

Upward Trend for Job Prospects and Starting Salaries for Recent College Graduates This Year, CareerBuilder.com Survey Finds

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Job prospects and starting salaries for recent college graduates are trending upward, according to CareerBuilder.com's annual survey. Seventy-nine percent of hiring managers say they plan to hire recent college graduates this year, up from 70 percent in 2006. Nearly one-in-four hiring managers (24 percent) expect to hire more recent college graduates in 2007 compared to last year and 42 percent plan to increase starting salaries. The new survey, "College Hiring 2007," was conducted from February 15 through March 6, 2007 and included 2,591 hiring managers.

"As the skilled labor force shrinks, the demand for educated workers will continue to increase, and you'll see more hiring managers at college campuses recruiting and developing relationships early," said Brent Rasmussen, chief operating officer of CareerBuilder.com. "The fact that nearly one-in-five hiring managers plans to hire more than 100 recent college graduates this year makes for a very positive outlook for these young workers."

Forty-two percent of hiring managers anticipate increasing starting salaries for recent college graduates in 2007 and only four percent plan to decrease them. Thirty-six percent of hiring managers expect to offer between \$30,000 and \$40,000 compared to 28 percent in 2006. An additional 16 percent will offer between \$40,000 and \$50,000 and 12 percent will offer more than \$50,000.

When asked about minimum GPA requirements, one-third of the hiring managers surveyed said they require a 3.0 and above and one-in-ten requires a 3.5 and above. However, if you didn't quite make the grade, opportunities are still available if you know how to sell yourself. Based on the survey findings, Rasmussen suggests the following tips for recent college graduates in their quest to get noticed by hiring managers:

Do Your Research

Obviously it's important to know the nuts and bolts of the company, but you should also be familiar with the culture. If your personality and work style matches that of the organization to which you're applying, your chances of getting hired are much greater. In fact, 25 percent of hiring managers said that a recent college graduate who is a good fit with the company culture is the most influential factor in their hiring decision.

Don't Take Experiences For Granted

Internships certainly bolster a recent graduate's resume. However, other activities such as student government, volunteer work, organization of campus activities and team sports can also be leveraged as useful real world experience. With 21 percent of hiring managers citing experience as the most influential factor in their decision to hire a recent college graduate, it's important to identify things such as management or leadership and budgeting in the activities in which you have participated and highlight them in both your resume and your interview.

Do Show Your Enthusiasm

Ever wonder why people tell you to go into interviews prepared to ask your own questions? It's because job interviews aren't a one-way street. Being prepared with your own questions not only shows the interviewer that you're interested enough to do your homework but also gives you a better idea if the job matches your needs and wants for your career. If that isn't enough to sway you, consider this -- 21 percent of hiring managers say that asking good questions and showing enthusiasm weighs heavily on their hiring decision for recent college graduates.

If you're looking for more information on job search and interviewing, visit CBcampus.com, a job site tailor-made for college students and alumni. Equipped with special search capabilities, CBcampus.com provides instant access to jobs matching the student's major, experience level, skills and interests. The site also provides information on local career fairs and campus events, news on leading companies and industries, and advice for everything from building compelling resumes to moving ahead in the real world.

Survey Methodology

This survey was conducted online by Harris Interactive on behalf of CareerBuilder.com and USA TODAY among 2,591 hiring managers and human resource professionals (employed full-time; not self-employed; with at least

significant involvement in hiring decisions), ages 18 and over within the United States between February 15 and March 6, 2007. Figures for age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region and household income were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

With a pure probability sample of 2,591, one could say with a ninety-five percent probability that the overall results have a sampling error of +/-1.9 percentage points. Sampling error for data from sub-samples would be higher and would vary. However that does not take other sources of error into account. This online survey is not based on a probability sample and therefore no theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

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