

Job Market for College Graduates in 2007 Looks Promising

As students complete their college degree, anxiety customarily mounts in terms of the student's next steps and, when relevant, ways to best navigate the transition from college into the workforce. For the graduate who plans to go directly to work, questions commonly arise concerning job opportunities that exist and how marketable one will be.

Fortunately, the picture looks promising for the college class of 2007 as they pursue career and employment opportunities. Judging from labor market data and employer hiring trends, many students should find jobs that offer decent career potential. A National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) survey suggests that an increased number of employers are in a recruitment mode, and they will hire nearly 20 percent more new graduates this year as compared to last. Starting pay is also on the upswing. The NACE survey projects that a vast majority of all majors (26 of 29) will experience a boost in salary. Although most majors look encouraging, job demand appears hottest with majors related to business, engineering, and computer related areas. In summary, it appears to be very much a student driven market. Some employers are actually providing perks and incentives in order to attract desirable candidates. In some cases, employers began their recruitment process much earlier. Louisville's Yum Brands for instance sent students post cards and emails last August, reportedly the earliest it had ever started campus recruiting efforts.

Although job opportunities apparently exist, new college graduates may have to decide among multiple job offers in order to secure a position that best fits their needs and can help them launch a viable career path. Moreover, ongoing employer surveys suggest that many new graduates are perceived as being insufficiently prepared to meet the expectations employers have of students coming out of college into the workforce. Students may lack readiness in any one of a number of areas. Obstacles for instance can include a lack of general business sense, weak written communication, or poor teamwork skills. Students may also display deficits with regard to resume development, interviewing, or networking. Research clearly suggests that students are often ill equipped when it comes to executing a well planned, strategic employment search.

For students who are less certain or soon may be changing course be it returning to school, traveling overseas, or pursuing other less traditional avenues, an internship experience is an employment option to consider. An internship, either paid or unpaid, basically represents work experience that is shorter term and less binding but nevertheless allows students to test the waters ideally in a field or industry that arouses strong interest. It also gives the employer the chance to check out the student, assess skills and performance, and provide feedback that can be very useful to the student's subsequent career development. If it turns out to be a positive experience for both parties involved, an internship also has the potential to convert into a permanent position.

Web sites exist that are designed to help new college graduates explore various career and employment opportunities. One such web site is collegerecruiter.com. As this region's longest standing college and career advisement provider, JFVS is likewise well equipped to evaluate a student's experience, talents, college major, extracurricular activities, and other facets of the student's profile in order to assess best career direction and enhance the student's transition from college into the workforce.

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