

Putting Education To Work: Employer Advice to CSU Students



Hiring Factors

Employers ranked ten hiring factors as to how important they are in selecting college graduates for entry level positions.

Seven key hiring factors in rank order of importance:

- ✓ **Capability to learn what is necessary to be effective in their assignments**
- ✓ **Oral communication**
- ✓ **Teamwork**
- ✓ **Flexibility to respond to changing work demands**
- ✓ **Potential to contribute to the future success of their organization**
- ✓ **Written communication**
- ✓ **Leadership potential**

Two additional important hiring factors:

- ✓ **Technical skills**
- ✓ **Representing the diversity of the emerging workplace**

One emerging skill set will become more important in the future:

- ✓ **Global Skills (e.g., multilingual capability; multicultural knowledge; international experience; international work experience)**

In October and November 2011, Career Centers from 20 campuses of the California State University conducted a statewide survey of 978 employers who recruit CSU students for professional postgraduate positions. Their insights and suggestions can help each CSU student and recent graduate increase their job search success.

CSU Graduating Student Brand:

Employers identified four distinctive qualities of CSU graduates:

In each of these four areas CSU graduates performed significantly above the overall pool of college graduates they had hired:

1. Teamwork
2. Flexibility to respond to changing work demands
3. Capability to learn what is necessary to be effective in their assignments
4. Representing the diversity of the emerging workplace

Think of these 4 qualities as positive aspects of the CSU Graduating Student Brand with employers. To activate this brand, students can interject appropriate examples of their accomplishments and abilities as they communicate with employers.

Employers also identified two factors where CSU graduates are weaker than the typical recent college graduate they have hired:

1. Written Communication Skills
2. Global Skills

Think of these 2 qualities as weaker aspects of the CSU Graduating Student Brand, and counteract them by strengthening your writing and global skills throughout your academic program. Be prepared to interject appropriate examples of these skills from your experiences as you communicate with employers.

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Advice to Students from Employers

Employers provided the following advice for students to become more attractive as potential employees in this highly competitive employment market:

- ✓ **EXPERIENCE:** related experience (volunteer, internship, part time job) is critical, and internships, in particular, are becoming an increasingly important part of employers' recruiting strategy.
- ✓ **COMMUNICATION SKILLS:** quality verbal and written communication skills are essential.
- ✓ **PRACTICE INTERVIEWING:** more practice in conducting job interviews is key, candidates should practice highlighting relevant skills and experiences.
- ✓ **COVER LETTERS AND RESUMES:** candidates must effectively communicate their skills in a clear and concise way via cover letters and resumes.
- ✓ **RESEARCH:** successful candidates are required to carefully research an employer, their services, and customers, as well as understand the particular position for which they are applying.
- ✓ **SOCIAL MEDIA:** most employers already use Social Media as part of their recruiting, and 75% say it will be more important in the future. Savvy students need to learn how to use social media to expand their professional networks and connect with employers.

Graduates from the CSU are clearly seen as future leaders who possess the skills, knowledge and abilities that employers are seeking as they grow our economy and serve the citizens of California.

We encourage you to utilize the many services your campus Career Center has to offer to help you take full advantage of your investment in a California State University education, and put your CSU education to work.



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Suggestions from Employers for Students:

- ✓ ***“Experience. Whatever it may be. Clubs, part time jobs, hobbies that are relevant to what you want to do, but ultimately sharpen your communication skills, be eager to learn and you will do well.”***
- ✓ ***“Seek as many opportunities as possible to gain experience and knowledge for desired career. Be willing to collaborate, embrace change, (and) communicate with people from different cultural backgrounds.”***
- ✓ ***“Improve your verbal communication skills to deliver clear and concise statements during an interview.”***
- ✓ ***“We’ve noticed a decline over the last two years in the quality of resumes and cover letters being submitted. Work on (your) writing skills, have your resume looked at by a counselor, teacher, a peer, etc.”***
- ✓ ***“Do research, so (you) know what we are looking for and know if (you) might be a good fit. Research and have knowledge on what we do as a company.”***