Fall 2020

Recruiting Trends 2020-2021

50th Anniversary

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Collegiate Employment Research Institute

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The Recruiting Trends Report began as a dream, an idea that grew from a small seed sown in 1970. Jack Shingleton, Michigan State University's Director of Career Services and Placement, and I brainstormed about expanding our research efforts to advance our understanding of college recruiting. MSU already had an excellent and highly regarded graduation follow-up reporting system that included a main report for all new graduates (Bachelors, Masters, and Doctoral degrees), as well as special reports on minority, women, teacher education and Honors College graduates. Later, special studies of alumni five-year and ten-year post-graduation were undertaken.

Jack and I firmly believed that a career service and placement operations were only as strong as the research arm of their units. At MSU, we had designed, created, and developed the first computerized interview sign up system in the nation and expanded to other placement operations in our office. At this time, MSU's career services earned a national reputation for these innovations. Guided research from Career Services and Placement office made this possible.

A recruiting report already existed in 1970 called the Endicott report. Frank Endicott researched and produced the report through the career office at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. It was the preeminent report for new college graduates. A hint that Frank Endicott was about to retire from his role as director of placement and possibly no longer author the report triggered our brainstorming about future research on new college graduates.

Jack and I felt that we could effectively step into this niche with the research expertise available to us. Our ultimate objective was not only to create a report which would help with recruitment of new college graduates at Michigan State University but expand the career opportunities for all new graduates. We settled on Recruiting Trends for New College Graduates (shortened to Recruiting Trends with annual dates), not only as a catchy title, but also apropos for what we wanted to achieve.

Our first edition was a mimeographed report of only several pages. When looking through current editions of this report and comparing them against earlier editions, one wonders how the report could become such a national source for information about job market trends for new college graduates.

Our first endeavors involved the use of tally sheets. After initial steps of designing and administering the survey, staff tallied the results then transferred into spreadsheets for analysis.

Lists of employers was difficult and costly to obtain in the early years. Employers visiting Michigan State University comprised our original mailing list of business, industry, and government agencies. Over time, this list expanded as we reached out to employers all over the country. It also proved effective in attracting more recruiters to come to Michigan State for on-campus recruitment.

Our survey questionnaires improved over time as our survey questions became more robust. Each year, we added more questions, eventually cycling questions in alternating years to keep the survey length reasonable.

Our analysis data became more sophisticated, too. From the original tally sheets, we advanced to using multiple choice (bubble) answer sheets for employers to enter survey results. We designed our questionnaires so the Computer Laboratory at Michigan State University could use a Scantron machine to tabulate our survey results. The final steps of statistically analyzing the information, interpreting results, preparing the report proved easier to accomplish.

John Deere Corporation gifted us our first six cathode-ray tube (CRT) computer terminals that allowed us to enter directly our recruiting trends data from the surveys. These computers were connected by cable from the John Hannah Administration Building through the heating tunnels under the Michigan State University infrastructure to the Olin Health Center and then to the Student Services Building, the location of the Career Services and Placement office. The cost of running the cable fell to our unit that required prioritizing all the programs we provided and eliminating some popular events.

As Career Services reputation for excellent research grew, Bill Sederberg, a Michigan State senator, approached Jack in the summer of 1985 about speaking to a group of senators about new college graduates. Their focus was on the graduates' successful or unsuccessful job campaigns and Michigan is ability to retain its college-educated workforce. Out of this meeting support for a legislative grant to Michigan State for Career Services to undertake this research.

After Recruiting Trends gained traction, funding for the project came directly earmarked in the Career Service's budget. With the establishment of the Collegiate Employment Research Institute in the fall of 1985, the Institute took the responsibility for the Trends project.

At the same time two important advances occurred. First, the delivery of the first desktop computers through the office. This technological advance made it possible to undertake more tasks rapidly, including administering the Trends project. The second event was the arrival of Dr. Phil Gardner to over the research initiatives at the Institute. I continued to provide the leadership for Recruiting Trends while Phil focused on research for the legislature and studies on early career success and internships/co-ops.

After I accepted a new position at the University in spring 1996, Phil assumed the leadership for Recruiting Trends. Several initiatives started during the early transition of leadership focused on expanding the employers involved in the project to capture a more reflective mix of organizations recruiting college students. CareerSearch and Vault resources aided in compiling lists of potential employers. These employers received surveys during the next Trends cycle. As career centers around the country began to adopt employer management systems (Such as Simplicity or Career Builder), new opportunities to reach employers emerged. Phil approached several colleagues at career offices in other parts of the country asking their support in reaching out to their employers. The result was a noticeable increase in the number of employers completing the Trends survey. By 2005, nearly 100 two and four year colleges and universities assisted in the annual fall undertaking (soon named the Consortium for Student Transition Studies). With several thousand respondents, Recruiting Trends offered a more balanced and comprehensive picture of college hiring across organizational size, industry segment, and regions. We no longer focused on the heavy manufacturing companies found in the Midwest.

As the reputation of Recruiting Trends grew, media interest also grew. How new graduates fair in the labor market tends to be a top story each year, especially during recessions or unexpected events such as COVID. The AP wire services and selected news outlets that run feature stories, NPR radio and top talk radio, and infrequently television covered the Trends story. Michigan State University through Career Services and CERI serves as an excellent source for latest, accurate information and deeper understanding of labor market for new college graduates, the role of internships and experiential education, and early socialization and success in the workplace.

One important vehicle for delivering the newest Trends report was the annual fall meeting (usually November or early December) of Midwest placement officers in Chicago (hosted for many years by MidWest Association of Colleges and Employers). Phil continued this agreement with MwACE to host this kick-off of Trends to much success. Unfortunately, when Phil took on the mantel of Executive Director of Career Services the agreement ended.

With pressure to release Trends information earlier, the publication date was pushed back to the middle of October or as soon as the report was completed. This calendar change opened the opportunity to present the newest Trends information at forums around the country. Over the past several years, Phil made between 10 and 15 presentations between October and early January.

Early fall marks the beginning of a new recruiting season graduating seniors. Therefore, having the ability to understand the anticipated recruiting needs of employers, the Trends results would be very helpful to students, career professionals and human resource managers. As long as our recruiting trends report published early, the results would carry us through the entire recruiting season in May.

Recruiting Trends is the central component of CERI research and an essential resource offered by Career Services to the Michigan State University community and our colleagues across the U.S. For MSU Career Services provides grounded research through the follow-up or destination report, Recruiting Trends and other CERI research. To our colleagues we offer the best research on timely issues that is possible with limited budgets and resources.

The seed that Jack and I planted 50 years ago nurtured and grew into one of the most respected reports in our field. We knew that to sustain Trends required the support, encouragement and trust of all career professionals everywhere. All of us appreciate all that each of you have done in our behalf. We envisioned Trends as a cornerstone of our profession and as a cornerstone; hope that others can carry it forward for another 50 years. It is not often a dream becomes such a rich and vital legacy for MSU and all career services

Enjoy this, the 50th edition, of Recruiting Trends 2020-2021.

After an impressive 10-year run of continuous expanding opportunities for new college graduates, the unforeseen COVID-19 brought college recruiting to a standstill. This year's outlook is more subdued with the labor market in a swoon with only the associate's degree seeing growth in opportunities.

COVID-19, a non-economic event with destructive economic consequences, continues to raise uncertainty nearly 10 months after introducing in the U.S. The hope for a speedy recovery has not materialized, and conflicting economic news sends troubling signs that some employers are recovering and doing well while others face continued economic hardship.

- The 600,000 new jobs the economy added in September (Department of Labor), down from 1.4 million in August, now overwhelmed by the steady increase in new unemployment claims.
- Only about one-half of the 15 million plus jobs lost during the initial phase of the COVID shutdown have been restored.
- While the GDP grew by 32% in the second quarter, providing hope for the recovery, it actually needed to increase 54% to offset the losses in the first quarter.
- Food Services, including drinking establishments, lost 2.5 million jobs in the first six months of the shutdown. Higher Education endured the worst job losses ever, with 337,000 positions eliminated or furloughed. Those in peril include adjunct and contingent faculty, athletic programs, targeted liberal arts programs, and support staff in residence halls, dining facilities and array of other positions. (*Chronicle of Higher Education*)
- *Washington Post* reported that Black men, Black women, and mothers of school-age children have been hit hard by the virus shutdown - "overwhelmingly affecting low-wage minority workers."
- Department of Labor announced that job posting down at the end of August by one-half million compared to July.
- Despite a lengthy embargo, the U.S. trade deficit increased to its highest level in history as Americans continued to purchase from abroad while foreign trade partners dramatically slowed the purchase of U.S. goods.
- Airlines, arts and entertainment, brick and mortar retail along with food services, manufacturing, hotels/motels, and childcare services, are some of the sectors that have failed to recover.

Despite the turbulent economy swirling around us, the college labor market did not totally collapse. In fact, associate-level opportunities continued to expand. Good news for two-year schools with programs in applied technology and engineering, computer science, health technicians and support, and programs tailed to local economy. Enrollment declines, a repercussion of COVID, needs to address the support needed by low income, underrepresented youth and adults who could supply talent to these employers.

The bachelor's labor market swooned with opportunities contracting slightly. Underlying the modest decline, the landscape is murkier with some employers not on campus this fall and many employers without clear directives on their hiring targets. The bachelor's picture reflects some of the traits associated with the K-recovery discussed by economists.

For MBAs, opportunities shrank continuing a roller coaster ride since the 2008 recession. As in past periods of economic uncertainty, students pursuing additional degrees to avoid a poor labor market run the risk of not recouping their investment. Employers prefer more experience than more degrees.

Employers expect the recovery of the jobs lost to COVID and attaining the momentum of the college labor market that started the fall a year ago to take some time. Forty-eight percent felt that it would take two to three years to recover and additional 15% even longer.

The one sure thing emerge out of the pandemic -- virtual recruiting. Virtual recruiting is here to stay and will shape the recruiting landscape for years to come.

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Useful Survey Responses

Our employers. In planning for this year's Recruiting Trends project, we revised the survey to address the adjustments to and implications of COVID-19 on college recruiting. More than 3000 attempted the survey with 2408 providing information that could be used in preparing this report. Due to the high level of economic uncertainty, only 1036 employers could provide hiring information at this time. A sharp drop from the recent period of strong labor markets.   Fifteen percent indicated sole responsibility is recruiting college graduates for full-time positions. Fifty-four percent have responsibilities for both full-time positions and intern/co-op positions. Another six percent are solely responsible for intern or co-op recruiting, the lowest level since the recessionary period prior to 2010. Recruiters seeking experienced talent shot up nine percentage points to 19 percent – reflecting organizations seeing out experienced individuals. Those filling short-term assignments of six months or less account for six percent of the respondents. (NOTE: AN ADDITIONAL 350 RESPONSES WERE RECEIVED TOO LATE TO BE INCLUDED IN THE ANALYSIS PRESENTED HERE. ABOUT 75 PROVIDED HIRING INFORMATION WHICH PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS SUGGEST WILL NOT CHANGE THE FIGURES PRESENTED WITHIN THIS REPORT. THESE SURVEYS WILL BE ADDED AT A LATER DATE WITH ANY CORRECTIONS NOTED.)

The respondents represent the rich diversity of companies and organizations seeking new college talent. Sixty-four percent represented organizations with fewer than 500 employers and thirty-six percent with more than 500 employees.

Every major industrial sector (based on major NAIC codes) provided information for this survey. Sectors providing the highest number of respondents included Construction, Educational Services, Finance and Insurance Services, Healthcare and Social Assistance, Manufacturing, and Business, Professional, and Scientific Services (BPSS).

An employer from every state and several territories appeared among the respondents. States providing the highest number of respondents included California, Colorado, Illinois, Kansas, Michigan, Texas, and Utah.

ADJUSTMENTS IN FULL-TIME COLLEGE RECRUITING DUE TO COVID-19

The labor market for new college graduates appeared headed toward another banner year in the fall of 2019 according to Recruiting Trends 2019-2020. With an anticipated 10 percent growth in positions designated for bachelor graduates, opportunities would expand for the tenth consecutive year. Then the hammer came down very suddenly. COVID-19 forced everyone to adjust from campuses shifting to on-line instruction to recruiting activities going completely virtual. As organizations closed, hiring plans had to scuttled or, at best, modified.

Organizations took various actions in response to COVID-19 outbreak that impacted recruiting. Presented with possible options, respondents indicated their adjustments led to:

Ceasing all recruiting or rescinding all full-time offers:
     19% --- Curtailed all college recruiting without making an offers for employment
     4% --- Curtailed all college recruiting and rescinded offers extended
     2% --- Suspended recruiting and considered candidates identified in the fall 2019,
            even extending offers that later had to be rescinded

Completed full-time hiring with adjustments

      7% --- Suspended all recruiting and worked with candidates identified prior to cessation but made fewer offers than originally planned

    11% --- Suspended all recruiting and worked with candidates identified prior to cessation extending offers as planned

   56% --- Continued recruiting using virtual technologies, career center networks and staffing agencies, extending offers as planned

As new hires reported to work, their on-boarding experience differed, in some respects, from normal procedures. Both normal on-site and virtual on-boarding schemes, following health protocols, greeted new hires.

   34% --- All on-boarding conducted at organization as normal

   21% --- After on-boarding either virtually or on-site, new hires transitioned to virtual teams or assignments

   17% --- Staggered on-boarding in small groups at organization's facilities

    9% --- On-boarding conducted on site transitioning new hires to virtual assignments

    6% --- All on-boarding was handled virtually

    6% --- Delayed started dates (late summer to early fall) depending on the current health situation at organizations' offices or facilities

    3% --- Used a combination of on-boarding methods depending on position and job responsibilities

> TWENTY-FIVE PERCENT OF EMPLOYERS CLOSED THEIR OPEN POSITIONS OR RESCINDED OFFERS MADE TO GRADUATING STUDENTS IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19.

FULL-TIME COLLEGE RECRUITING PLANS FOR 2020-21

Outlook Less Optimistic. Employer outlook dimmed noticeably this fall. Fifty-three percent (down sharply, 39 percentage points, from last year) described the overall new college labor market as good to excellent. The average rating of 2.73 is the lowest in seven years (Figure 1) and is comparable to numbers in the early recovery from the 2008 recession.

Employer Overall Optimism
Fair to Good

On the other hand, respondents felt more optimistic about the job prospects in their own economic sector. About 70 percent (down 22 percentage points from 2019-2020) described the new college labor market in their industrial or economic sector as good to excellent. Their average rating of 3.13 places the outlook for jobs in the "good" range.

An ANOVA (analysis of variance) comparison by size, found a significant difference in outlook for the overall market (F = 4.226, p=.006) but no difference within their economic sector. Large companies with more than 4,000 employees (average overall outlook of 2.88) was significantly different from the smallest organizations (average 2.62). In general as organizational size increased optimism about the prospects for job opportunities increased. Interestingly, this relationship failed to hold from hiring information presented below.

An ANOVA comparison by industry sector revealed significant difference for outlook of the overall market (F = 4.76, p=.000) and sector (F=7.066, p=.000). Education Services (average 3.05), Health Services (average 3.15) and Administrative Services (average 3.25) significantly differed from Leasing Services (average 2.00) on outlook for the overall market. Oil and Gas (average 1.33) reported the most pessimistic view of any sector and together with Arts & Entertainment (average 2.46) differed significantly from Education Services (average 3.52) and Health Services (average 3.69).

Figure 1. Employer Outlook for Overall College Labor Market 2008/09 through 2020-2021.

Most Positive Overall Market	Least Positive Overall Market	Most Positive Sectors	Least Positive Sectors
Health Services	Leasing Services	Health Services	Oil & Gas
Education Services	Arts & Entertain.	Education Services	Leasing Services
Admin Services	Non-profits	Admin Services	Arts & Entertain.
Information Svcs	Oil & Gas	Construction	Wholesale
Retail	Manufacturing	Utilities	Non-profits

A comparison of the differences between the two ratings found:

- Two sectors rated their sectors worse than the overall economy: Oil & Gas and Accommodation and Food Services
- Several sectors rated overall and sector nearly the same: Retail, Wholesale, and Arts & Entertainment
- Sectors with the largest gap between their sector outlook and overall outlook: Agricultural Production and Services, Leasing, Utilities, Professional Business and Scientific Services, and Health Services.

37%

Set to increase hiring quotas across all degrees

Over the past several years, more than fifty percent of respondents expected to increase hiring across all degree levels. This year this figure plummeted to only 37 percent (down 15 percentage points) indicating they plan to increase hiring over 2019-20. The breakdown by degree shows that 42 percent of employers seeking associate's degree candidates (down 10 points) and 35 percent seeking bachelor's degree (down 11 points) will increase hiring over last year. On the other hand, 38 percent of employers seeking associates and 41 percent seeking bachelor's candidates will decrease the number they expect to hire this year.

The hiring intentions for MBAs and masters are more disappointing. Only 26 percent of employers recruiting MBAs (down 10 points) expect to increase hiring with 53 percent expecting to reduce the number hired. Similarly, 25 percent of employers seeking all other masters' degrees will add more positions (a 12 point percentage) while 50 percent expect to lower hiring compared to last year.

Approaching the fall 2020 recruiting season.   Organizations alter their approaches to recruiting based on internal and external factors. In recessionary times, recruiting activities may be narrowed to fewer campuses and in expansionary periods, just the opposite. Over the past ten years, employers have focused on activities to engage as many students as possible with more time on-campus, leveraging social media, and increasing internship opportunities. No event has caused more organizations to pause and recalibrate their recruiting approach for the fall of 2020. With many campuses operating virtually or limiting non-essential individuals access to campus, organizations face both uncertainty and frustration in conducting traditional recruiting practices. In response to how they planned to approach recruiting this fall (2020), responses revealed:

- 9% --- do not plan to engage in college recruiting this academic year (through spring 2021)
- 16% --- do not plan not engage in college recruiting during the fall, reevaluating the situation in January 2021 for spring recruiting operations
- 13% -- plan to rely on in-house and other virtual technologies to recruit with minimal interaction with college career centers
- 18% --- plan to work closely with campus partners will participate in on-campus events if they occur, using virtual recruiting methods to supplement our efforts
- 44% --- plan to rely completely on virtual technologies for college recruiting while maintaining strong connections with career centers

NEARLY 40 PERCENT OF EMPLOYERS WHO RECRUIT COLLEGE STUDENTS WILL BE ABSENT FROM CAMPUS RECRUITING THIS FALL.

Characteristics of those respondents not recruiting or chosen to delay recruiting:
- 62% rated the overall college market outlook Poor to Fair (mean 2.31)
- 53% rated their industry sector outlook Poor to Fair (mean 2.49)
- Organizations with fewer than 100 employees are 37 percent more likely to be in these two categories
- Manufacturing organizations are 27 percent more likely to be in these two categories
- Professional, Business and Scientific Services organizations are 33 percent more likely to be in these two categories

Good news for Class of 2020. Members of the class of 2020 suddenly found themselves in a rapidly changing recruiting environment by the end of February. Some witnessed the positions they were seeking closed, some had offers rescinded, others had their job search short-circuited and others could not even get started. Shut out in the spring (2020) these graduates seek opportunities now. Employers plan to consider 2020 graduates to fill open roles – 54 percent will definitely consider and 34 percent are likely to very likely to consider. Recent graduates still pursuing employment fit into some employers' recruiting strategy of shifting to just-in-time hiring (see below).
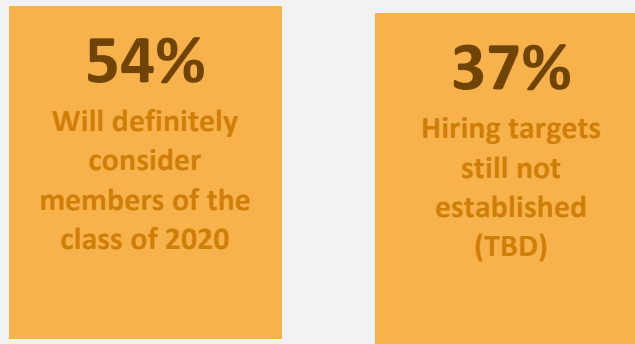
Hiring Intentions for 2020 – 2021. For those organization actively engaged in fall recruiting or anticipate initiating recruiting in the spring of 2021, hiring intentions have been determined or are still being considered. Some organizations report they have no specific hiring targets and will hire depending on how the economy evolves in response to COVID-19. At this time employers plan to:

- 5% --- have no plans to hire new graduates
- 27% --- have set preliminary hiring goals for new college graduates for this year
- 27% --- have established firm hiring targets for new college graduates for this year
- 37% --- have not committed or confirmed hiring goals for this year but will actively connect with college students who seek full-time employment
- 4% --- recruiting but not focusing on new college graduates

Organizations who are stilling determining their hiring targets (TBD) report:

- 42% --- rated the overall college job market to be Poor to Fair (mean 2.80)
- 26% --- rated the market for their industrial sector as Poor to Fair (mean 3.22)
- Organizations with 100 to 4,000 employees 11 percent more likely to be in this group
- Organizations with fewer than 100 employees 7 percent less likely to be in this group
- Agricultural Production and Services and Construction organizations are 33 percent more likely to be in this group
- Non-profit organizations are 37 percent less likely to be in this group
- Those organizations indicating that they would not be hiring graduates this year are mostly from the delaying college recruiting until spring 2021 group, which suggests that their hiring may not resume this year.
- 66% --- are working closely with colleges to identify potential talent

HIRING FOR FULL-TIME POSITIONS: COLLEGE RECRUITING 2020-2021

Since the 2008 recession bottomed out in 2010, the college labor market has experienced ten years of solid, if not spectacular, growth. The figure below uses the year-to-year change for the bachelor's labor market to illustrate the story for this historical period in job growth. From 2010-11 through 2013-14 employers slowly advanced the college labor market by expanding opportunities at a steady growth around 7 percent. Then in 2014-15 opportunities exploded as organizations across all economic sectors began to recruit aggressively. Growth exceeded 15 percent four consecutive years. In 2018-19 growth moderated to 8.5 percent but sprang back to 10 percent in 2019-2020 (before COVID-19). Results from this year suggest that COVID-19 has caused the labor market to go into a swoon with opportunities declining negligibly for bachelor's degrees and sharply for MBA and Masters. Only associate degree graduates will witness a positive market as employers opened positions targeted for that degree level.

Year-Over-Year Change in BA/BS Hiring
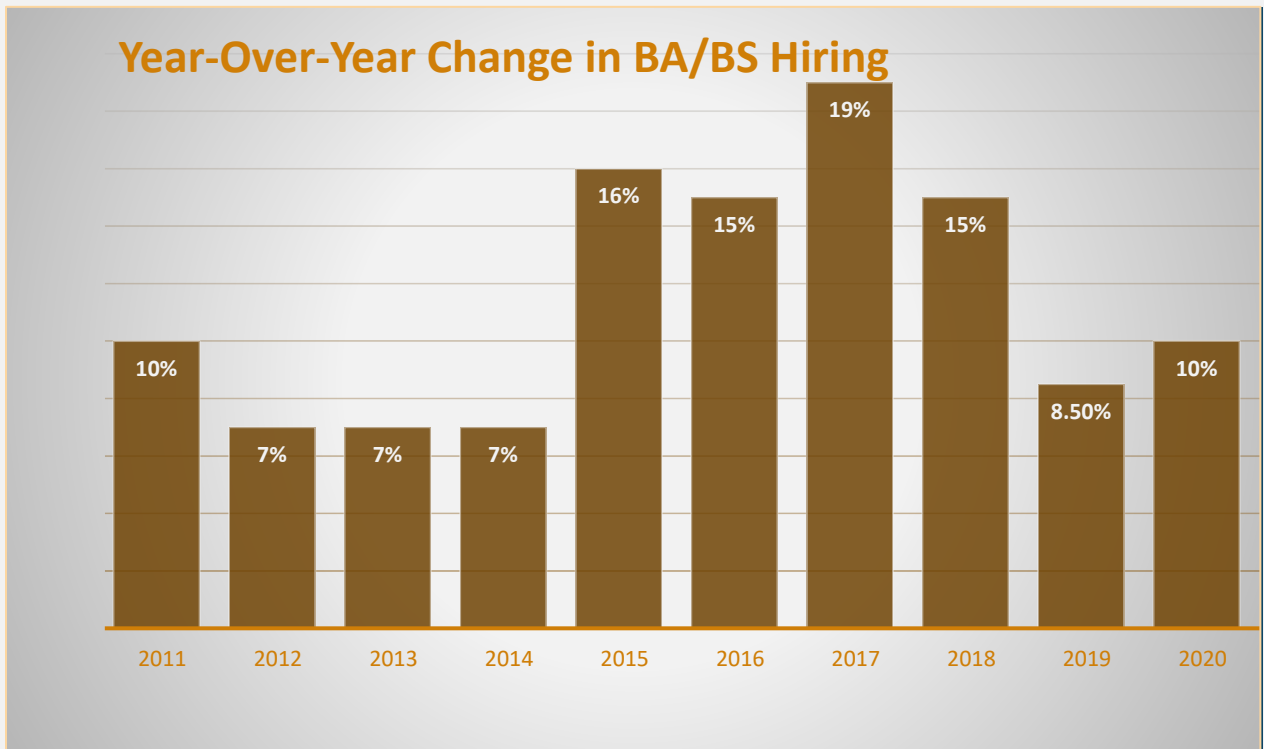
NOTE: AFTER REVIEWING THE SURVEY WITH EMPLOYERS AND EVALUATING THE NUMBER OF RESPONSES FOR DOCTORAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEGREE POSITIONS, THE DECISION WAS TO REMOVE THEM FROM THE SURVEY THIS YEAR. WE APOLOGIZE TO THOSE WHO MAY BE LOOKING FOR THIS INFORMATION.

Employment opportunities for class of 2020-2021. The number of employers able to provide hiring information is sharply lower than previous years. Clearly more employers are still not in a position to provide information that remains uncertain (37 percent in the TBD group). Also the lower number of employers engaging the college labor market and the large number of those hiring who expect to hire fewer than last year influence the actual situation not captured in these figures. 1036 organizations provided hiring information. They plan to hire nearly 59,000 new graduates this year, compared to 63,555 reported by 1535 organizations last year that included PhD and professional degrees.

Bachelor Hiring Down 1%

Approximately 71 percent of the new hires will be at the bachelor's level and 12 percent at the associate's level.

Total hires (across all degree levels) will be down 2 percent compared to hiring levels of a year ago. The positive situation for associates' and the small decline in bachelors' dents the impact of opportunity losses at the advanced degree levels.

Comparison of growth levels find that associates' degrees fuel this year's market with a hiring increase of 16 percent. This news should resonate with two colleges, many facing enrollment declines. Associate opportunities drove the college labor market of over the past eleven years. The need for these graduates is evident. Students who are more likely to be from lower economic households and underrepresented need more support to stay in school (Or return) and take advantage of these opportunities.

TABLE 1 HIRES PER ORGANIZATION, 2020-21

	NUMBER OF EMPLOYERS	NEW HIRES 2019-20 (AVG.)	NEW HIRES ANTICIPATED 2020/21 (AVG.)	CHANGE FROM 2019/20 (%)
ASSOCIATE	366	17.2	20.0	16
BACHELOR	962	44.2	43.7	-1
MBA	249	19.3	15.1	-22
MASTER	342	18.7	17.0	-9
TOTAL	1036	58.1	56.9	-2

Employers expect to reduce MBA hires by 22 percent. MBAs traction over ten years reflects a roller coaster ride with periods of growth offset by contractions. In periods of uncertainty, some students pursue additional degrees hoping for a better position in the labor market when they finish. If experience rings true during the COVID rebound, lower expectations are in order as they may not be able to capitalize on their investment. Employers clearly prefer more experience, no matter type or place, than more degrees.

Hiring by organizational size. Smaller organizations contributed consistently to the improved performance of the college labor market over the past ten years. This year smallest companies with fewer than 99 employees (composed of entrepreneurial start-ups, fast-growth companies, and established local firms) and mid-size companies (500 to 4,000 employees) are poised to increase hiring of associate's and bachelor's degrees. This active hiring offsets the declines

reported by organizations with 100 to 500 employees and those with more than 4,000 employees (except at the associate level).

Small Employers Lead Hiring

Employers with fewer than 100 employees indicated they would hire more associate (up 46 percent) and bachelor talent (up six percent) but were paring back hires for advanced degrees. For organizations with 500 to 3,999 employees hiring improves for associates' (up 10 percent) and bachelors (up 13 percent) degrees. These organizations expect to hire fewer at the MBA and master's level. across all degree levels, except for Professional degrees.

Firms with 100 to 499 employees will hire fewer new graduates across all degree levels from 10 percent at the bachelors to 31 percent at the MBA. The largest organizations are focused on associate degree candidates with hiring expected to increase to 21 percent. Hiring at the bachelor's level drop modestly by four percent. Employers in this group expect to make some deeper cuts in anticipated hiring numbers at the MBA and master's levels.

TABLE 2A. HIRING INTENTIONS FOR ORGANIZATIONS WITH LESS THAN 99 EMPLOYEES

DEGREE	NUMBER OF EMPLOYERS	NEW HIRES 2019-20 (AVG.)	NEW HIRES ANTICIPATED 2020/21 (AVG.)	CHANGE FROM 2019/20 (%)
ASSOCIATE	148	2.2	3.2	46
BACHELOR	365	3.4	3.6	6
MBA	71	1.6	1.5	-4
MASTER	115	2.0	1.7	-15
TOTAL	414	5.0	5.1	3

Readers should use caution when interpreting the figures in Tables 2A to 2D due to the small number of responses for some response cells. These figures provide a snapshot of the current situation that you should verify through hiring trends in your area and discussions with employers or colleagues.

TABLE 2B. HIRING INTENTIONS FOR ORGANIZATIONS WITH 100 TO 499 EMPLOYEES

DEGREE	NUMBER OF EMPLOYERS	NEW HIRES 2019-20 (AVG.)	NEW HIRES ANTICIPATED 2020/21 (AVG.)	CHANGE FROM 2019/20 (%)
ASSOCIATE	103	5.4	4.3	-21
BACHELOR	280	11.2	10.1	-10
MBA	57	3.5	2.4	-31
MASTERS	97	5.4	4.1	-24
TOTAL	293	15.0	13.0	-14

TABLE 2C. HIRING INTENTIONS FOR ORGANIZATIONS WITH 500 TO 3,999 EMPLOYEES

DEGREE	NUMBER OF EMPLOYERS	NEW HIRES 2019/20 (AVG.)	NEW HIRES ANTICIPATED 2020/21 (AVG.)	CHANGE FROM 2019/20 (%)
ASSOCIATE	72	42.9	46.1	10
BACHELOR	171	41.0	46.5	13
MBA	56	29.9	19.3	-36
MASTER	76	28.4	24.9	-12
TOTAL	175	78.7	30.8	3

TABLE 2D. HIRING INTENTIONS FOR ORGANIZATIONS WITH 4,000+ EMPLOYEES

DEGREE	NUMBER OF EMPLOYERS	NEW HIRES 2019/20 (AVG.)	NEW HIRES ANTICIPATED 2020/21 (AVG.)	CHANGE FROM 2019/20 (%)
ASSOCIATE	43	54.2	71.4	31
BACHELOR	146	212.9	204.9	-4
MBA	65	46.0	37.4	-19
MASTER	54	64.3	61.5	-4
TOTAL	157	257.3	251.1	-2

In disaggregating the size categories to the original nine categories presented in the survey. Information for organizations with fewer than 100 employees and 100 to 500 employees remains the same as presented in the tables above. A more nuanced picture emerges but sample size restrictions come into consideration.

- Organizations with 500 to 1,499 will increase hiring at all degree levels except MBA. Bachelor hiring is up a robust 38 percent with an average of 45 hires.
- For organizations with 1500 to 25,000 employees (comprising three groups – 1500 to 3999 employees, 4000 to 9999 employees and 10,000 to 24,999 employees), hiring weakens across all degree levels, except at the associates degree. Bachelor's degree hiring will be 19 percent lower this year than last across these organizations.
- Organizations with more than 25,000 present a problem due to the wide spread in their reported hiring numbers. Fifty percent will be hiring 75 or fewer new college graduates while 9 percent will be hiring 1000 or more. Separating organizations hiring 1000 or more new graduates, the average hires per company of these companies is approximately 2000, an 11 percent increase over last year. The remaining employers in this group expect to hire an average of 143 new hires, a slight decline of 2 percent from last year. Associate degree graduates fare well with this group with a strong 50 percent growth, but MBAs will see opportunities shrink and master's numbers remain unchanged.
- Larger organizations offer MBAs the best opportunities as they will be hiring but the numbers remain significantly below last year.

FOR THIS YEAR'S BACHELORS OUTLOOK, ACCORDING TO THIS SAMPLE OF EMPLOYERS, THE SMALLEST ORGANIZATIONS (UNDER 100 EMPLOYEES), ORGANIZATIONS WITH 500 TO 1499 EMPLOYEES AND A HANDFUL OF VERY LARGE EMPLOYERS ARE OFFSETTING THE OPPORTUNITIES BEING LOST AT ALL OTHER ORGANIZATIONS.

Hiring by economic sector (segment). All 20 of the major industry groups designated through NAIC codes reported hiring information for 2019-20. The small number of responses with complete hiring information for Oil & Gas, Utilities, Wholesale, Transportation, Information Services, Leasing Services, Arts & Entertainment and Administrative Services resulted in their information not being included in this section. With the little information provided by these sectors, several appear to be inclined to hire additional college graduates this year (Utilities, Wholesale, Information Services and Administrative Services) while others probably will reduce hiring (Oil & Gas, Transportation, Leasing Services, and Arts and Entertainment).

Information provided by the other sectors for total hires across all degrees, associate's and bachelor's degree levels offer the best industry-based measures for this labor

market study. In the tables in this section only information deemed reliable has been included.

An examination of the change in total hires in 2019-2020 and this year reveals several clusters going in divergent directions. One group that is expanding opportunities includes Accommodation and Food Services (hotels only represented in this group), Government, Health Services, Non-profits and Retail (primarily e-retail). A cluster that includes Business, Professional & Scientific Services, Educational Services and Manufacturing are slightly decreasing hiring this year. The final cluster is cutting more severely including Agricultural Production and Services, Construction, and Finance and Insurance.

Insights for subsectors of most major sectors cannot be presented because of data limitations. However, Manufacturing and Business, Professional and Scientific Services offer some insight into selected subsectors (only bachelors information provided).

- Within Manufacturing, the auto, aerospace, truck subsector reports hiring will be down about nine percent at the Bachelors level though they will be seeking an average 34 new hires.
- Insufficient information with other Manufacturing subsectors hinders providing actual numbers. Gleaning from available information, Food & Beverage Production and Chemical, Petroleum and Plastics hiring looks positive this year. In comparison Primary Metals, Fabricated Metals & Equipment Production and Surgical Equipment plan to cut back slightly on hiring.
- Business, Professional and Scientifics Services subsectors present mixed outlooks. Keep in mind many organizations in this sector are smaller when considering these projections.
- Tax, Payroll Tax, including CPA firms – hiring will be down 20 percent, averaging 4.7 hires per organization.
- Engineering Services – hiring will be down nearly 40 percent, averaging 7.3 hires per organization.
- Computer Services, Development and Services – hiring will be up strongly by over 70 percent, averaging 36.7 hires per company
- Scientific Research (biological, physical, clinical, social) – hiring will be up 20 percent, averaging 9.2 hires per company.
- Advertising, Marketing, PR – hiring will be down 15 percent, averaging 10.5 per organization.

INDUSTRY SEGMENT	NEW HIRES 2019/20 (AVG.)	NEW HIRES ANTICIPATED 2020/21 (AVG.)	CHANGE FROM 2019/20 (%)
ACCOMMODATIONS & FOOD SERVICES	10.8	11.6	7
AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES	33.9	31.3	-19
BUSINESS, PROFESSIONAL & SCIENTIFIC SERVICES	24.3	23.3	-4
CONSTRUCTION	17.1	13.6	-20
EDUCATIONAL SERVICES	140.8	139.5	-1
FINANCE AND INSURANCE	99.2	87.3	-12
GOVERNMENT	107.0	112.3	5
HEALTH CARE SERVICES	43.9	44.4	1
MANUFACTURING	59.5	58.6	-1
NON-PROFITS	21.2	23.7	12
RETAIL SERVICES	184.6	187.7	2

Industry sector hiring intentions differ by degree level. The following tables present the outlooks for the associate, bachelors, MBA and master's degree levels. Sectors not included in the tables failed to meet the criteria we use for including information.

PLEASE BE CAUTIOUS IN INTERPRETING THE REPORTED CHANGES. THEY REFLECT ONLY A SMALL PORTION OF EACH SECTOR AND ARE NOT GENERALIZABLE. REMEMBER SMALL NUMBERS PRODUCE LARGE PERCENTAGE CHANGES THAT MAY OVERSTATE THE HIRING OUTLOOK FOR THAT DEGREE.

Any momentum for college hiring in 2020-21 comes from strong gain for associate's degrees. Nearly all sectors intend to hire more associate candidates, except for

Agricultural Production and Services which remains unchanged and Educational Services which is down slightly.

Bachelor's hiring is more mixed with some sectors expecting to hire more (Accommodations, Business, Professional & Scientific Services, Government, Non-profits, and Retail). Other sectors appear to be lowering the number they will be hiring, including Agricultural Production and Services, Construction, Finance & Insurance, Health Care and Manufacturing.

MBAs and master's degree outlook is shakier. After several years of strong growth, MBA and master's hiring opportunities shrink this year.

TABLE 3B. HIRING TARGETS FOR ASSOCIATE DEGREE GRADUATES 2020-2021 BY INDUSTRY SECTOR

INDUSTRY SEGMENT	NEW HIRES 2019/20 (AVG.)	NEW HIRES ANTICIPATED 2020/21 (AVG.)	CHANGE FROM 2019/20 (%)
AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES	6.5	6.5	NC
BUSINESS, PROFESSIONAL & SCIENTIFIC SERVICES	23.1	24.0	4
CONSTRUCTION	2.5	3.5	40
EDUCATIONAL SERVICES	41.4	40.3	-3
GOVERNMENT	10.5	16.05	53
HEALTH CARE SERVICES	31.6	38.6	22
MANUFACTURING	10.4	43.0	14
NON-PROFITS	6.8	8.8	30

INDUSTRY SEGMENT	NEW HIRES 2019/20 (AVG.)	NEW HIRES ANTICIPATED 2020/21 (AVG.)	CHANGE FROM 2019/20 (%)
ACCOMMODATIONS & FOOD SERVICES	9.4	10.4	11
AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES	30.4	27.8	-8
BUSINESS, PROFESSIONAL & SCIENTIFIC SERVICES	12.5	13.3	4
CONSTRUCTION	16.0	12.4	-22
EDUCATIONAL SERVICES	111.0	110.0	NC
FINANCE AND INSURANCE	69.8	62.3	-11
GOVERNMENT	65.5	70.1	7
HEALTH CARE SERVICES	24.7	24.3	-2
MANUFACTURING	44.4	43.0	-3
NON-PROFITS	16.6	18.2	9
RETAIL SERVICES	180.8	182.2	1

INDUSTRY SEGMENT	NEW HIRES 2019/20 (AVG.)	NEW HIRES ANTICIPATED 2020/21 (AVG.)	CHANGE FROM 2019/20 (%)
MBA			
BUSINESS, PROFESSIONAL & SCIENTIFIC SERVICES	4.2	4.0	-5
FINANCE & INSURANCE	38.4	20.6	-46
EDUCATIONAL SERVICES	38.0	34.9	-8
MANUFACTURING	17.7	13.5	-24
MASTERS			
BUSINESS, PROFESSIONAL & SCIENTIFIC SERVICES	18.4	14.4	-21
EDUCATION SERVICES	18.7	20.6	10
GOVERNMENT	46.6	47.0	1
HEALTH SERVICES	13.3	11.9	-10
MANUFACTURING	23.8	18.6	-22
NON-PROFITS	21.2	23.7	12

FROM COMMENTS PROVIDED BY EMPLOYERS WE CAN ADD THESE INSIGHTS. EDUCATIONAL SERVICES WERE IN THE MIDST OF STARTING A SCHOOL YEAR MUDDLED BY COVID AND POLITICS. MOST STATED THEY WOULD NOT HAVE A SOLID HANDLE ON STAFFING UNTIL SPRING, AS THEY NEED TIME TO DETERMINE THE NUMBER OF TEACHERS WHO VACATED POSITIONS BECAUSE OF THE VIRUS. IN HEALTH SERVICES MANY AMBULATORY CARE FACILITIES, OUTPATIENT SURGICAL UNITS AND OTHER UNITS WHO REDUCED STAFFING DURING THE INITIAL MONTHS OF THE VIRUS HAVE RECALLED STAFF AND ARE DETERMINING ANY ADDITIONAL HIRING THEY REQUIRE. GOVERNMENT RESPONDENTS EXPRESSED CAUTION AS FUTURE FUNDING WAS UNCERTAIN GIVEN CURRENT BUDGET IMBALANCES. AGRICULTURE PRODUCTION AND SERVICES ORGANIZATIONS CONTENDING WITH SEVERAL ISSUES SUGGEST THAT HIRING MAY BE MORE POSITIVE TOWARD SPRING.

Academic discipline outlook. To simplify the survey this question was modified from previous years. During periods of economic uncertainty, employers have the option of narrowing the focus of their talent pool to fill essential positions. A question tapping into this option was included. In addition, employers selected the academic majors of interest from a more defined list of academic major groups.

Eighty-three (83) percent of employers expect to keep the same academic majors in their talent pool as in previous years. Another 13 percent expect to broaden the scope of majors they will considered while a less number (four percent) will narrow the scope of majors considered.

Nevertheless, the organizations selected engineering, business and "all majors" as the most likely to be under consideration. Computer science/IT, accounting and data analytics followed. Table 4 presents the hiring change according to bachelor level academic disciplines. Organizations' talent pool can include a mix of multiple academic majors. To interpret this information properly, the change in hiring reflects the organizations outlook not specifically the academic discipline. For example, organizations who plan to include accounting majors in their talent pool are likely to reduce by 11 percent. Therefore, accounting can expect to see many of the organizations they connect with reducing opportunities but it does not mean all the reduction will be from accounting positions.

 NOTE: ACCOUNTING IS THE ONE GROUP IN THIS REPORT THAT DOES NOT AGREE WITH INFORMATION FROM OTHER SOURCES. CPA INPUT RELIES ON SMALL AND MID-SIZE FIRMS OVER THE VERY LARGE FIRMS WHO PARTICIPATE IN THE SURVEY BUT DO NOT PROVIDE HIRING TARGETS. ACCOUNTING POSITIONS IN MANUFACTURING AND FINANCE ALSO INFLUENCE THIS NUMBER AND BOTH SECTORS ARE DECREASING HIRES. WE ARE STILL LOOKING AT THE DATA TO DETERMINE POSSIBLE REASONS FOR THE DIFFERENCES.

Table 4. Organization Hiring Intention by Academic Majors in Their Bachelor Talent Pool

ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE	AVERAGE HIRED IN 2019/20	AVERAGE EXPECTED TO HIRE IN 2020/21	EXPECTED CHANGE FROM 2019/20 (%)
ALL MAJORS	85.7	89.7	4
ACCOUNTING	38.2	33.8	-11
BUSINESS (INCLUDING FINANCE, LOGISTICS, MARKETING, HR, SALES, RELATED)	32.6	34.5	6
COMPUTER SCIENCE/IT	43.7	47.3	8
ENGINEERING (ALL DISCIPLINES)	29.8	29.6	<-1
COMMUNICATION, PR, ADVERTISING	40.3	42.0	4
DATA ANALYTICS, INFORMATIONSCIENCE, STATISTICS, HUMAN-COMPUTER INTERACTIONS	48.2	50.3	4
SOCIAL SCIENCES	42.6	55.7	>30
ARTS & HUMANITIES	59.4	82.5	>30
EDUCATION (SPECIAL EDUCATION, PRE-K, K, ELEMENTARY)	84.1	79.7	-5
HEALTH (INCLUDING NURSING, DIETETICS, SOCIAL WORK, TECHNICIANS, SPECIALISTS)	41.6	38.4	-7
CONSTRUCTION, AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES, & AGRI-BUSINESS, NATURAL RESOURCES	25.6	20.0	-22

Due to an oversight, biological and physical science majors were not included in the options. We apologize for this omission.

Comparisons by Location. Location plays an important role in shaping the labor market whether globally, nationally or within specific regions of the U.S. Respondents first indicated whether they recruited globally, nationally or within specific regions of the U.S. While regional employers are likely to identify recruiting in only one region, some employers may recruit in multiple regions.

Globally oriented recruiters showed strength in their hiring, except at the MBA level. The nationally focused employers only expect to increase hiring at the associated level. For all other degrees hiring will be down – four percent at the bachelors' level. Despite all the troubles associated with COVID-19, regional employers remain resilient. Associates degree hiring is up modestly by six percent and bachelors' hiring inched down by one percent. MBA hiring is sharply off.

TABLE 5A. OUTLOOK FOR GLOBALLY ORIENTED RECRUITING

DEGREE LEVEL	NEW HIRES 2019/20 (AVG.)	NEW HIRES ANTICIPATED 2020/21 (AVG.)	CHANGE FROM 2019/20(%)
ASSOCIATE	18.8	21.8	16
BACHELOR	111.6	123.7	11
MBA	24.9	22.4	-10
MASTER	25.6	30.4	19
TOTAL HIRES	**130.9**	**143.5**	**10**

TABLE 5B. OUTLOOK FOR NATIONALLY ORIENTED RECRUITING

DEGREE LEVEL	NEW HIRES 2019/20 (AVG.)	NEW HIRES ANTICIPATED 2020/21 (AVG.)	CHANGE FROM 2019/20 (%)
ASSOCIATE	26.7	35.5	33
BACHELOR	92.2	88.1	-4
MBA	28.7	23.9	-17
MASTER	30.5	25.7	-16
TOTAL HIRES	**114.2**	**110.1**	**-4**

TABLE 5C. OUTLOOK FOR REGIONALLY ORIENTED RECRUITING

DEGREE LEVEL	NEW HIRES 2019/20 (AVG.)	NEW HIRES ANTICIPATED 2020/21 (AVG.)	CHANGE FROM 2019/20 (%)
ASSOCIATE	14.1	14.9	6
BACHELOR	18.1	17.9	-1
MBA	11.3	7.1	-37
MASTER	10.9	10.0	-8
TOTAL HIRES	**27.6**	**26.2**	**-5**

Note: Regional reports are no longer included in this report but are part of the Recruiting Trends presentation package. Regional results will be made available at the CERI website at the completion of our presentations.

Starting salary. Because of the swirling uncertainties in the economy, we limited our starting salary question to one: Will starting salary offers increase, decrease or remain the same this year? Employers expect to hold starting salaries steady as:

- 84% -- starting salary offers will remain the same as last year
- 13% -- starting salary offers will increase this year
- 3% -- starting salary offers will decrease this year

Technology and Campus Recruiting 2020

Technologies both new and untried dominate college recruiting scene this fall (2020) and probably into 2021. Most colleges remain closed to most non-instructional members with instruction often on-line, meaning students are not even on many campuses. Employers will have to utilize virtual technologies whether they want to or not. Virtual career fairs, for many, will be far different from the in-person methods they cherish. Yet virtual is the new reality that raises interest in employers' use of technology.

Through several discussions with employers over the past six months about their approach to technology, we developed several agree or disagree statements for employers to consider. The first group focused on whether employers would utilize in-house virtual platforms to connect with students (organization career fair, for example), engage in college specific events or participate in multi-school events.

Employer's engagement centers on working within both single and multi-school contexts with many not opting to use their own virtual technologies. Approximately 30 percent are using their own technologies that opens possibilities for other approaches to college recruiting.

TABLE 6A. VIRTUAL PLATFORMS UTILIZATION

MY ORGANIZATION:	AGREE (%)	NEITHER (%)	DISAGREE (%)
WILL UTILIZE OUR OWN VIRTUAL PLATFORMS AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE (HOSTING OWN CAREER FAIRS)	29	23	48
WILL OPT TO ENGAGE IN COLLEGE SPECIFIC EVENTS NOT MULTI-SCHOOL EVENTS	62	23	16
WILL BE OPEN TO PARTICIPATING IN MULTI-SCHOOL EVENTS	64	20	16

TABLE 6B. SCOPE USING VIRTUAL TECHNOLOGIES

MY ORGANIZATION THROUGH VIRTUAL TECHNOLOGY:	AGREE (%)	NEITHER (%)	DISAGREE (%)
PLANS TO CONCENTRATE ON FEWER SCHOOLS FOR FULL-TIME HIRES BECAUSE OF COVID-19	25	23	52
PLANS TO RECRUIT AT MORE SCHOOLS THIS YEAR BECAUSE OF COVID-19	30	30	40

TABLE 6C. OTHER OPTIONS BEING CONSIDERED

MY ORGANIZATION:	AGREE (%)	NEITHER (%)	DISAGREE (%)
PLANS TO HIRE MORE INDIVIDUALS WITH CREDENTIALS/CERTIFICATES THAN CANDIDATES WITH DEGREES	12	26	61
WILL RELY ON STAFFING AGENCIES TO ASSIST IN REACHING COLLEGE STUDENTS	7	11	72

Some employers find advantages through virtual technologies to expand the connections with more campuses. At the same time, others appear to be reducing the number of schools visited.

The virtual technologies that employers have chosen to utilize in recruiting this year are already familiar to students, career professionals and talent professionals. For recruiters the virtual career fair may be unfamiliar with many taking their first steps into this technology. Employers were asked to select from a list of possible technology options available to them and the ones they have opted to utilize this recruiting season. The following list descends from most selected option to least selected.

- The top tier of technologies being utilized
    - College and university employment management systems (Handshake, Simplicity, 12Twenty, for example)
    - Virtual career fairs (sponsored by colleges, professional associations, industry affiliations)
    - LinkedIn
    - Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, for example)
- The middle tier of technologies being utilized
    - Job boards not associated with colleges or universities
    - Non-proprietary virtual platforms (third party)
    - Proprietary virtual platforms
    - Supplemental applicant tracking systems or recruiting technologies not currently in-house
- Low tier of technologies being utilized
    - Staffing agencies
    - Candidate assessment tools using predictive games or AI technologies (Knack, Pymetrics, for example)

Respondents could provide additional technologies not covered in the provided list. Two options mentioned frequently: using **Zoom** for organizational information sessions and conversations with employees and **Indeed** to identify and connect with potential talent.

With limited opportunities to connect on campus, engagement with students challenges employers who seek to establish and advance their organizations' brand. Employers briefly discussed how their plans for engaging students will unfold this year. Many appear to be doubling down on approaches they are familiar with such as social media, campus contacts and employment systems used by colleges.

Utilize college employment systems more effectively to develop a bigger pool of potential candidates. Be more effective in reaching out to students. Couple these efforts with effective use of sources such as **Indeed**.

Virtual everything! Participate in virtual events offered by colleges, student organizations and industry associations with particular focus on career fairs. Will host own virtual events open to all students or limited to invited candidates, depending on the objective.

LinkedIn. Unleash the power of LinkedIn by bringing together students of interested, doing a better job of seeking candidates, and promoting our organization.

Establish a **broader visual presence** through Zoom or Microsoft Teams mash-ups and information sessions. Developing video for YouTube and organization's website.

Leveraging interns who are either full-time employees with the organization or have returned to campus to identify friends who are interested or can open connections to student groups and faculty.

Several employers summarize what many are trying to do:

 "We are using it (the virus) as an opportunity to go to more schools and additionally we are trying to engage in more events at each school. Previously we were limited to how much we can attend because our staff can only attend so many events during our busy time. With us being virtual, we anticipate it will be easier to get staff participation at events and therefore we've signed up for more things and more schools."

"We have a variety of virtual engagement activities, connecting students with employees at various levels across the enterprise. Our focus will be sharing experiences, industry information, career development, rather than traditional company information sessions."

"It's important that we explain who we are, what we can do, and maintain a presence in the colleges we are targeting."

DIVERSITY RECRUITING DURING COVID-19

Organizations desire to develop a talented, diverse workforce. Over the past five years the Recruiting Trends report has periodically contained information on diversity recruiting issues. Organizations are about equally divided among those having specific diversity hiring targets, general diversity hiring goals, and no diversity planning around recruiting. The heightened concerns over social justice and inequality crystalizing during the pandemic sharpens the discussion on diversity recruiting on both campuses and within organizations. The increasing use of virtual (often AI driven) technologies in recruiting has attached hope to the possibilities

for a broader scope in recruiting. Even though nearly 45 percent of respondents do not believe technologies will change their current recruiting strategies, they expressed hope that their reach would be geographically wider and more inclusive according to these statements.

	AGREE (%)	NEITHER (%)	DISAGREE (%)
VIRTUAL TECHNOLOGIES WILL NOT CHANGE OUR CURRENT DIVERSITY RECRUITING STRATEGIES.	43	29	28
BY USING VIRTUAL TECHNOLOGIES MY ORGANIZATION PLANS TO REACH OUT TO POTENTIAL TALENT IN HARD-TO-REACH GEOGRAPHIC AREAS.	44	35	21
OUR VIRTUAL RECRUITING EFFORTS WILL RESULT IN A MORE INCLUSIVE APPLICANT POOL.	53	37	10
OUR VIRTUAL TECHNOLOGIES WILL ALLOW US TO CONNECT WITH MORE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES, BROADENING OUR SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE OF OUR APPLICANT POOL.	58	32	10

Awareness of some of the more subtle problems with language used in recruiting messaging. National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) advocates for review of organizational materials to ensure they foster respect for all individuals. Organizations are using this time to review and update materials as mentioned in comments to the open-ended question on messaging.

About one-third of responding organizations highly value and are strongly dedicated to diversity and inclusion and speak passionately of this commitment. These organizations work continuously to enhance their inclusion and diversity efforts. As one organization has a *powerful program "EveryoneIN!"* that drives recruiting.

Another group representing about one-third of respondents has taken this time to review, revise and clean up their messaging. Some have added additional clarity going beyond the generic EEOC language often used with job announcements; some have updated wording to reflect appropriate nouns and pronouns. Others are expanding their visual images to reflect the diversity of the organizations. Others have taken action in consultant to learn better methods to recruit diverse candidates.

Our organization has "ensured job description wording was inclusive and information regarding our inclusion initiatives; publicizing what our company is doing regarding inclusion and diversity; pictures include diverse people; created newsletter specific for our HBCU partners."

Formed a Diversity and Inclusion Committee to research best practices to inform and guide diversity and inclusion programs."

"We recently rolled out a new employment brand that includes strong, active language about our commitment to an inclusive work environment. We are also seeing changes internally with more open forums and actions from within the organization to truly practice what we preach around an inclusive culture."

About one-third organizations are not doing anything at this time or believe their current efforts embrace diversity. Several explained the best way to achieve a diverse workplace is to find the best qualified talent and bring them into the organization.

"Finding the right individual with all the skills to fill the position is the primary goal, regardless of race or gender."

Organizations have also altered their recruiting practices in attempts to be more inclusive. Respondents provided many exciting examples of what they were trying to do to improve diversity. Several options were mentioned more frequently and are presented here.

- Adding colleges with more diverse student populations as partners
- Training and education efforts for all staff on inclusion
- Acquiring better data that track diverse candidates through the recruiting process
- Broadening outreach to student groups, organizations and associations that promote diverse groups
- Expanding geographical area to encompass areas with more diverse population than currently
- Ensuring the composition of recruiting team is diverse

INTERNSHIPS, CO-OPS AND EARLY TALENT PROGRAMS

Adjustments to intern and co-op recruiting due to COVID-19. Employers had to make quick adjustments to their early career programs, including internships and co-ops, in response to the rapid developments around COVID-19. In comparison to full-time hiring internships and co-ops were hurt much more seriously. Approximately 40 percent of employers eliminated their

programs for the summer. The situation was further acerbated by colleges who opted to protect student health and safety by canceling for-credit internship programs (did not include co-ops). The adjustments employers made with regard to their early career programs:

- 25% --- closed programs and did not accept interns, co-ops or students for professional practice
- 6% --- curtailed recruiting without making any offers
- 10% --- curtailed recruiting, closed programs and rescinded extended offers
- 17% --- continued recruiting for interns, co-ops or offered professional practice placements but reduced the number originally planned
- 37% --- continued recruiting for interns, co-ops or professional practice assignments hiring as we planned
- 5% -- continued recruiting for interns, co-ops or professional practice assignments actually hiring more than originally planned

Those employers who reported hiring more interns and co-ops than expected cited pressing needs for virtual customer support, on-site logistics (delivery/distribution) and data analysts.

FIFTY-NINE PERCENT OF EMPLOYERS HIRED INTERNS/CO-OPS FOR THE SUMMER OF 2020 BUT MAY HAVE ADJUSTED THEIR HIRING EXPECTATIONS.

Work arrangements for interns and co-ops during summer 2020.

- 31% --- worked virtually with remote teams or supervisor
- 21% --- mixed arrangements with some working on-site and others remotely
- 27% --- worked on-site as planned
- 27% --- worked in blended rotation virtual and on-site assignments

Insights gained from interns/co-ops working remotely. Organizations that hosted interns and co-ops during the summer (2020) provided thoughts on how to successfully structure remote work assignments.

- Communicate! Communicate! Communicate! – Clearly the most important step for success.
- Provide clear expectations for both intern and supervisor; set clear objectives; establish clear guidelines on conducting work
- Set a schedule with regular touch points to check in; hold daily meetings; use Zoom to explain assignments
- Ensure a constant, structured workflow; need to plan out ahead as cannot assign anything that just crops up

- Collaborate and collaborate some more
- Greater pre-planning by supervisor; helpful to assign intern a mentor in addition to supervisor

"We learned to give them a ton of coaching in teams and 1 on 1. We also delegated clear tasks with a lot of structure, but gave them independent time to follow through with those and reach out as needed. We ensured they felt they had the support, but didn't need to be on conference call 24/7 just "shadowing" they were included on project work."

"We had to be more specific about deadlines than we were used to. We had to have a lot of trust that they were able to stay on task. There were a few that struggled with the independence at first, we had to help them build their confidence by being available and more regular check ins via webcam. Webcams/Digital meeting was invaluable during this time. Seeing everyone's' faces made it much easier to communicate and recognize whether or not you were understood."

"It was important that teams knew the equipment and resources an intern would need to be able to successfully work from home. Regular check-ins with the team became critical.

Advantages and disadvantages of interns/co-ops working remotely. Some organizations offered virtual internships before COVID-19. For others this was their first experience and could not anticipate the outcome for their interns and the organization. As they prepare their early talent programs for the next cycle of interns, co-ops and students, they offered what they saw as the advantages and disadvantages of virtual internships.

- **Advantages**:
  - Provided a safe experience for students
  - Cost-savings: did not have to arrange housing, students did not have to pay for housing, no commuting costs (time and money)
  - Students learned valuable skills including new way to work, time management, discipline, adaptability
  - Communication by providing clearer messaging and guidelines; students also learned to communicate more effectively in a work setting
  - More flexible work schedules and structuring work arrangements – led to increased production as worked planned out with clear assignments
  - More one-on-one connection team members, supervisor; had wider access to individuals, teams and leadership throughout the organization.
  - Adjustments in policies and procedures to be more flexible and adaptive in current and future uncertain circumstances

- **Disadvantages**
    - Loss of the overall program experience with no social events and limited exposure to organizational culture
    - Lost the spontaneous connections and conversations of working together and able to cultivate relationships face-to-face; lost informal networking opportunities
    - Delays due to technology problems (sometimes organization, more often student issues) – often had to provide additional technical support to students
    - Not as hands-on, unable to provide critical experiences not available virtually
    - Communication issues such as slower response time from inter-department connections; one-on-one communication not as personal, often felt disconnected
    - Time-consuming supervision
    - Students unable to build understanding of how to work with others
    - Virtual interns were "Out of sight, out of mind" to hiring managers

"An advantage is that we re-assessed our internship program and focus on what it means to be an intern at our company and created a strong weekly learning series from the change from in-person to virtual. A change we anticipate will remain, even when interns are able to be with us in person again."

"We had more interns that wanted to stay on in the fall than we ever had with onsite. It is possible for us to have interns from more places than when we require onsite. It is a lot harder on the mentor when the intern is virtual. It is also harder for the intern to feel as connected to the team and the mentor. It took longer for both of them to get comfortable with each other than when in person. There are also technology issues when remote, but that is true of all employees."

"The loss of social interaction and loss of spontaneous conversations in the office was a disadvantage as the strong suit of working at our company is a strong associate culture. An advantage was that our students could work where they work best – outside, room, deck, etc. – and they could manage their schedule to best fit their naturally productive working hours."

"Disadvantage: connections with others was more challenging; advantage: they were able to learn things that they would likely have never learned in their entire lives because of the situation. We made every attempt to help our interns see the positive side of what they were experiencing this year, even though it was unconventional in every way and somewhat challenging for some of them."

Intentions for recruiting interns/co-ops for 2020 – 2021. Students seeking internships, co-ops and other preprofessional experiences can expect more opportunities throughout the remainder of 2020 and 2021. Only ten percent of respondents indicated that they would not be recruiting any interns or co-ops this year. Approximately one-quarter will delay decisions on whether to utilize

- 10% -- definitely not hiring interns, co-ops this year
- 27% -- due to uncertainty surrounding COVID-19 will delay decision on hiring interns/co-ops until January, 2021
- 37% -- plan to hire same number of interns/co-ops as able to this past year
- 12% -- plan to increase the number of interns/co-ops compared to last year
- 8% -- plan to hire fewer interns/co-ops compared to last year

THE INTERSHIP MARKET MAY BE MORE ROBUST THAN PROJECTED IN THESE FINDINGS. AS EMPLOYERS FIND WAYS TO ADOPT VIRTUAL INTERNSHIPS INTO THEIR WORK ASSIGNMENTS, THEY BECOME MORE RECEPTIVE TO HOSTING MORE INTERNS. INTERNSHIP POSTINGS HAVE SURGED OVER RECENT WEEKS.

Adaptations to early career programs due to COVID-19. Organizations anticipate engaging interns, co-ops and students through the academic year and into the summer of 2021. Most plan to continue in a virtual format and have adjusted their programs accordingly. Others tell students they will review the situation in early 2021 as to their ability to host students whether virtually or onsite. Some are reconfiguring assignments hosting fewer at main offices and placing more in field-based experiences. The following comments cover the typical approaches organizations may be making to their programs.

"Completely virtual on-boarding & orientation, coupled with virtual mixers with company executives and full-time new hire cadre."

"More virtual networking – game nights, happy hours, coffee chats – our intern program was already running a series of lunch and learn virtually as well as virtual intern presentations so that all interns across the country could take part in those activities."

"Our hiring numbers are reduced, more summer interns who would normally leave at the end of the summer, are staying on through the fall since the work and school are virtual."

"Since a lot of our work is hands on lab testing or plant support we don't plan to change our intern activities. That is why we had to rescind out offers this past summer since we didn't think our work could be done virtually."

"Small changes in orientation to better prepare for the virtual environment, curating additional resources for working from home, more virtual social events."

"Training experiences have been socially distanced (when in person) or virtual; assignments for interns look drastically different and the wins we've identified for them have been completely redefined."

"We have put it (intern program) on hold as we wait to see if we will be rolling out a program next summer. We have been transparent with students by letting them know that we are working through various scenarios and will not start interviewing until we have a plan set in place."

Pending work arrangements for new interns and co-ops. Internship/co-op work arrangement will be normal for approximately 40 percent of organizations hosting students. Another third reflect the caution of organizations who are still evaluating if hosting a student is possible. One-fourth (25 percent) will host students virtually.

- 32% -- uncertain at this time – working on possible options
- 25% -- working virtually with supervisor or teams until onsite work is deemed appropriate
- 34% -- working at facilities as normal
- 9% -- working in selected facilities or locations with appropriate safety measures in place

- **LOOKING AHEAD: LASTING IMPACT OF COVID-19**

Will COVID-19 adjustments have a long lasting impact on college recruiting? On the other hand, will recruiting return to the tried-and-true methods that have been in place for decades. Some changes will stick while others fade away. Nearly 60 percent expect virtual recruiting to become the norm but they still expect to be back on campus as soon as possible. Surprisingly, few employ data analytics to measure the effectiveness of their recruiting process.

Students who take a gap year or complete their degree online because of COVID face no penalties when they undertake their job search. One thing new graduates can expect is that more work will be undertaken remotely.

TABLE 8. ADJUSTMENTS TO COVID; SHORT AND LONG-TERM			
My organization:	Agree (%)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)
Recruiting			
Plan on visiting campuses in spring 2021 if open.	43	21	36
Anticipate our virtual recruiting strategy(ies) will be the norm moving forward.	58	26	15
Using data analytics to determine the best campuses at which to recruit and to evaluate recruiting methods.	21	26	54
Students			
Juniors and seniors who choose not to return to the classroom this year (gap year) will not be negatively impacted later when seeking position.	68	21	12
Will not penalize applicants who have had to complete their degree on-line as a result of COVID-19.	83	9	3
Likely to look more closely at candidates who obtain relevant certificates and credentials for full-time positions.	36	41	23
Receptive to considering international students if U.S. hiring climate is favorable.	25	32	44
Receptive to considering international students for full-time employment in our international offices or facilities.	17	41	42
Other			
Anticipates that more work assignments will have the option of working remotely.	46	24	30

Virtual Career Fairs! Really? Some employers have experience with virtual career fairs as these events have been around for a number of years, but most employers attribute in-person relationship building as the key to successful recruiting. Students avoid virtual fairs (almost everything virtual) as the event is outside their normal comfort zone and increases their anxiety in an already highly anxious process. So having to transition quickly and completely to virtual career fairs has and will temper everyone's expectations.

Nearly one-third of respondents already had participated in a virtual fair at the time of the survey. Some for just the very first time prior to completing the survey. For those who have yet to participate, most know they would be shortly.

Respondents who have participated in virtual fairs provided insights on the advantages and the disadvantages of virtual fairs.

- **Disadvantages of Virtual Career Fairs**
  - Absence of face-to-face connections that drive deeper relationships with highly qualified students.
  - Poorly configured technology platforms that are either outdated, clumsy to navigate or too quickly brought into use without enough testing. All systems are inflexible and difficult to use.
  - No standard platform. Have to deal with several different platforms each day.
  - Attendance issues by students who do not seem to be motivated to participate given that employers pay to attend. Several employers suggested that the pay structure should be based on the number of students that visit the company during the fair. This places the burden on the schools to do a better job of marketing the fair's participating employers.
  - Not enough promotion to students. Many companies are not consumer brands and lack name recognition. Partners need to do better in educating students about companies.
  - Students lack experience to carry on conversations. Schools need to do more coaching to help students be ready for the fair.
  - Conversation time is too short. Options for extended chats are limited and often not easy to use.
  - "Learning curve" for everyone.
  - Schools are still charging too much given the current situation and the services being provided.

"Virtual career fairs have been extremely poorly attended at the six fairs attended so far. I see no advantage thus far other than lack of a commute. I believe career services needs to do a vastly better job advertising, training, and encouraging students on these fairs and how to attend."

"Several schools having virtual events but there is no particular platform, very limited or poor understanding of the platforms, and worse communication skills of getting information out from the schools to the employers. For example, some have used Handshake, but Handshake is NOT user friendly to businesses – it is a clunky and cumbersome system, which is extremely time-consuming, and a non-intuitive system with cutting edge technology for the early 2000's. There is NO way to influence or give feedback to Handshake to make it a better system for both schools and employers; its one-size system that doesn't fit at all."

"Handshake is the common platform and does not really allow for organizational interaction. If the schools are using Handshake, the employers MUST buy into a premium package (min $90K) to get any access to students. It's a bummer."

"Difficult to develop strong emotional ties with candidates, difficult to appropriately respond with viewing body language." "I wasn't able to be proactive as I want to be because I had to wait for people to reach out to me."

- **Advantages of Virtual Career Fairs**
    - Tremendous cost savings, as on-campus career fair fees in the stratosphere on many campus, no travel costs, no shipping costs (save on the swag) and no employee time out of the office (maintain workflows).
    - Better use of staff time. Can participate in multiple events each day and get more done. Associates pulled to assist at on-campus events can contribute an hour or two and return to their work without disruption. Better control over hours involved.
    - See a greater variety of students from all over the country which would not happen going campus to campus.
    - Find just as qualified candidates as we do on campus without enduring the long lines.
    - Pre-approving students who visit has improved ROI.

"Virtual career fairs are significantly better than in-person fairs. 1. Attract more students because they are more inclusive. In-person fairs are designed to be more welcoming to extroverts and can be very overwhelming to a large number of students. 2. They are less or a waste of time – I love having students sign up for times to connect so I know the interest of our positions going in. Rather than standing around a table for hours with little interest. 3. Levels

the playing field – orgs don't need to spend a ton of money to make a table look nice or on a bunch of cheap swag."

"I think it makes it easier for us to get our name out there and connect with students that might not have considered us previously. It can be a challenge because sometimes it seems like we get an overwhelming amount of interest that isn't true interest, just people giving us resumes and when we follow-up no one responds."

"Virtual fairs cut down on the random people who walk up to your table, they save time and money on travel, and we talk to more people than we would in person."

"Time and cost savings, can participate in some career fairs that are not normally on our list due to travel restrictions."

"Speak to students 1 to 1 without loud background noise. No standing for hours talking over hundreds of people. Students not required to wait in long lines."

Any permanent changes to recruiting after COVID-19? After major events like COVID-19 changes do occur in operations and processes associated with how goods and services are produced and provided. In all likelihood the response to COVID-19 will result in some changes. While it is too early to tell, some employers just want to return to tried and true in-person activities. More pragmatic observers know that virtual technologies and thus virtual recruiting (Interviews, fairs, information sessions) are here to stay, IF data proves these approaches are viable.

Too early to tell

"It is too early to tell what changes will be long term."

"Hard to say what will permanently shift but as virtual town halls and events get better and technology evolves to support virtual networking, it is only makes sense recruitment will follow this engagement model."

"Too early to tell if there will be permanent shifts on our recruiting to more of a virtual format, but it is safe to say we are open to more virtual opportunities. We will always prefer to recruit in-person."

Return to normal

"I fear I will lose connections with students… need to return to on-campus activities."

"I am interested to see how our numbers recruiting virtually before COVID and during COVID relate to each other."

"It is less about practices my organization had adopted and more about traditional fairs no longer yielding any recruits for us. Attendance has been down at the fairs we travel to, and the people we have recruited successfully are pretty average overall."

The new "blend"

"A blend of virtual and in person will be the norm. The costs affiliated with going to campus are astronomical and w/ virtual tools more user friendly – virtual is the new wave." "A move away from traveling to job fairs."

"A stronger focus on local recruitment." "Emphasis on targeted recruitment using virtual platforms." "As little onsite interviewing as possible."

"As we look more forward, we see us having a hybrid of in-person and virtual events so students can connect with us more. We also plan to create an opening for direct applicants from schools we don't usually recruit at by hosting virtual events."

"Participating in more virtual events or less large-size events. Hopefully will have the opportunity to expand out recruitment pool to other states, depending on the long-term effects of remote work opportunities."

"Being virtual gives more options and accessibility to connecting with colleges throughout the U.S. We can now attend more virtual career fairs where before we had to pick and choose based on traveling, budgets, and time."

Increase in remote work can impact "international students who can work remotely and do not have to be sponsored can be hired."

Bold hopes

*"Ability to have people interview virtually if they are across the country and **having trust in the process**."*

"Better systems will emerge from this period."

Will relationships with career centers change? As COVID-19 produces changes in the recruiting process, traditional relationships between campus career centers and employer representatives become strained, pushed in new directions. When the veil of the virus lifts, what will happen to these relationships as more virtual activities become the norm? Many employers expect things to return to normal and relationship continue as before. Yet, most are also pragmatic that as recruiting changes campus-employer relationships will have to be re-envisioned. Some say that this step is long overdue. In moving forward five key themes emerged from comments provided by employers:

- Communicate! Communicate! Communicate! Virtual technologies open more informative and timely conversion to build connections and stay informed.
- Collaboration and relationships will be more valuable than ever to keep abreast of student trends, open channels to students, student organizations, and other groups, and promote (yes, promote and more promote) their organizations. Expect them to be deeper and stronger.
- More proactive, innovative and creative in working together.
- Career centers will hold the responsibility to train, educate, coach students to prepare for and utilize virtual interfaces – from researching organizations, prepping for interviews, and seeking opportunities to engage employers in new ways.
- Biggest challenge to making this happen: the lingering doubt that career centers will put in the effort required building and sustaining these types of relationships on a much wider scale; can they act in timely fashion.

"We believe there is a new opportunity to connect with career centers as we have to make more of an effort to build and keep our relationships."

"I am hopeful that the career centers will be able to pivot and continue to provide valuable services and serve as a key liaison to their students. If they can, then we will maintain Strong relationships with them. If they are not able to, then we will find other avenues to connect to students. Connecting to students is the key."

"The relationship will remain strong, but more for ensuring students know about us outside of school events. Career centers will act as marketing and advertisement directories for students and advise them on external virtual events."

"Our relationships will need to become stronger as we will not be able to interact as much with the student population as we did in the past. The career center staff will play a vital role moving forward in the connection. Honestly, it is a great opportunity to expand the network of employers too that may have been bound by time or financial parameters to do onsite recruiting!"

"Potentially will negatively affect relationships. While easy to communicate virtually, the amount of communication will increase and I'm not sure if career centers are staffed to accommodate the work load."

"Need career services offices to provide timely responses to questions/issues encountered in placing online recruiting notices."

"Looking for services that are more innovative to assist our efforts vs. simply making every career fair virtual. We will be reducing the number of career fair participation this fall as we work to utilize other means of attracting talent."

"I think universities will have difficulty responding to employers' need of addressing 'team fit' and 'personality' if relying on virtual partnerships."

"I anticipate the relationships to strengthen. We will rely more heavily on career centers for support and information sharing. Looking forward to our collaborative efforts."

<div style="background-color:#7a5a1e; color:white; text-align:center; font-weight:bold;">FINAL THOUGHTS AND SOME ADVICE TO STUDENTS</div>

When will jobs return to pre-COVID levels? COVID-19 put a hammer to the ten-year run of strong labor markets. While the decline in jobs was not catastrophic at the bachelor's level, the absence of employers who typically recruit, the increased uncertainty about hiring numbers (TBD), and the high percentage of employers who are hiring at reduced numbers leaves a sense that things may be worse or will get worse before turning around. When asked to consider from their organization and industry sector perspective when the job outlook would return to level witnessed in 2018 and 2019, respondents felt we might be in for a short wait:

- 5% -- hiring has remained at 2018-2019 level – witnessed no decline
- 23% -- take about 12 months
- 38% -- take about 24 months
- 30% -- take 3 to 4 years
- 8% -- take 5 years or more

Some words for students during this time. No matter how long a Trend's survey is and how frustrated respondents might be, I am always amazed at the time they take to help students. Respondents saved their best input for last and again graciously and honestly provided words of advice for any student navigating school and early career during these times. We do not have room to share all the comments here but highlight several key themes.

Work hard

"You work super hard in classes and the culture of academia, homework, service and extra curriculars may have made you feel like you are working all the time. You'll have to learn to get rid of that notion. Your time as a full-time employee is time-bound. Protect your personal time! Learn to prioritize what is most important to do in your daily work schedule and be effective at scheduling your weekly tasks to take as much time as you are paid to work. Sometimes you do need to make sacrifices and work over time; but if you are constantly making sacrifices to get your work done, then you are in a patterns of working all the time! If that's not what you want

in your work/life balance, then make a plan for getting your work done and having your personal time every week."

Be flexible and adaptable

"Be open to uncertainty. The path you have set in your mind could easily change in a moment. Being flexible is key to navigating one's career path these days. DO your research on the company before applying! Prepare for phone interviews via research on the internet. One never knows where their path will take them. Accepting a position you may have said no to earlier, may bring you to the position you truly wanted all along. Be enthusiastic and again, open to change!"

Be open-minded

"Be open to new opportunities. The likelihood of you finding your forever home right out of school is very limited, even before the global pandemic struck. When you join a firm, give it 2 years and allow yourself to connect with others – seek out informal mentors within the firm. Talk to different departments/offices because you never know what opportunity will present itself. Also, don't let work control you, build in time to cook dinners or work out and meet up with friends throughout the week. Work will be here for a long time, so don't feel guilty leaving at 5 to go play kickball."

It's all about ATTITUDE!

*"Your degree is valuable, but it only gets you in the door. Please respect the experience of your employer. Your employer will train you; please be receptive to receiving that training. Remember a 13-week class does not prepare you professionally. Your capstone project is still a student-quality project. The 3 qualities we seek are: **attitude**, **attitude**, and **attitude**. Skills can be taught; positive attitude cannot be taught. A professional workplace requires a professional attitude and professional attire. Brace yourself now for the concept of not checking your social media during work hours and not wearing earbuds – even just on ear – while you are working. Many full-time jobs require you to sit at your workstation for 8 hours a day. For many students, this is a rude awakening."*

Persistence

"Graduates may not be able to find employment in their desired field for some time. In light of that, it is better to have any job, rather than no job. One learns and grows while working in any capacity, and skills are picked up in some of the least likely positions. At the same time, if you cannot find work in your desired field, see if you are able to some pro-bono, or volunteer work in that field, though you may have to work in another industry for a while. For example, if you ae

and Architectural graduate, approach a local homeless shelter, Boys & Girls Club, YMCA, etc., and see if there are any projects that need a professional designer. If such an option is not available, seek out other volunteer work. Get involved in Scouting, tutor English language learners, volunteer in a soup kitchen, etc. In the years ahead, employers are going to be empathetic to COVID-19 resume gaps, the question will be how did you fill that time, and what did you learn and how did you grow during that unfortunate career gap?"

Virtual is the new reality

"Be prepared to work virtually. Be open to using many different forms of technology to accomplish workplace goals. Be pro-active about seeking out assistance from colleagues and managers."

"Don't be afraid of remote work opportunities. This may be the norm in the future, so it's a good idea to get used to it now. There are benefits to working in a virtual environment, but still make sure the company has made a successful transition to remote work so that you know you're entering a well-functioning remote environment."

One employer sums everything up in three words: **Plan! Prepare! Persist!**