unpaid internships.

Five years later, the Trends survey asked employers whether they were offering paid or unpaid internships. Sixty-six percent were offering paid internship, 18 percent unpaid and 16 percent a mix. The reader should not immediately assume that unpaid internships have grown over the past five years. Over this time period, our sample of organizations has changed. In 2007 we had only 900 employers responding, today more than 3,000 respond. The mix has changed with the inclusion of more nonprofits, small companies, and local government agencies — long the home of unpaid internships. Because of the heated discussion surrounding unpaid internships, caution must be extended when using these figures.

How many organizations convert their interns and co-ops to full-time hires? Several years ago we asked this question and learned the conversion rate on average ranged from 35-50 percent for a typical organization. We probed this topic again this year for a contrast between interns and co-ops to determine which group had the better full-time conversion rate.

In the process we learned a lot about framing the conversion question. First, we encountered a noticeable group of employers who had no idea what their conversion rate was. Second, verb choice was important. We captured three very different measures in their response: they provided their preferred (what I dream of), expected (what I hope we will get), or real (what I really got) conversion rates.

Table 11. Hourly wages by academic discipline

Academic discipline	Employers reporting salary (#)	Average hourly salary (\$)	Hourly salary range (\$)
Accounting	346	15	7.27 – 30.00
Agriculture	114	13	7.50 – 30.00
Business	625	14	7.25 – 35.00
Communication, Social Science, and Humanities	146	13	6.00 – 30.00
Engineering, Computer Science, and Information Technology	840	16	7.25 – 60.00
Health	77	14	7.00 – 30.00
Science	107	15	7.50 – 35.00

Caution must therefore be exercised in interpreting these results. Third, a zero conversion rate had several different meanings

Employers provided opportunities for students out of a sense of responsibility to their profession and seldom converted any to full-time employment (e.g., student teachers, nursing, and other health practitioners).

Employers were not in a position to convert any interns/co-ops to full-time positions because of the economy. Employers supported internships, knowing they would rarely hire one as an employee (e.g., nonprofit).

We made two calculations for the conversion rates. In the first calculation, we retained all reported conversion rates,

including zero. In the second calculation, we excluded all the zero responses because of the confusion about what this value meant. From the second calculation, we found the average conversion rate for co-ops to be 45 percent. This was slightly higher than the conversion rate for internships of 39 percent.

We asked employers the hourly pay rate for their interns and co-ops in different academic disciplines. Responses provided as annual salaries were converted to an hourly wage assuming 50 weeks of work and 40 hours of work per week (table 11). Average salaries were confined to a narrow range between \$13 and \$16 per hour. The ranges were wide depending on academic major. The median, however, was comparable to the average. The majority of salaries clustered between \$10 and \$15.

GLOBAL HIRING

The H-1B visa is hot. Companies use the visa to hire the best talent wherever they can find it.

Last year the Trends survey examined global hiring within U.S. companies (see www.ceri.msu.edu for the research brief) because the number of foreign students in U.S. colleges and universities has been increasing significantly. This year the global hiring portion of the survey focused on company sponsorship of foreign nationals with the H-1B visa. This visa is a hot topic in some quarters because companies seek talent wherever they can find it. The questions asked about the company's use of the H-1B visa, their hiring intentions for next year, and the academic majors they would be sponsoring.

Fifteen percent of respondents (slightly more than 500 companies) indicated their company planned to sponsor hires with an H-1B visa.

Although large companies outnumbered all others, companies from each size category were sponsoring workers.

Professional Services, Manufacturing, and Information Services were the sectors sponsoring the most H-1B visas.

Most companies (69%) planned to sponsor the same number of visas next year as they are currently sponsoring, but some are increasing (13%) or decreasing (17%) sponsorships.

More than one-half of respondents sponsor Bachelor's degree holders in computer science and information technology, Master's degree holders in computer science and engineering, and workers at all degree levels who have computer engineering degrees (table 12).

Table 12. Employer intentions to sponsor H-1B visas for selected academic majors

Academic major	Do not sponsor (%)	None this year (%)	Decrease (%)	Same number (%)	Increase (%)
Accounting (BA)	60	43	5	48	4
Computer Science (MS)	45	16	9	59	16
Computer Science and Information Technology (BS)	39	19	10	59	12
Engineering (BS)					
Electrical	60	23	5	64	7
Mechanical	64	24	10	57	8
Chemical	74	31	2	63	4
Civil	76	30	10	57	3
Computer	49	19	10	60	11
Engineering (MS)	47	16	10	60	14
Finance (BA)	62	40	8	47	5
Marketing (BA)	65	41	8	44	7
MBA	56	30	8	55	8

Numbers in the last four columns reflect only the companies sponsoring a particular degree.

COLLEGE RECRUITING ISSUES

*Assessments have not become
a major part of college recruiting.*

Can companies find “fit” by using assessments? Companies organize their talent pipelines in two parts to find qualified candidates. The first part consists of an initial screening for the eligibility requirements (e.g., major, grade-point average, and work experience) a candidate must meet before he or she can be further vetted. These requirements are audited by the federal government when it examines an organization’s hiring practices. The second part consists of suitability requirements (e.g., people skills, personality); that is, interviewers and other company employees determine how well the candidate fits into the organization.

According to our friends who attend conferences at the Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM), the use of Emotional Intelligence Assessments is a hot-button topic. One could surmise that everyone is using these assessments and that, based on some presenters’ web sites, these assessments will identify the perfect candidate. This challenged us to see how extensively different forms of suitability assessments are used in college recruiting and look at other group methods used to determine people skills.

We gave a list of common suitability assessments to respondents and asked them to indicate which assessments they used (figure 13). We followed the same procedure for group exercises. The bottom line is simply that these assessments have not made their way into the college hiring process. This lack of use raises an important question: are suitability assessments another fad?

Tradeoffs – which college activities really count? The most requested topic from the CERI advisory board’s college members concerned rating, ranking, or comparing the college activities students can engage in with respect to the activity’s importance in the recruiting process. This

request presented a challenge: rankings (1 to 10) and ratings (level of importance) fail to actually differentiate between activities. To honestly capture how activities play into recruiting a researcher would have to set up a controlled experiment or conduct a paired-comparison experiment. The latter is an excellent but unwieldy method in the survey’s present format. After struggling with how to present this topic, several of our research partners settled on asking how each activity contributes to the development of the skills and competencies that comprise “people” or “soft” skills (e.g., teamwork, cultural awareness, and interpersonal aptitude).

These results merely reflect the perceptions respondents had about each activity (fig. 14). Individuals familiar with college recruiting posited a defining experience can come from any of these activities. Employers, however, believe an internship contributes most to the development of people or soft skills.

These results are not surprising. Students have not been able to adequately demonstrate the significant skills they have gained in study abroad (and in other co-curricular activities). Unlike internships that employers know a lot about, employers are generally unfamiliar with study abroad.

It is not enough just to have the experience; students must be able to intelligently discuss how the experience has helped them develop skills they can bring to bear in a professional setting. If a student merely communicates that the study abroad was “totally awesome,” employers assume the lowest common denominator of the study-abroad experience — a great vacation with ample pub crawls. International educators, faculty, study-abroad staff, career services, and others must make a conscientious effort to

help students learn to identify, articulate, and apply skills they learn in the experiential and co-curricular activities.

Are parents involved with their children's recruiting and hiring? Five years ago the Trends survey tapped into the emerging role parents play during their child's job search and early career — how many are helicopter parents?

At that time some parents seemed to be deeply involved with assisting their young adult with resume preparation, contacting employers for interviews, negotiating the hiring contract, and even assisting with work. Amid all the negative press, parents seemed to go underground. With the downturn in the economy, parents have stepped up to help with the job search. Just to see how much parental involvement employers were witnessing, we asked companies to compare their experience to five years ago.

We saved for another survey questions about the types of activities parents may be performing and whether their participation left a positive or negative impression with the employer. This year companies compared current parental involvement with recruiting and hiring with their experience five years ago and observed

- Very little involvement (30%)
- Less involvement (3%)
- Same level of participation (36%)
- Slightly more involvement (22%)
- A lot more involvement (9%)

Figure 13. Use of suitability assessments

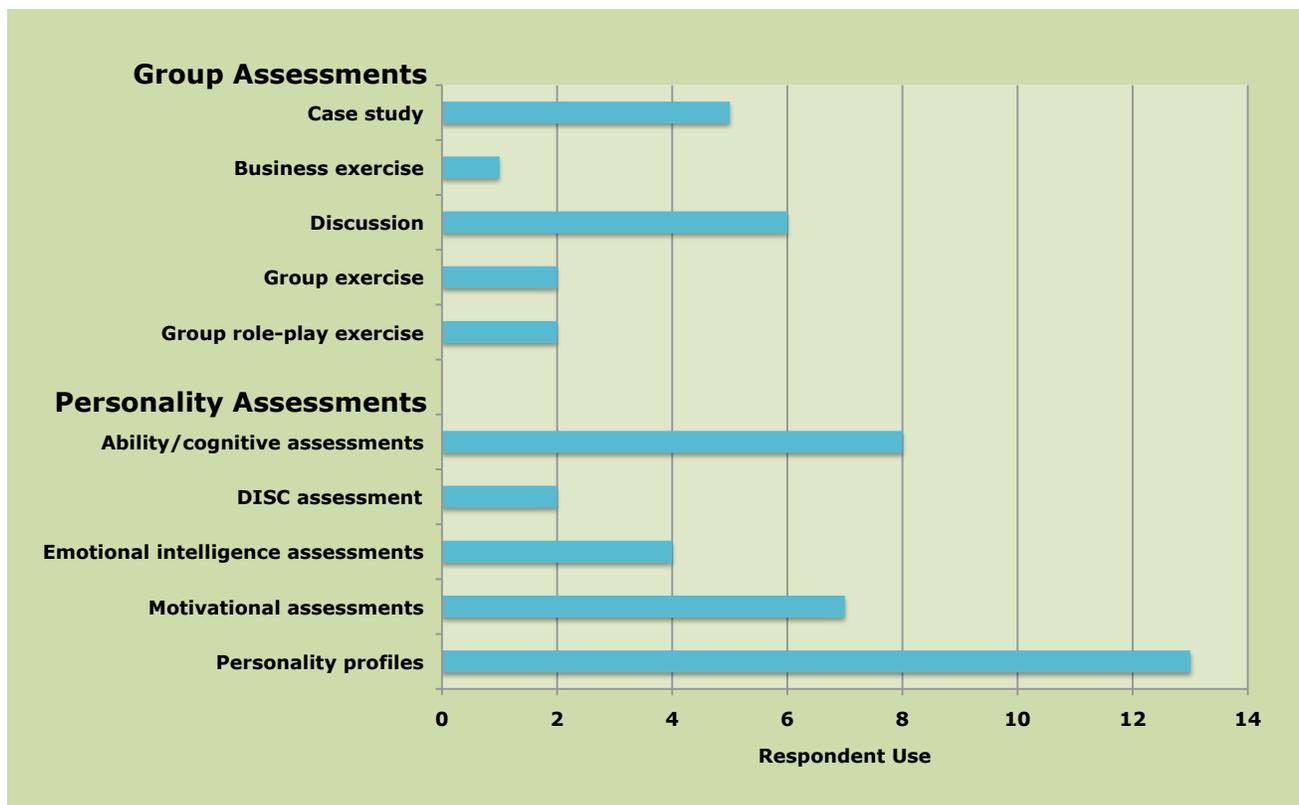
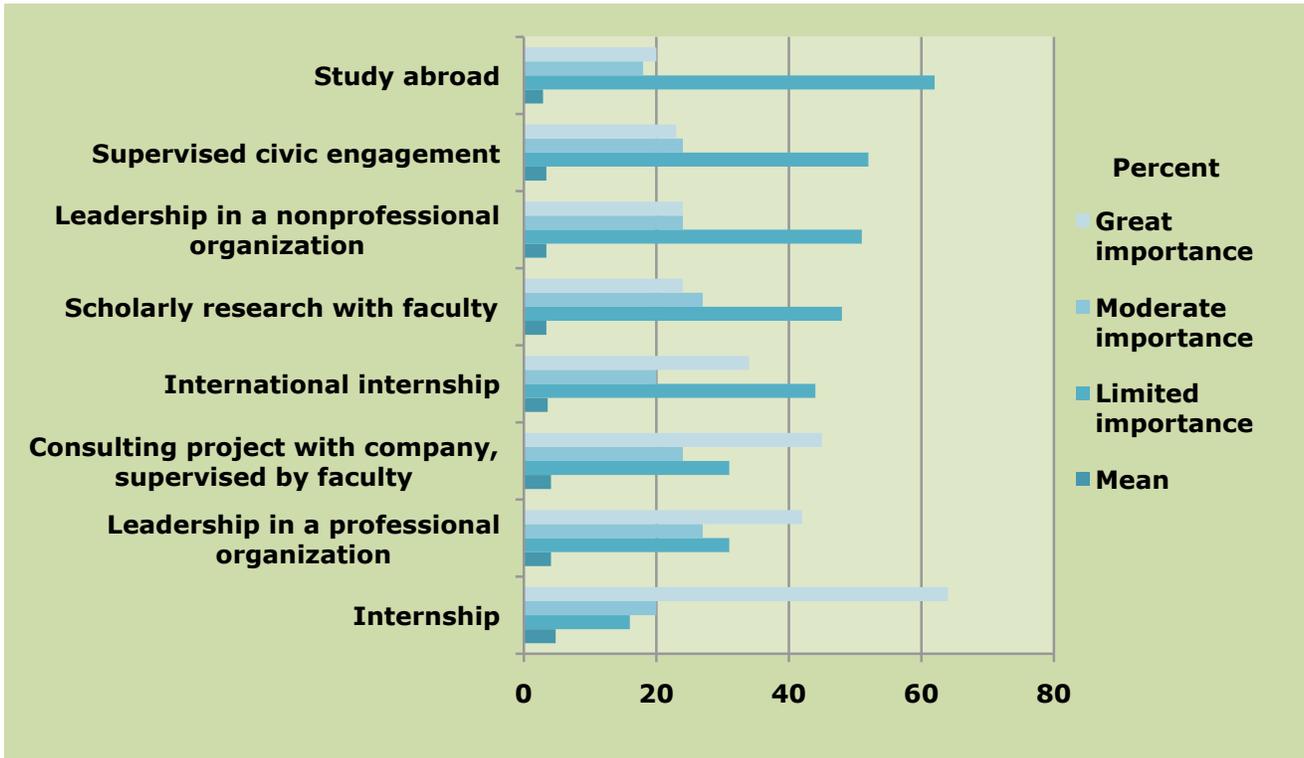


Figure 14. Importance of college activities to recruiting



CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships give organizations early access to the best talent.

What are the benchmarks for corporate partnership programs? This year the topic selected for detailed examination focused on the special arrangements or partnerships an organization has with colleges and universities. As we were developing this question, we became aware of a study from the University of Minnesota that was part of the Twin Cities regional development plan. From the materials available, we could not determine how they developed their rankings on the goals of these partnerships. We developed our survey as we originally intended. We hope the two studies complement each other.

This brief profile of campus partnerships is based on information from 1,437 employers, representing the 40 percent who completed this section of the survey. The profile precedes a lengthier, more detailed research brief to be prepared later. As might be expected many arrangements involved cooperation on internships, clinical assignments, and other professional practices. Some campus partnerships have more extensive involvement.

Campus Partnerships or Special Arrangements

Number of Partnerships: 4-5 on average
Distribution range: 1-500 partnerships
One partnership: 38%
Three or fewer partnerships: 75%

Length of Partnership Agreement
One-year agreement: 61%
Two-year agreement: 22%
Three-year agreement or longer: 17%

Q: How successful have your partnerships been in identifying and attracting new talent?

A: Moderately successful

\$ Organizations Invest in Partnerships

Less than \$1,000	48%
\$1,000 to \$5,000	20%
\$5,000 to \$10,000	12%
\$10,000 to \$50,000	22%

4 Top Organizational Goals

- Gain early access to new talent
- Extend organization's employer brand (leverage current and future talent needs)
- Gain access to diverse talent
- Develop contacts with student organizations

4 Least Important Reasons for a Partnership

- Expand opportunities for executive education
- Support continuing education needs for employees
- Fulfill corporate social responsibility initiatives
- Support research and innovation initiatives/interests

4 College or university representatives that partners want to see sitting across the table when developing a partnership agreement*

- Career Services Director (60%)
- Selected faculty from targeted programs (39%)
- Deans from targeted colleges (37%)
- Students from professional associations (28%)

* Least wanted: Research representatives & corporate relations officers

% Hiring from Partnership Programs

Total hires	Average 50%
Hires during last 5 years	41%
Increasing hires from partnership schools	41%
Increasing hires 2011-2012	36%
Maintaining current levels 2011-2012	59%

FINAL THOUGHTS

This report marks fifteen years of my supervising the national labor market study for MSU. My nightmares during the month prior to its release are filled with dread that we will have nothing interesting to report. For fourteen years, we have always found an interesting story. This year, well, this year is different. The results are basically boring. We found consistency across economic sector, organizational size, academic major, and location. But you know what? Boring is good. Last year's market was superficial. It did not run deep, and we did not know if it had legs for the long haul. This year's market runs broader and deeper and is beginning to recover and expand across all fronts.

The college labor market can run upstream against the prevailing sluggish economy. As Manpower stated: demand trumps uncertainty. Companies simply have to hire. They have outstanding requisition (many since the early years of the previous decade) that now need to be filled. Baby boomers are retiring, and this trend will only accelerate over the next decade. The current workforce is exhausted, and this is showing up in productivity figures. Plus, employers need to revitalize their skill base. All these factors are nudging the college labor market out of the doldrums, ahead of other segments of the labor market.

Small, midsize, and large organizations are all involved in this turn around. It is good to see that the hemorrhaging has finally stopped among midsize companies. We hope they are now positioned to capitalize on new growth opportunities over the next several years. A word of caution: we should not become too giddy. In the first place the uncertainty level within the economy, particularly among consumers, remains persistently high. Of course, world events and political chaos in Washington, D.C., keep the economy on edge. We may no longer be teetering on the edge of an abyss, but we still have a long way to go to have enough opportunities to meet the yearly supply of new college graduates.

The pressure will continue to mount for more accountability among higher education institutions to demonstrate their relevancy for preparing students to engage in meaningful employment after graduation. Our challenge is to align these students with the emerging opportunities witnessed in the two years of job growth and not leave them wandering lost, hoping something good happens. I would rather do this than catch my students at Occupy Wall Street – though they do have legitimate beefs. But this may not be the best way to use their creativity, knowledge, and energy. Putting them to work to solve our problems contributes more to society.

**BE FOCUSED, BE DIRECTED
& BE CONNECTED.**

May this year be a successful one for you and your staff. Best wishes to all your graduates,



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