



Presented by DeVry University

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Hiring Managers Struggle to Find Candidates Who “Fit”

Fourth annual survey reveals skills, attributes employers are looking for in job seekers

DOWNERS GROVE, Ill. – Dec. 22, 2014 – Only 7 percent of hiring managers report that “nearly all” or “most” job seekers have the right combination of skills and traits to fill open positions. The fourth annual Job Preparedness Indicator study explores this issue and highlights gaps where job applicants lack the skills and traits hiring managers view as most important for entry-, mid- and senior-level employees. The Career Advisory Board, established by [DeVry University](#), conducted the survey in October of 524 hiring managers who are responsible for screening post-college-level applicants and making hiring decisions.

2014 Job Preparedness Indicator Key Findings

Millennials must strengthen, showcase writing skills

- Basic written communication ability is one of the most desirable skills for entry- and mid-level employees, but surprisingly is one of the least common skill sets displayed by these job candidates.
- Though digital communication is often informal, hiring managers look for proper grammar, spelling and clarity in applicants’ materials.

Employers need quick learners and problem solvers

- Hiring managers want to hire employees who meet as many of their criteria as possible, but only 7 percent of hiring managers reported that “nearly all” or “most” job seekers have the right combination of skills and traits.
- Problem-solving skills are a differentiator; job seekers who showcase how they’ll use their knowledge and experience to make an immediate contribution to the organization’s bottom line have an advantage.

“Employers want to see more than a good pedigree; they want candidates who can think critically on the fly,” said Madeleine Slutsky, chair of the Career Advisory Board and vice president of career and student services at DeVry University. “Job seekers should tailor their résumés to specific job opportunities and explain how they will hit the ground running to become an integral part of the team quickly.”

Hiring managers value micro-credentials

- One quarter of hiring managers are “very” or “extremely likely” to consider micro-credentials - specialized certificates awarded by reputable educational or business institutions - as proof of skill mastery.

2014 Job Preparedness Indicator Findings

- Employers view a candidate's ability to showcase results in a similar position as the most important factor in awarding a position. Similarly, certificates in niche job functions can demonstrate mastery of knowledge in the given field.

Hiring managers favor locals

- Despite globalization and innovative technology that uses big data to help hiring managers identify ideal candidates wherever they may be located, those surveyed stick with what they know. 75 percent of hiring managers are not willing to relocate candidates from other geographies
- One quarter of hiring managers are even more likely to hire from within their organization than they were last year; when the right talent isn't available to fill open positions, some cite "growing their own" as a solution.

Attitude is most important to hiring managers interviewing recent college graduates

- Integrity, a strong work ethic, accountability, self-motivation and strong basic interpersonal ability are the most critical attributes for entry-level candidates.
- Hard skills in technology, decision-making, presentation and risk-taking are not as essential for an entry-level position.

"Many of the skills employers want in the future can be learned," said Alexandra Levit, business and workplace consultant and Career Advisory Board member. "At the entry level, attitude outweighs tangible skills. Hiring managers see attributes like a strong work ethic and self-motivation as differentiators between those who will succeed and those who won't."

To read the research report and expert commentary on solutions for closing the gaps between job seekers and hiring managers, please visit www.careeradvisoryboard.org

About the Career Advisory Board

Established in 2010 by DeVry University, the Career Advisory Board is comprised of leading representatives from business and academia, and recognized career experts who deliver valuable insights on today's most important career trends and provide actionable advice for job seekers. The Career Advisory Board generates original research and commentary, and creates tools, insights and resources to prepare job seekers for success. Its members include executives from DeVry University, Google, HP, IBM and LinkedIn, as well as nationally recognized career experts. For more information, visit www.careeradvisoryboard.org.

Survey Methodology

The 2014 Job Preparedness Indicator survey is designed to identify gaps between the skills candidates have and the skills employers seek to fill available positions, as well as to assess how hiring managers are selecting successful candidates.

The research was conducted online within the United States by DeVry University on behalf of the Career Advisory Board in October 2014. Survey respondents included 524 U.S. individuals who are responsible for screening post-college-level applicants and making hiring decisions in organizations with more than 10 employees. These hiring managers have been in their positions an average of 6-10 years.

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