



NOVEMBER 2017

FREE TO NACE MEMBERS
\$52.00 NONMEMBER PRICE

JOB OUTLOOK 2018





TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABOUT THE SURVEY	2
U.S. COLLEGE HIRING TO INCREASE BY 4 PERCENT	3
Job market ratings shifting from “good” to “very good”	
Little change in reassessing hiring plans	
Fall vs. spring recruiting	
Hiring by industry	
Hiring by region	
WHO IS IN DEMAND?	13
Demand by degree level	
Top majors in demand	
Hiring of international students continues decline	
HOW EMPLOYERS VIEW CANDIDATES	28
Resume attributes	
How employers decide between two equally qualified candidates	
Career readiness	
COMPENSATION AND SIGNING BONUSES	34
Starting salaries	
Signing bonuses	
WHAT’S AHEAD FOR THE CLASS OF 2018	39
APPENDIX	40
Participating organizations	



ABOUT THE SURVEY

The *Job Outlook* survey is a forecast of hiring intentions of employers as they relate to new college graduates. Each year, the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) surveys its employer members about their hiring plans and other employment-related issues in order to project the market for new college graduates for the current class and to assess a variety of conditions that may influence that market.

From August 9, 2017, through October 2, 2017, data were collected for the *Job Outlook 2018* survey. A total of 201 surveys were returned—a 20.5 percent response rate.

Of those responding, 14.4 percent of respondents were from the West, 25.9 percent were from the Northeast, 23.9 percent were from the Southeast, and 35.8 percent were from the Midwest. For a breakdown of respondents by industry and size, and a partial list of organizations that supplied data for this report, see the Appendix.

Please note: Totals throughout the report may not equal 100 percent due to rounding.

NACE expects to provide a formal update of job market information once more in the 2017-18 academic year: The *Job Outlook 2018 Spring Update* (data collected in February – March) will give NACE members a final update on hiring for 2017-18 graduates. Results will be available in early April.

Research

Director of Research, Public Policy, and Legislative Affairs: Edwin W. Koc

Research Manager: Andrea J. Koncz

Research Associate: Louisa Eismann

Research Assistant: Anna Longenberger

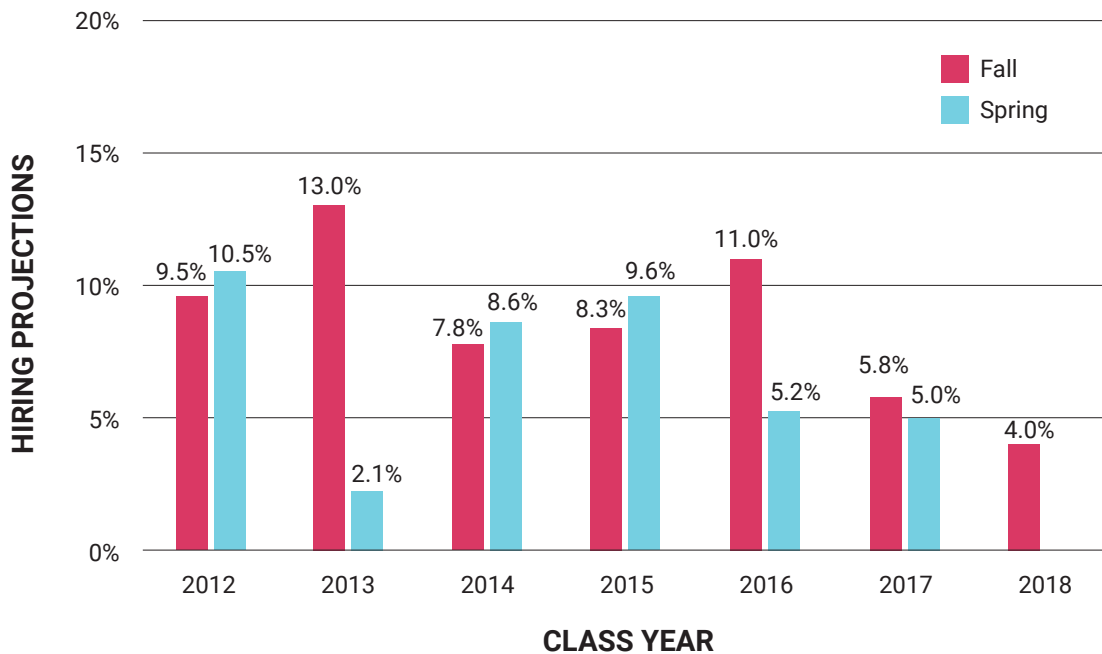
U.S. COLLEGE HIRING TO INCREASE 4 PERCENT



Employers plan to increase their hiring for U.S. operations for the Class of 2018. They plan to hire 4 percent more new graduates in the 2017-18 recruiting year than they did during the 2016-17 recruiting year. (See Figure 1.)

While the 4 percent increase is lower than the hiring projections over the past several years, it remains in the more moderate range reported in the last three *Job Outlook* surveys. And, it continues to point to a positive job market for new college graduates.

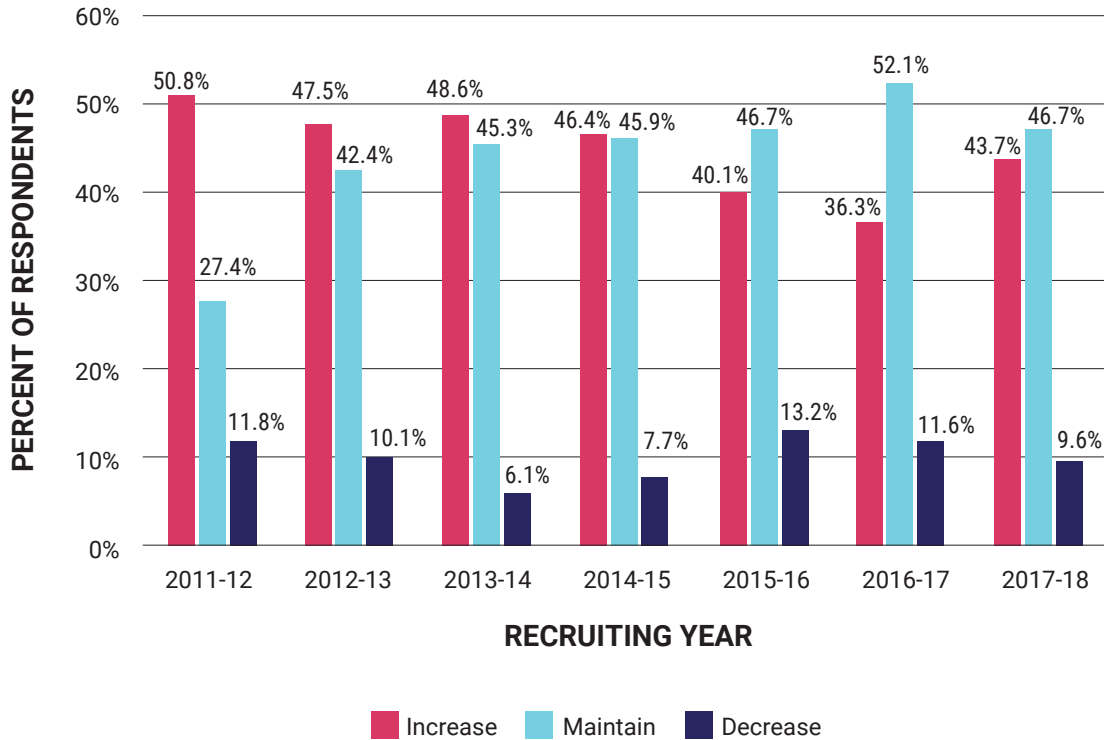
FIGURE 1
Job Outlook Hiring Projections, 2012 – 2018*



*The hiring projections provided for years 2014 through 2018 are for U.S. locations only. Projections provided for 2012 and 2013 include hiring projections for U.S. and non-U.S. locations; they are provided for informational purposes only and should not be compared to projections for 2014 and beyond.

Real evidence of the continued positive trend can be found in examining the individual hiring expectations of respondents. In the *Job Outlook 2017* survey, more than half of respondents had plans to maintain their hiring numbers, while slightly more than one-third planned to increase their numbers. For the Class of 2018, the percentage of responding organizations that plan to increase their hires has increased to 43.7 percent, with those maintaining their numbers dropping to 46.7 percent. Also this year, less than 10 percent plan to cut their number of hires. (See Figure 2.)

FIGURE 2
Employers' Hiring Expectations



Among those employers planning to increase their hires, company growth, retirements, and the need for entry-level talent were the three primary drivers behind hiring plans. Responding organizations that indicated that they are experiencing company growth need to hire more graduates to fill open positions. In addition, a number of retirements will create openings that respondents want to replace with new graduates. And, finally, the need for entry-level talent was cited by some organizations that are growing their entry-level programs or starting rotational programs, and by organizations that expressed satisfaction with previous entry-level college hires and so are looking to bring in more. One particular respondent noted specifically that new college graduates have “new and enthusiastic perspectives,” and possess a skill set that is “very different than long tenured people.”

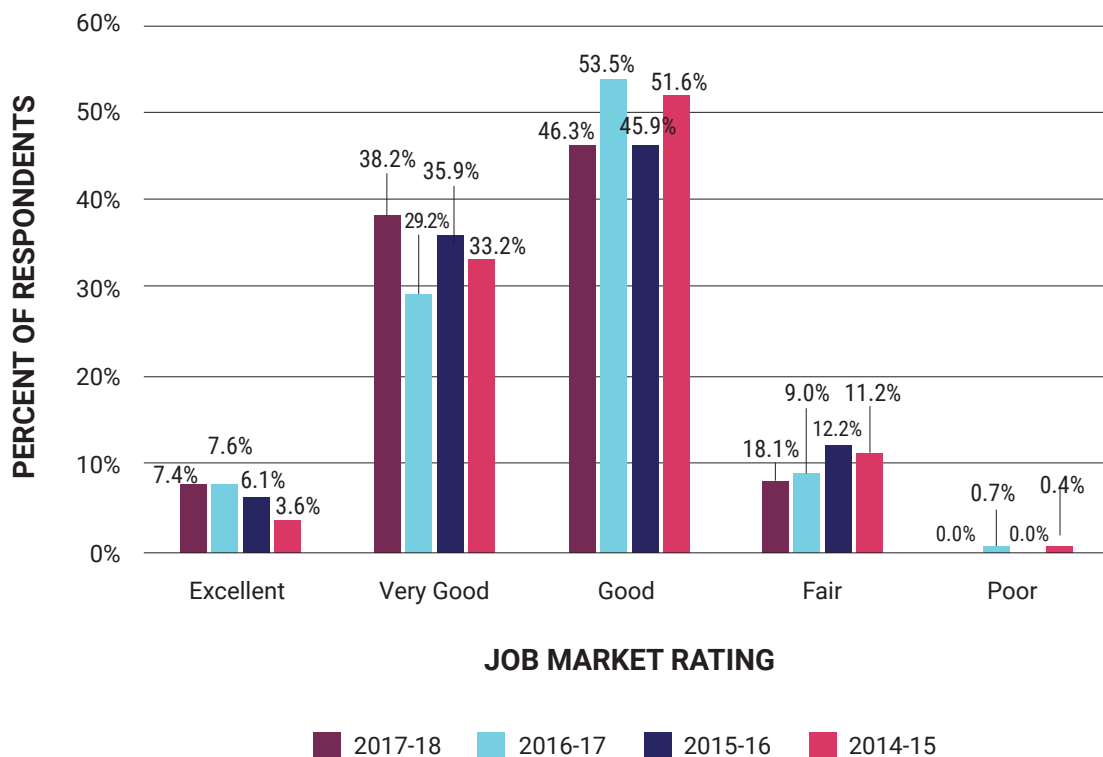
Respondents that are maintaining their new college hiring numbers cited factors quite similar to the respondents that are increasing their hires. Some cited company growth as helping them maintain their hiring, while others pointed to unchanged business needs and unchanged budgets as factors. In addition, some noted that they have had success with new graduates, and this has allowed them to continue hiring.

The small number of organizations that are decreasing their hiring numbers cited a wide variety of factors—lack of turnover, lack of work, organizational changes, and uncertainty in the marketplace, to name a few.

JOB MARKET RATINGS SHIFTING FROM “GOOD” TO “VERY GOOD”

Since the 2014-15 recruiting year, the largest percentage of responding employers have rated the job market for college graduates as “good,” with the second largest group rating the market as “very good.” This year’s survey respondents continue the same trend with 46.3 percent of respondents providing a “good” rating, and another 38.2 percent rating the market as “very good.” In addition, the “very good” rating for the 2017-18 college job market has reached a four-year high, and the “fair” and “poor” ratings are at their lowest points, with just 8.1 percent of respondents rating the market as “fair” rating and no respondents rating it as “poor.” The percentage of respondents providing an “excellent” rating is nearly the same as last year. (See Figure 3.)

FIGURE 3
Employers Rate the Job Market for 2017-18 Graduates



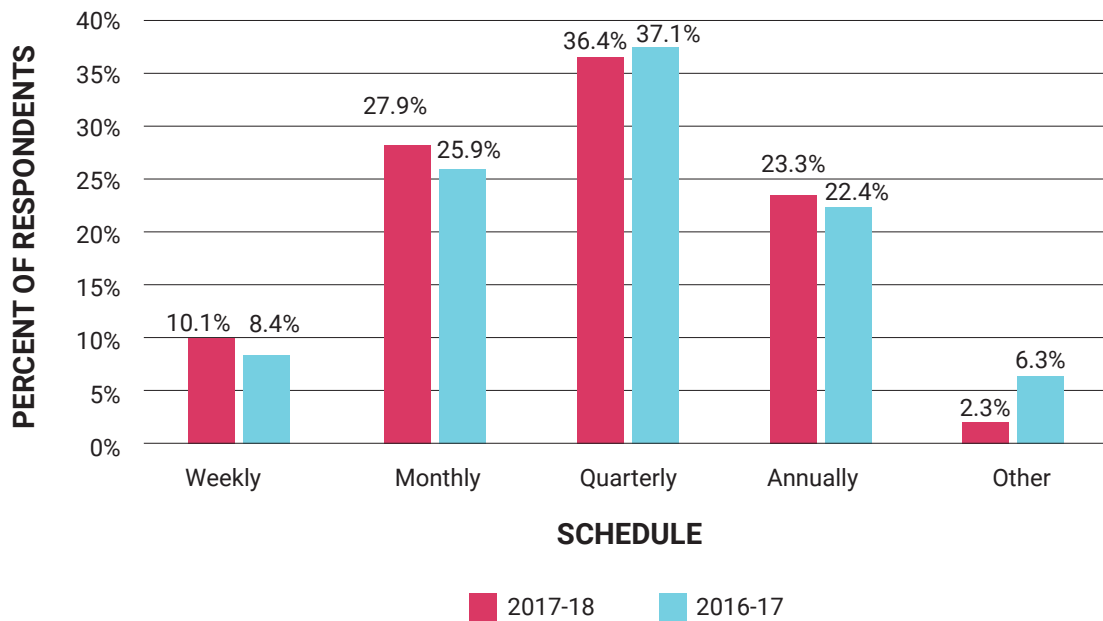
LITTLE CHANGE IN REASSESSING HIRING PLANS

Overall, there is little change in how often employers will reassess their college hiring needs. This may be a sign that their current schedules are working and/or the college job market is stable.

The largest group of respondents—more than one-third—plan to reassess their hiring needs on a quarterly basis. Slightly more respondents will reassess less frequently on an annual basis than was the case last year, but a few more respondents also reported they will reassess more frequently—monthly and weekly.

(Note: The three responding organizations that plan to reassess hiring on an “other” schedule indicated they will reevaluate their needs after the fall recruiting season.) (See Figure 4.)

FIGURE 4
Employers’ Plans to Reassess Hiring Needs



FALL VS. SPRING RECRUITING

Extending offers to new graduates in the fall continues to be the preference among employer respondents. This year’s respondents plan to conduct 70 percent of their college recruiting in the fall and finish the remaining 30 percent in the spring. This is the third consecutive year that respondents report at least 70 percent of their hiring to be conducted in the fall. (See Figure 5.)

Of the total respondents that provided their hiring percentages for fall and spring, 13 percent plan to do 100 percent of their recruiting in the fall of 2017 and none in the spring of 2018. This is also consistent with last year’s findings when 14 percent of total respondents reported plans of conducting 100 percent of their recruiting in the fall. (Also to note: While collecting data for this survey, NACE encountered a record number of out-of-office replies, perhaps another indication that employer members were in fact busy recruiting on campuses in the fall.)

Almost 70 percent of the employers that do have plans to recruit on campus in the spring indicate that they have firm or tentative plans in place. In addition, the percentage of respondents that are unsure of their plans or are not hiring has dropped from 16.5 percent of last year’s respondents to just 12.1 percent this year. (See Figure 6.)

FIGURE 5
Percentage of College Recruiting Conducted in Fall vs. Spring, 2013-2018

Job Outlook Survey Year	Fall	Spring
2018	70%	30%
2017	72%	28%
2016	71%	29%
2015	66%	34%
2014	62%	38%
2013	68%	32%

FIGURE 6
Spring 2018 Recruiting Plans

Recruiting Plans	Spring 2018	Spring 2017
Firm recruiting plans	37.1%	39.0%
Tentative plans in place	32.6%	27.4%
All recruiting in fall	18.2%	17.1%
Unsure	10.6%	14.4%
Not hiring	1.5%	2.1%

HIRING BY INDUSTRY

Thirteen industries are represented in this iteration of *Job Outlook*.^{*} Among those, just two expect to hire fewer graduates in 2017-18. The remaining 11 reported increases in their hiring numbers over last year; those increases range from just under 3 percent to nearly 25 percent. These findings show improvement over last year when four of the total 11 industries reported overall decreases to their hiring numbers. (See Figure 7.)

Employers in the information industry are planning the largest overall increase of 24.6 percent. In fact, five of the reporting organizations in this industry are planning increases of at least 25 percent. Just two organizations in this industry report plans to decrease hiring.

Overall, miscellaneous manufacturers are also planning a large percentage increase, but that increase is skewed. Of the total respondents in this industry, five are maintaining their hires, 12 are increasing their hires, and the remaining six are decreasing their hires. Two of the responding organizations that are increasing their hires are also reporting large increases: One is *doubling* its college hires, and the other is *tripling* its number of college hires. Together, these two organizations are driving the large overall increase.

Of the two industries that are decreasing their hires, both are reporting minor decreases in the amounts: Among retail organizations, the decrease is 3.1 percent, while accounting services firms project a 5.4 percent decrease. Within the retail industry, only three of the 13 responding organizations are decreasing their hires, three are maintaining hires, and the remaining seven are increasing their hiring numbers. Consequently, as a whole, the outlook is by no means bleak for retail. Within the accounting services industry, the decrease is driven by the small number of responding organizations: Three of the five responding organizations are cutting hiring, while two are maintaining hiring.

^{*}Industry-specific information is provided only for those in which five or more organizations provided individual hiring data.

FIGURE 7

Total Change in Hiring, by Industry

Industry	# of 2018 Projected Hires	# of 2017 Actual Hires	% Change	# of Respondents
Food & Beverage Mfg.	331	320	3.3%	6
Chemical (Pharmaceutical) Mfg.	511	473	8.0%	9
Computer & Electronics Mfg.	3,603	3,263	10.4%	14
Motor Vehicle Mfg.	3,758	3,551	5.8%	8
Misc. Mfg.	1,432	1,159	23.5%	23
Wholesale Trade	513	499	2.8%	5
Retail Trade	1,315	1,357	-3.1%	13
Information	1,593	1,279	24.6%	8
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	10,891	10,538	3.3%	30
Accounting Services	8,243	8,710	-5.4%	5
Engineering Services	371	338	9.8%	7
Management Consulting	618	538	14.8%	7
Misc. Professional Services	1,402	1,309	7.1%	11

The hiring outlook revealed within each industry is also consistent with the spring 2018 recruiting plans and job market ratings within each industry. (See Figures 8 and 9.) Information industry employers rated the job market for their industry as very good, with a 4.11 average rating, the highest of all other reported industries. In addition, two-thirds of this group report firm or tentative plans to recruit in spring of 2018, while slightly more than 11 percent will do all recruiting in the fall. Slightly more than 22 percent of information industry organizations are unsure of their spring 2018 recruiting plans.

Although retail employers project an overall decrease in hiring and rated their industry job market lower on the scale (3.25, or “good”), their spring 2018 recruiting plans look promising. In fact, retail employers have the largest group of employers with firm plans in place for spring 2018 recruiting—75 percent. The remaining 25 percent will conduct all of their recruiting in the fall.

FIGURE 8

Spring 2018 Recruiting Plans, by Industry

Industry	Firm plans	Tentative plans	All in Fall	Not Hiring	Unsure	# of Respondents
Construction	60.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%	5
Food & Beverage Mfg.	40.0%	60.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5
Chemical (Pharmaceutical) Mfg.	37.5%	37.5%	0.0%	12.5%	12.5%	8
Computer & Electronics Mfg.	33.3%	16.7%	33.3%	0.0%	16.7%	12
Motor Vehicle Mfg.	0.0%	87.5%	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%	8
Misc. Mfg.	21.7%	34.8%	13.0%	4.3%	26.1%	23
Retail Trade	75.0%	0.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%	8
Information	33.3%	33.3%	11.1%	0.0%	22.2%	9
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	35.0%	40.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%	20
Management Consulting	40.0%	20.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5

FIGURE 9

Job Market Ratings, by Industry

Industry	Average Rating	Number of Respondents
Information	4.11	9
Food & Beverage Mfg.	3.83	6
Construction	3.80	5
Management Consulting	3.80	5
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	3.67	21
Computer & Electronics Mfg.	3.58	12
Misc. Mfg.	3.29	24
Retail Trade	3.25	8
Motor Vehicle Mfg.	3.13	8
Chemical (Pharmaceutical) Mfg.	2.87	8

HIRING BY REGION

The Northeast region is the only one of the four regions reporting an overall decrease in college hiring, with a slight dip of 1.7 percent. The Southeast (3.8 percent), Midwest (10.4 percent), and West (4.1 percent) regions are showing increases. (See Figure 10.)

Within the Northeast, most employers plan to increase or maintain their hiring levels. (See Figure 11.) Of those that are decreasing their numbers, half are planning decreases in the double-digits, which may be producing the overall decrease for the region.

In the Midwest region, where the overall increase in hiring is 10.4 percent, a little more than one-third of respondents are planning increases to their numbers. However, of those planning increases, one-quarter are reporting numbers that will increase by more than 100 percent. This helps to explain the somewhat large overall increase.

The hiring numbers in each region are just one piece of data that provides insight into the college job market within the four geographic regions. Examining the spring 2018 recruiting plans sheds a somewhat different light in terms of the hiring outlook for new college graduates. (See Figure 12.)

While the Northeast region projects a small decrease in overall hiring, spring 2018 recruiting plans for employers in this region show the most promise. More than three-quarters of respondents in the Northeast have firm or tentative plans to recruit on campus in the spring, with another 21.2 percent that will complete all of their recruiting in the fall. Just 3 percent of Northeastern respondents are unsure of their spring 2018 recruiting plans, and no respondents in the Northeast are not hiring in the spring.

Conversely, despite reporting the highest projected increase in college hiring, less than 70 percent of employers in the Midwest have firm or tentative plans for spring 2018 recruiting. An additional 16.7 percent will complete all recruiting in the fall, and slightly more than 12 percent are unsure of their spring 2018 recruiting plans at this time. Within the Midwest, there are also 2 percent that are not hiring at all, so will not be on campus in the spring of 2018.

FIGURE 10

Total Change in Hiring, by Region

Region	# of 2018 Projected Hires	# of 2017 Actual Hires	% Change	# of Respondents
Northeast	12,170	12,375	-1.7%	42
Southeast	10,221	9,852	3.8%	43
Midwest	12,261	11,105	10.4%	60
West	3,546	3,405	4.1%	21

FIGURE 11

Hiring Expectations by Region, by Percent of Respondents

Region	Increase	Maintain	Decrease
Northeast	45.7%	48.6%	5.7%
Southeast	45.5%	48.5%	6.1%
Midwest	34.7%	49.0%	16.3%
West	61.1%	33.3%	5.6%

FIGURE 12

Spring 2018 Recruiting Plans, by Region

Industry	Firm plans	Tentative plans	All in Fall	Not Hiring	Unsure	# of Respondents
Northeast	30.3%	45.5%	21.2%	0.0%	3.0%	33
Southeast	45.5%	15.2%	18.2%	3.0%	18.2%	33
Midwest	35.4%	33.3%	16.7%	2.1%	12.5%	48
West	38.9%	38.9%	16.7%	0.0%	5.6%	18

WHO IS IN DEMAND?

DEMAND BY DEGREE LEVEL

Virtually all respondents expect to hire bachelor's degree candidates for the 2017-18 recruiting year. Further, all responding organizations that hired college graduates last year also hired at the bachelor's degree level. (See Figure 13.)

In addition, the composition of total new hires remains nearly unchanged not only at the bachelor's degree level, but also at the associate, master's, doctorate, and professional levels. Almost 84 percent of new hires will hold bachelor's degrees, 12 percent will have master's degrees, 2.4 percent will have associate degrees, and 1.7 will hold doctoral degrees, with the remaining 0.4 percent holding professional degrees.

FIGURE 13
Hiring Expectations, by Degree Level

Degree Level	Average % Of New College Hires in 2017-18	Number of Respondents Hiring 2017-18	% of Total Respondents Hiring in 2017-18	Average % Of New College Hires in 2016-17	Number of Respondents That Hired in 2016-17	% of Total Respondents That Hired in 2016-17
Associate	2.4%	18	15.4%	1.4%	16	13.7%
Bachelor's	83.4%	116	99.1%	84.9%	117	100.0%
Master's	12.1%	83	71.0%	11.8%	81	69.2%
Doctorate	1.7%	26	22.2%	1.6%	22	18.8%
Professional (J.D., M.D., etc.)	0.4%	11	9.4%	0.4%	10	8.5%

Once again this year, business, engineering, and computer science degrees will be in demand at the associate, bachelor's, and master's degree levels. At the doctorate level, engineering and computer science also gain top interest, but math and sciences degrees replace business degrees in terms of demand. (See Figures 14 and 15.)

FIGURE 14
Top Degrees in Demand, by Broad Category

Broad Category	Number of Respondents That Will Hire	% of Total Respondents (N=132)
Business	113	85.6%
Engineering	89	67.4%
Computer & Information Sciences	77	58.3%
Math & Sciences	53	40.2%
Communications	46	34.8%
Social Sciences	33	25.0%
Humanities	19	14.4%
Agriculture & Natural Resources	11	8.3%
Healthcare	8	6.1%
Education	4	3.0%

FIGURE 15

Top Degrees in Demand, by Degree Level and Broad Category

	Broad Category	Number of Respondents That Will Hire	% of Total Respondents (N=132)
ASSOCIATE	Business	4	3.0%
	Engineering	4	3.0%
	Computer & Information Sciences	3	2.3%
	Math & Sciences	3	2.3%
	Education	2	1.5%
	Agriculture & Natural Resources	1	0.8%
	Communications	1	0.8%
	Social Sciences	1	0.8%
	Healthcare	0	0.0%
	Humanities	0	0.0%
BACHELOR'S	Business	104	78.8%
	Engineering	85	64.4%
	Computer & Information Sciences	74	56.0%
	Math & Sciences	49	37.1%
	Communications	43	32.6%
	Social Sciences	32	24.2%
	Humanities	18	13.6%
	Agriculture & Natural Resources	10	7.6%
	Healthcare	4	3.0%
	Education	2	1.5%
MASTER'S	Business	54	40.9%
	Engineering	34	25.8%
	Computer & Information Sciences	32	24.2%
	Math & Sciences	18	13.6%
	Social Sciences	5	3.8%
	Communications	4	3.0%
	Humanities	3	2.3%
	Agriculture & Natural Resources	2	1.5%
	Healthcare	2	1.5%
	Education	1	0.8%
DOCTORATE	Engineering	9	6.8%
	Computer & Information Sciences	8	6.1%
	Math & Sciences	5	3.8%
	Social Sciences	2	1.5%
	Business	1	0.8%
	Agriculture & Natural Resources	0	0.0%
	Communications	0	0.0%
	Education	0	0.0%
	Healthcare	0	0.0%
	Humanities	0	0.0%

TOP MAJORS IN DEMAND

In last year's *Job Outlook 2017* survey, demand for individual majors at the bachelor's degree level shifted from more high-tech majors toward business majors. This is also true this year, with eight of the 10 top majors at the bachelor's degree level falling in the business category. (See Figure 16.) The top majors in demand are finance, accounting, and business administration/management, followed by computer science. The only other technical major on the list is information sciences and systems, which falls seventh in terms of demand. At least 45 percent of total respondents plan to hire the top 10 majors at the bachelor's degree level.

FIGURE 16

Top Degrees in Demand (Bachelor's Degree Level)

Major	# of Respondents That Will Hire	% of Total Respondents That Will Hire
Finance	86	65.2%
Accounting	80	60.6%
Business Administration/Mgmt.	78	59.1%
Computer Science	73	55.3%
Marketing	67	50.8%
Management Information Systems	66	50.0%
Information Sciences & Systems	64	48.5%
Logistics/Supply Chain	64	48.5%
Sales	60	45.5%
Human Resources	60	45.5%

Figures 17 through 23 show demand for the individual majors within each of the seven reported broad categories. Key findings are as follows:

- Finance, accounting, and business administration/management are not only the top three overall degrees in demand at the bachelor’s level, but they are also in very high demand among respondents that will hire business majors.
- Electrical engineering and mechanical engineering majors top the list of engineering degrees in demand. More than 60 percent of respondents hiring engineering degrees will target these two disciplines.
- Nearly all respondents that will hire degrees in the computer science category will hire computer science majors. Information sciences and systems majors follow closely behind with nine in 10 respondents having plans to hire them.
- For math and sciences degrees, more than 80 percent of respondents plan to pursue mathematics majors specifically. Respondents show much less interest in the additional science degrees, with slightly more than one-quarter of respondents planning to hire chemistry majors, and less than 15 percent of responding organizations that will hire any of the other science fields.
- All but one respondent of those hiring social science degrees will target economics majors. More than 40 percent will hire political science and psychology majors.
- While liberal arts/general studies degrees were pursued by 100 percent of respondents hiring humanities degrees last year, English majors are now most sought-after; more than 83 percent of those hiring liberal arts/general studies plan to hire them. This year, almost three-quarters of respondents in the group will hire liberal arts/general studies majors.

FIGURE 17

Top Business Degrees in Demand

Major	# of Respondents That Will Hire	% of Respondents Hiring Business Degrees (N=104)
Finance	86	82.7%
Accounting	80	76.9%
Business Administration/Mgmt.	78	75.0%
Marketing	67	64.4%
Management Information Systems	66	63.5%
Logistics/Supply Chain	64	61.5%
Human Resources	60	57.7%
Sales	60	57.7%
Economics	56	53.8%
International Business	33	31.7%
Actuary	23	22.1%
Hospitality Management	12	11.5%

FIGURE 18

Top Engineering Degrees in Demand

Major	# of Respondents That Will Hire	% of Respondents Hiring Engineering Degrees (N=85)
Electrical Engineering	58	68.2%
Mechanical Engineering	56	65.9%
Industrial Engineering	45	52.9%
Computer Engineering	44	51.8%
Chemical Engineering	33	38.8%
Software Engineering	31	36.5%
Engineering Technology	26	30.6%
Materials Engineering	25	29.4%
Civil Engineering	22	25.9%
Systems Engineering	22	25.9%
Environmental Engineering	18	21.2%
Aerospace/Aeronautical Engineering	12	14.1%
Biomedical Engineering	11	12.9%
Nuclear Engineering	4	4.7%
Petroleum Engineering	4	4.7%

FIGURE 19

Top Computer and Information Science Degrees in Demand

Major	# of Respondents That Will Hire	% of Respondents Hiring Computer & Information Science Degrees (N=74)
Computer Science	73	98.6%
Information Sciences & Systems	67	90.5%
Software Applications	49	66.2%

FIGURE 20

Top Math and Science Degrees in Demand

Major	# of Respondents That Will Hire	% of Respondents Hiring Math & Science Degrees (N=49)
Mathematics	40	81.6%
Chemistry	14	28.6%
Biology	7	14.3%
Environmental Science	7	14.3%
Physics	5	10.2%
Construction Science	4	8.2%
Geology	4	8.2%

FIGURE 21

Top Communications Degrees in Demand

Major	# of Respondents That Will Hire	% of Respondents Hiring Communications Degrees (N=43)
Communications	43	100.0%
Public Relations	26	60.5%
Advertising	20	46.5%
Journalism	16	37.2%

FIGURE 22

Top Social Sciences Degrees in Demand

Major	# of Respondents That Will Hire	% of Respondents Hiring Social Sciences Degrees (N=32)
Economics	31	96.9%
Political Science/International Relations	15	46.9%
Psychology	14	43.8%
Sociology	10	31.3%
Social Work	4	12.5%

FIGURE 23

Top Humanities Degrees in Demand

Major	# of Respondents That Will Hire	% of Respondents Hiring Humanities Degrees (N=18)
English	15	83.3%
Liberal Arts/General Studies	13	72.2%
History	11	61.1%
Foreign Language & Literature	8	44.4%
Philosophy	7	38.9%
Visual & Performing Arts	6	33.3%
Area & Gender Studies	5	27.8%

Demand at the master’s degree level has changed somewhat over the past two years. As reported last year in the *Job Outlook 2017* survey report, respondents were focused more on business degrees, and M.B.A. graduates topped the charts. There was much less demand for STEM graduates, in comparison to the previous year (*Job Outlook 2016*) when the top three majors in demand were STEM degrees—computer science, electrical engineering, and mechanical engineering.

This year’s focus appears to be somewhat mixed, with computer science topping the list, and M.B.A. graduates coming in at a close second. (See Figure 24.) While there are a few other STEM majors in top demand, such as information sciences and systems and computer engineering, the focus continues to be on business degrees at this level. Master’s degree electrical engineering majors will be targeted by slightly more than 13 percent of respondents.

At the doctorate degree level, STEM degrees “rule.” Of the total respondents that will hire at the doctorate level, most will target computer science majors and several engineering fields. (See Figure 25.)

FIGURE 24

Top Degrees in Demand (Master's Degree Level)

Major	# of Respondents That Will Hire	% of Total Respondents That Will Hire
Computer Science	32	24.2%
Business Administration/Mgmt.	30	22.7%
Management Information Systems	27	20.5%
Information Sciences & Systems	25	18.9%
Accounting	24	18.2%
Finance	23	17.4%
Computer Engineering	21	15.9%
Human Resources	19	14.4%
Logistics/Supply Chain	19	14.4%
Electrical Engineering	18	13.6%

FIGURE 25

Top Degrees in Demand (Doctorate Degree Level)

Major	# of Respondents That Will Hire	% of Total Respondents That Will Hire
Computer Science	7	5.3%
Electrical Engineering	5	3.8%
Information Sciences & Systems	4	3.0%
Software Applications	4	3.0%
Computer Engineering	4	3.0%
Chemical Engineering	3	2.3%
Materials Engineering	3	2.3%
Software Engineering	3	2.3%
Mathematics	3	2.3%

By region, the top five bachelor's degrees in demand are primarily business majors. Computer science is also in high demand among employers in three of the four geographic regions. (See Figures 26 through 29.)

FIGURE 26

Top Five Undergraduate Majors – Northeast

Major	# of Northeast Respondents That Will Hire	% of Northeast Respondents That Will Hire	% of Total Respondents That Will Hire
Finance	22	42.3%	16.7%
Accounting	21	40.4%	15.9%
Business Administration/Mgmt.	19	36.5%	14.4%
Economics	17	32.7%	12.9%
Computer Science	17	32.7%	12.9%

FIGURE 27

Top Five Undergraduate Majors – Southeast

Major	# of Southeast Respondents That Will Hire	% of Southeast Respondents That Will Hire	% of Total Respondents That Will Hire
Finance	18	37.5%	13.6%
Accounting	18	37.5%	13.6%
Business Administration/Mgmt.	17	35.4%	12.9%
Computer Science	17	35.4%	12.9%
Logistics/Supply Chain	15	31.3%	11.4%

FIGURE 28

Top Five Undergraduate Majors – Midwest

Major	# of Midwest Respondents That Will Hire	% of Midwest Respondents That Will Hire	% of Total Respondents That Will Hire
Finance	33	45.8%	25.0%
Business Administration/Mgmt.	30	41.7%	22.7%
Accounting	29	40.3%	22.0%
Management Information Systems	28	38.9%	21.2%
Marketing	28	38.9%	21.2%

FIGURE 29

Top Five Undergraduate Majors – West

Major	# of Western Respondents That Will Hire	% of Western Respondents That Will Hire	% of Total Respondents That Will Hire
Finance	13	44.8%	9.8%
Accounting	12	41.4%	9.1%
Business Administration/Mgmt.	12	41.4%	9.1%
Marketing	12	41.4%	9.1%
Computer Science	12	41.4%	9.1%

By industry, employers in finance, insurance, and real estate show the most interest in the top five majors at the bachelor's degree level. At least eight in 10 of these respondents have plans to hire all five disciplines. Employers in the information, retail trade, and food and beverage manufacturing industries also show much interest in the top five majors. However, each industry will highly target only two of the top five majors. (See Figure 30.)

FIGURE 30
Who Is Hiring, by Industry (Bachelor's Degree Level)

Major	Most Interested Industries	% of Industry Respondents
Finance	Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	95.0%
	Motor Vehicle Mfg.	87.5%
	Retail Trade	87.5%
Accounting	Accounting Services	100.0%
	Food & Beverage Mfg.	80.0%
	Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	80.0%
Business Administration/Mgmt.	Retail Trade	100.0%
	Food & Beverage Mfg.	80.0%
	Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	80.0%
Computer Science	Information	87.5%
	Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	80.0%
	Management Consulting	80.0%
Marketing	Information	87.5%
	Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	80.0%
	Management Consulting	80.0%

By region, demand for the top five majors is high among employers in the West. They have the most respondents showing interest in the top five majors, with at least 70 percent of respondents planning to target them. (See Figure 31.)

FIGURE 31
Who Is Hiring, by Region (Bachelor's Degree Level)

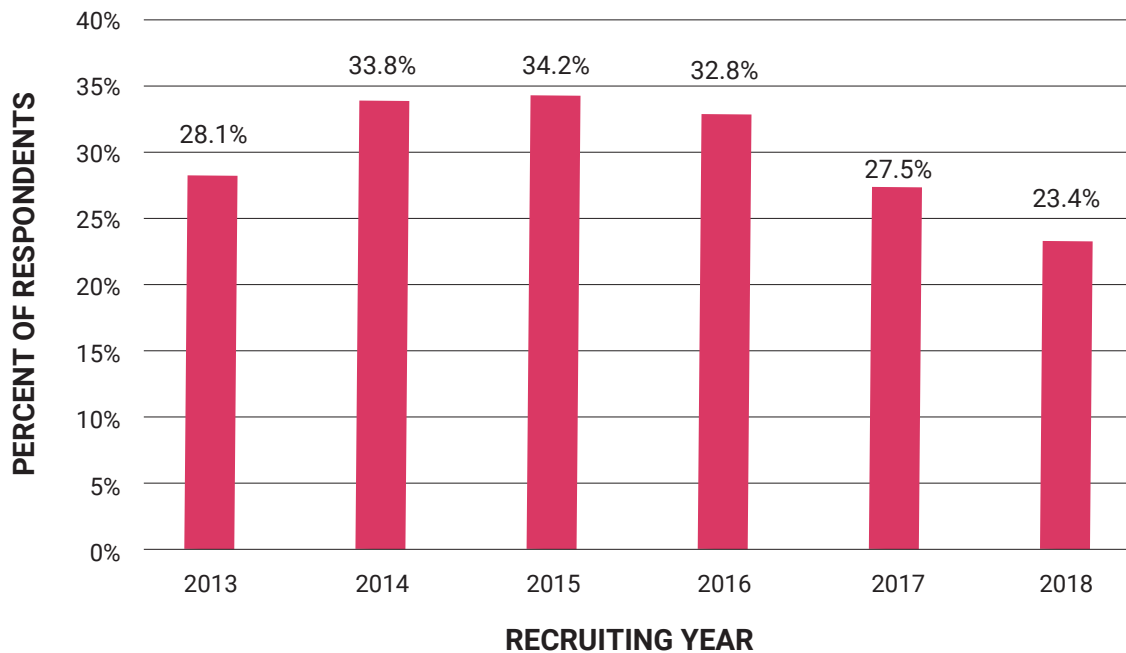
Major	Most Interested Regions	% of Region's Respondents
Finance	West	76.5%
	Midwest	68.8%
	Northeast	64.7%
	Southeast	52.9%
Accounting	West	70.6%
	Northeast	61.8%
	Midwest	60.4%
	Southeast	52.9%
Business Administration/Mgmt.	West	70.6%
	Midwest	62.5%
	Northeast	55.9%
	Southeast	50.0%
Computer Science	West	70.6%
	Midwest	56.3%
	Northeast	50.0%
	Southeast	50.0%
Marketing	West	70.6%
	Midwest	58.3%
	Northeast	44.1%
	Southeast	35.3%

HIRING OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS CONTINUES DECLINE

Hiring for international students continues to drop, and the percentage of respondents that will hire international students has hit an all-time low at 23.4 percent this year. (See Figure 32.) This is not surprising, as employers report that they plan to hire almost 16 percent fewer international students for positions in the United States in the 2017-18 recruiting year.

FIGURE 32

International Student Hiring Plans



By industry, accounting services employers show the most interest in hiring international students: 60 percent of respondents have plans to do so in 2017-18. (See Figure 33.) While accounting services also had 60 percent of respondents planning to hire international students last year, computer and electronics manufacturers had the highest interest in international students, with almost two-thirds of respondents last year reporting plans to hire them. They also showed the most interest in these particular students two years ago. This year, however, only one-third of responding computer and electronics manufacturers plan to hire international students, yet another sign of reduced hiring of these graduates.

FIGURE 33

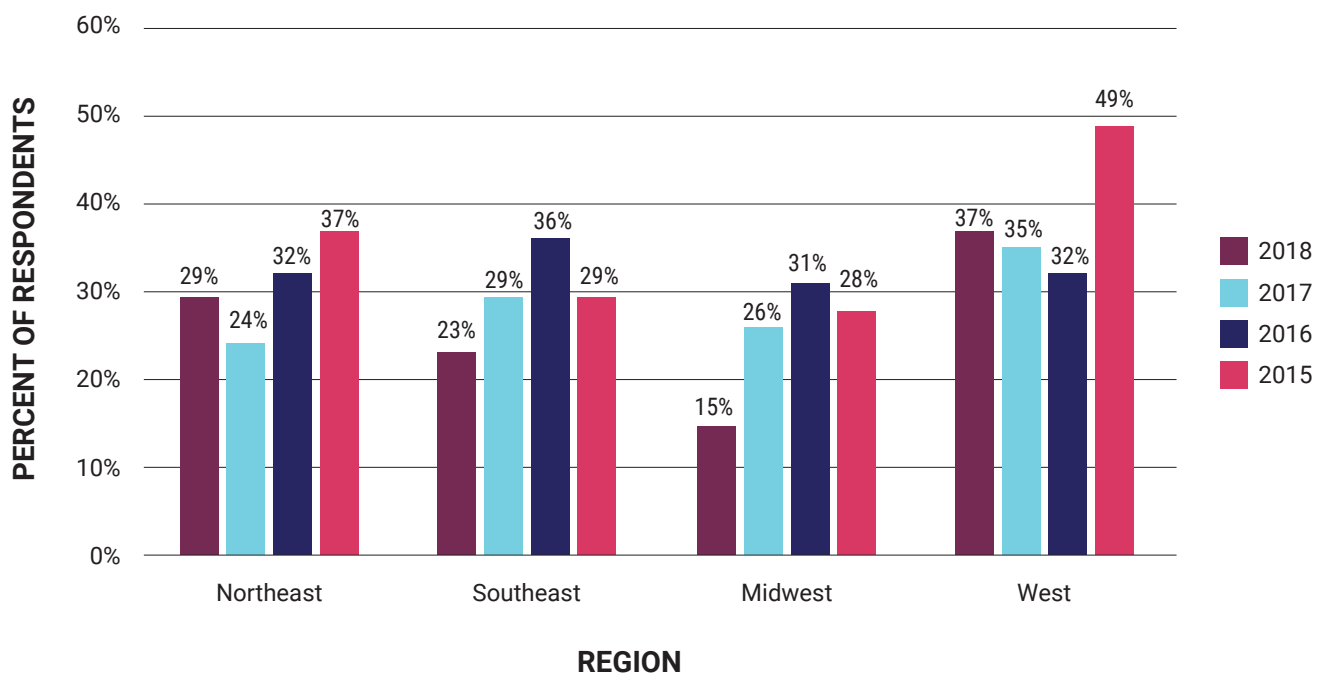
International Student Hiring Plans, by Industry

Industry	% of Respondents That Plan to Hire International Students
Accounting Services	60.0%
Information	36.4%
Computer & Electronics Mfg.	33.3%
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	29.2%
Chemical (Pharmaceutical) Mfg.	25.0%
Retail Trade	25.0%
Construction	20.0%
Management Consulting	20.0%
Misc. Mfg.	12.0%

By region, the Southeast and Midwest have the fewest organizations with plans to hire international students. (See Figure 34.) In the Midwest, the group of respondents hiring international students is almost half of the percentages reported in the last three years. In contrast, the West and Northeast regions show more employers with plans to hire international students. These increases are mainly due to the types of industries located in the West and Northeast regions, as they contain the largest number of respondents that are in the top-interested industries (accounting services, information, and computer and electronics manufacturers).

FIGURE 34

International Student Hiring Plans, by Region

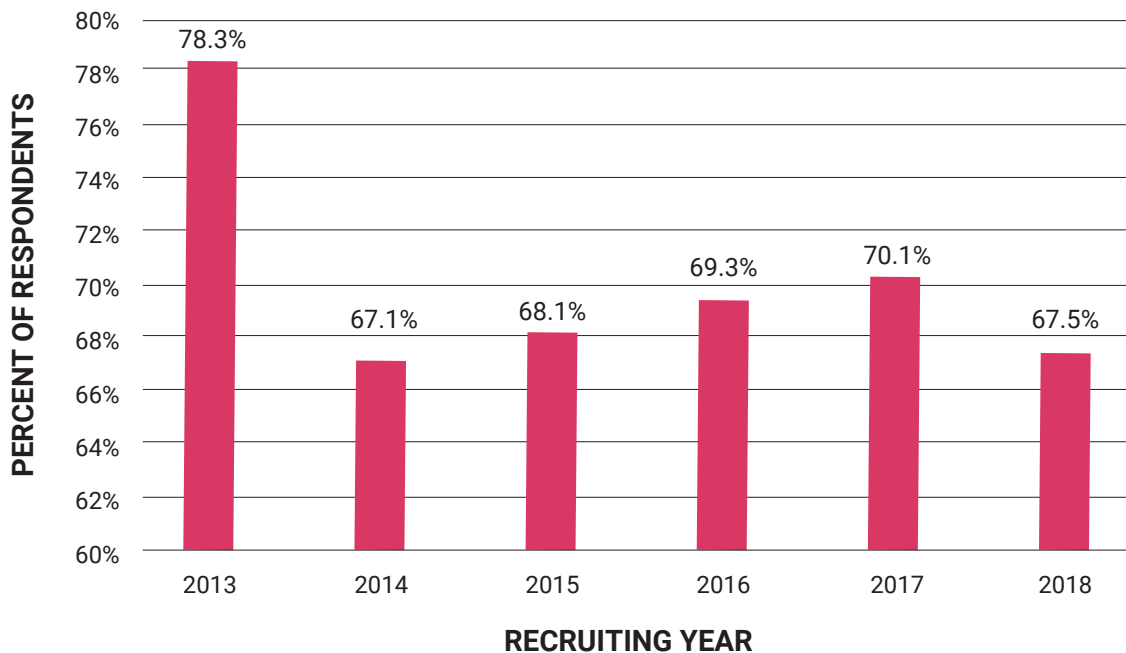


HOW EMPLOYERS VIEW CANDIDATES



Over the past four years, the percentage of employers that planned to screen candidates by GPA was on the rise. Last year, the group of respondents broke the 70 percent mark. This year, however, just over two-thirds of respondents will screen Class of 2018 candidates by GPA. While the group has decreased slightly, GPA remains an important factor in employers' view of candidates. (See Figure 35.)

FIGURE 35
Screen Candidates by GPA, by Percentage of Respondents



By industry, 100 percent of food and beverage manufacturers, accounting services employers, and management consulting firms will screen job candidates by GPA. GPA screening is also popular with at least half of respondents in seven additional industries. (See Figure 36.) The average GPA cutoff used almost entirely by respondents stands at 3.0, as almost 70 percent of respondents report their GPA cutoff at 3.0. In addition, the median GPA across industries is 3.0, with the exception of construction organizations, which will use a slightly lower GPA cutoff of 2.8. However, just 20 percent of construction respondents will screen candidates by GPA.

FIGURE 36
Screen Candidates by GPA, by Industry

Industry	% of Respondents	GPA Cutoff (Reported Median)
Food & Beverage Mfg.	100.0%	3.0
Accounting Services	100.0%	3.0
Management Consulting	100.0%	3.0
Motor Vehicle Mfg.	87.5%	3.0
Misc. Mfg.	78.3%	3.0
Information	75.0%	3.0
Engineering Services	75.0%	3.0
Computer & Electronics Mfg.	63.6%	3.0
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	57.9%	3.0
Chemical (Pharmaceutical) Mfg.	50.0%	3.0
Retail Trade	37.5%	3.0
Construction	20.0%	2.8

RESUME ATTRIBUTES

Once a candidate clears the GPA hurdle, employers look at the resume for evidence of problem-solving skills and the ability to work in a team. (See Figure 37.) These two attributes are equally important, with almost 83 percent of responding organizations saying they seek them. This is also the second consecutive year that the largest percentage of employers will search for these attributes on a resume.

Following problem-solving skills and teamwork, written communication skills will be required by 80 percent of respondents, and these skills may be clearly evidenced by the resume itself. Although leadership was the most sought-after attribute on a resume two years ago, it falls to fourth on the list this year, with approximately 73 percent of respondents that will look for it.

While some of the listed attributes are hard to document, this list may serve as a checklist for candidates to use to evaluate the effectiveness of their resumes. If candidates are invited to an interview, they can focus on communicating the manner in which they are proficient in these particular attributes.

FIGURE 37

**Attributes Employers Seek
On a Candidate's Resume**

Attribute	% of Respondents
Problem-solving skills	82.9%
Ability to work in a team	82.9%
Communication skills (written)	80.3%
Leadership	72.6%
Strong work ethic	68.4%
Analytical/quantitative skills	67.5%
Communication skills (verbal)	67.5%
Initiative	67.5%
Detail-oriented	64.1%
Flexibility/adaptability	60.7%
Technical skills	59.8%
Interpersonal skills (relates well to others)	54.7%
Computer skills	48.7%
Organizational ability	48.7%
Strategic planning skills	39.3%
Creativity	29.1%
Friendly/outgoing personality	27.4%
Tactfulness	22.2%
Entrepreneurial skills/risk-taker	19.7%
Fluency in a foreign language	4.3%

HOW EMPLOYERS DECIDE BETWEEN TWO EQUALLY QUALIFIED CANDIDATES

In this year's survey, when employers were asked how they would choose between two otherwise equally qualified candidates, a more extensive list of attributes was provided. An additional four attributes were added to the original list that had been used in the past. The new attributes added were related to work experience: "Has completed an internship with your organization," "Has internship experience in your industry," "Has general work experience," and "Has no work experience."

The addition of these four attributes produced several new findings. (See Figure 38.) While past surveys consistently found the student's major to be the deciding factor between two otherwise equally qualified candidates, this year the deciding factor is whether the candidate completed an internship with the hiring organization, and second, whether the candidate has internship experience within the hiring industry.

Additionally, general work experience and no work experience are found to be more of a deciding factor than a candidate's high GPA (3.0 or above), involvement in extracurricular activities, school attended, and volunteer work. The only other attribute that held its ground with the addition of the new attributes is leadership. It continues to follow immediately after the student's major in terms of influence.

FIGURE 38
Influence of Attributes

Attribute	2018 Average Influence Rating*	2017 Average Influence Rating*	2016 Average Influence Rating*
Has completed an internship with your organization	4.6	N/A	N/A
Has internship experience in your industry	4.4	N/A	N/A
Major	3.8	4.0	4.0
Has held leadership position	3.7	3.9	3.9
Has general work experience	3.7	N/A	N/A
Has no work experience	3.4	N/A	N/A
High GPA (3.0 or above)	3.4	3.6	3.5
Has been involved in extracurricular activities (clubs, sports, student government, etc.)	3.3	3.6	3.6
School attended	2.8	2.9	2.9
Has done volunteer work	2.7	2.6	2.8
Is fluent in a foreign language	2.2	2.1	2.2
Has studied abroad	2.2	2.0	2.0

*5-point scale, where 1=No influence at all, 2=Not much influence, 3=Somewhat of an influence, 4=Very much influence, and 5=Extreme influence.

CAREER READINESS

Employers were once again asked to rate the essential need of the eight career readiness competencies as defined by NACE, and the proficiency of their new hires within those competencies. (See Figure 39.)

Critical thinking/problem solving is rated as most essential by respondents, as it has been every time employers have been asked to rate the competencies. Teamwork/collaboration is considered the second most-essential competency, and it is slightly higher in terms of rating than professionalism/work ethic, which was the second most-essential of the competencies last year. As mentioned earlier, teamwork was also one of the top two attributes employers look for on a candidate's resume.

At the lower end of essential need are career management and global/multi-cultural fluency, but both competencies are still considered at least somewhat essential in terms of need. These two competencies were also at the bottom of the list last year.

In terms of proficiency, new hires appear to be hitting the mark on two competencies—teamwork and digital technology. (See Figure 40.) More than three-quarters of respondents rated new graduates as very or extremely proficient in teamwork, and almost two-thirds rated them very or extremely proficient in digital technology. (See Figure 41.) In contrast, the remaining competencies have far fewer respondents giving students high marks in proficiency, suggesting employers see skills gaps in these areas.

FIGURE 39

Employers Rate the Essential Need of the Career Readiness Competencies

Competencies	Weighted Average Rating*
Critical Thinking/Problem Solving	4.62
Teamwork/Collaboration	4.56
Professionalism/Work Ethic	4.46
Oral/Written Communications	4.30
Leadership	3.82
Digital Technology	3.73
Career Management	3.46
Global/Multi-cultural Fluency	3.01

*5-point scale, where 1=Not essential, 2=Not very essential, 3=Somewhat essential, 4=essential, 5=Absolutely essential

FIGURE 40

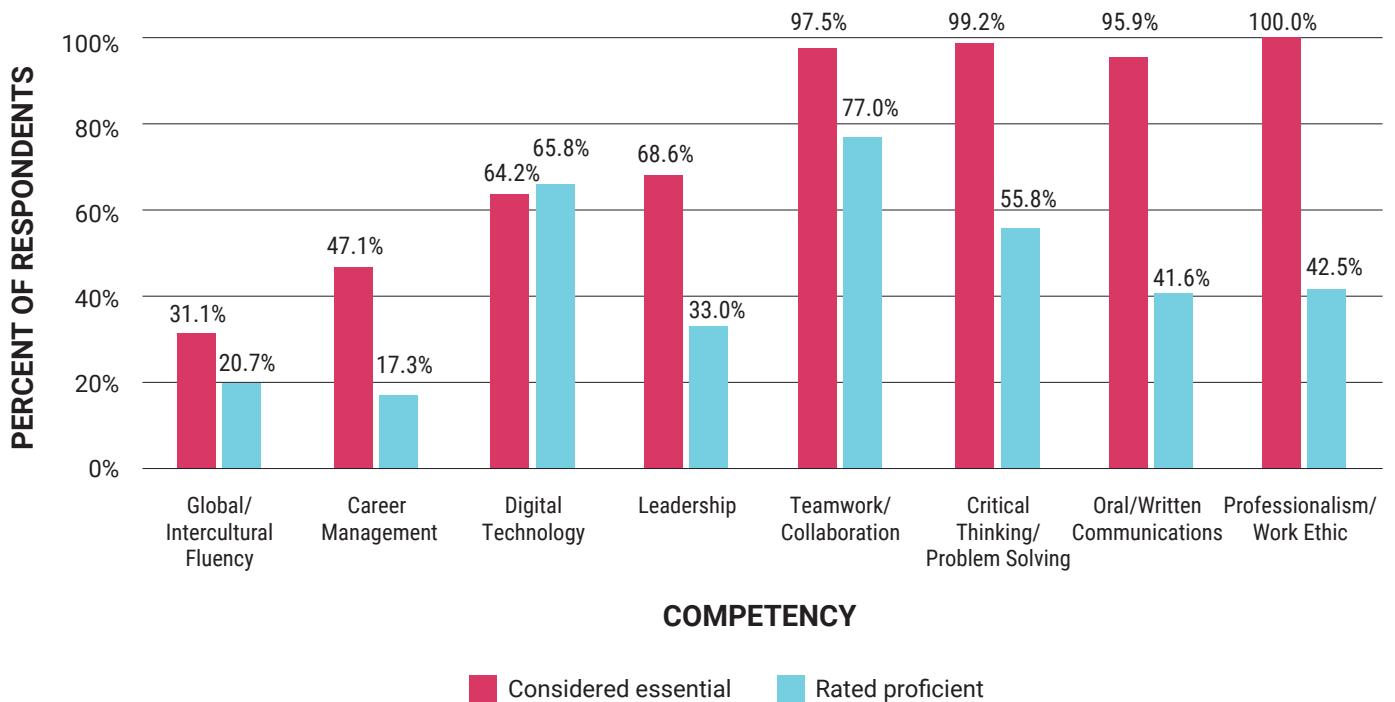
Employers Rate Recent Graduates on the Eight Career Readiness Competencies

Competencies	Weighted Average Rating*
Teamwork/Collaboration	3.82
Digital Technology	3.71
Critical Thinking/Problem Solving	3.58
Oral/Written Communications	3.39
Professionalism/Work Ethic	3.35
Leadership	3.28
Career Management	3.01
Global/Multi-cultural Fluency	2.94

*5-point scale, where 1=Not at all proficient, 2=Not very proficient, 3=Somewhat proficient, 4=Very proficient, 5=Extremely proficient.

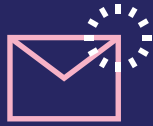
FIGURE 41

Need vs. Proficiency on Career Readiness Competencies, by Percent of Respondents



*The percentages corresponding to "considered essential" represent, among all responding employers, the percentage who, on a five-point scale, indicated that the respective competency was either "essential" (4) or "absolutely essential" (5) for college graduates to enter their workforce. The percentages corresponding to "rated proficient" represent, among all responding employers, the percentage who, on a five-point scale, rated recent graduates either "very" (4) or "extremely" (5) proficient in the respective competency.

COMPENSATION & SIGNING BONUSES



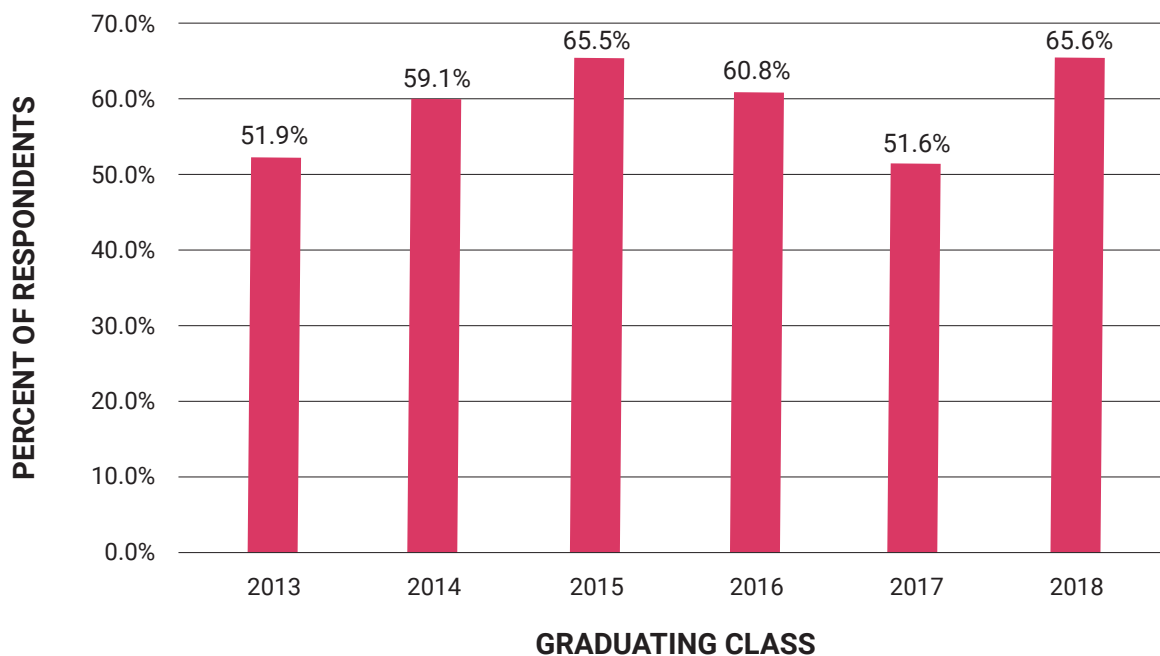
STARTING SALARIES

The percentage of employers with plans to increase starting salaries to bachelor's degree graduates has reached its highest point in the past five years: Overall, 65.6 percent of respondents plan to do so in 2017-18. (See Figure 42.)

The overall average salary increase planned is 4.4 percent, which is exactly the same figure planned for Class of 2017 graduates. While some individual respondents are planning much greater salary increases and tipping the computed average, the median increase planned is 3 percent, also identical to last year's median salary increase. More than 30 percent of respondents are planning a 3 percent increase in salaries for bachelor's degree graduates this year.

FIGURE 42

Employers With Plans to Increase Starting Salaries to Bachelor's Degree Graduates



Data are limited by industry, but miscellaneous manufacturers are most likely to increase bachelor's degree salaries; more than three-quarters of respondents in this industry plan to do so. In all four geographic regions, more than 60 percent of respondents expect to increase salaries to bachelor's degree graduates. In addition, employers in the West are extremely likely to increase bachelor's degree salaries, as more than 80 percent plan to do so. (See Figures 43 and 44.)

FIGURE 43

Employers With Plans to Increase Starting Salaries, by Industry

Industry	# of Respondents With Plans to Increase Bachelor's Salaries	# of Respondents by Industry	% of Respondents by Industry
Misc. Mfg.	13	17	76.5%
Information	4	6	66.7%
Computer & Electronics Mfg.	5	8	62.5%
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	11	18	61.1%
Retail Trade	1	5	20.0%

FIGURE 44

Employers With Plans to Increase Starting Salaries, by Region

Region	# of Respondents With Plans to Increase Bachelor's Salaries	# of Respondents by Region	% of Respondents by Region
West	5	6	83.3%
Northeast	17	26	65.4%
Southeast	15	23	65.2%
Midwest	22	35	62.9%

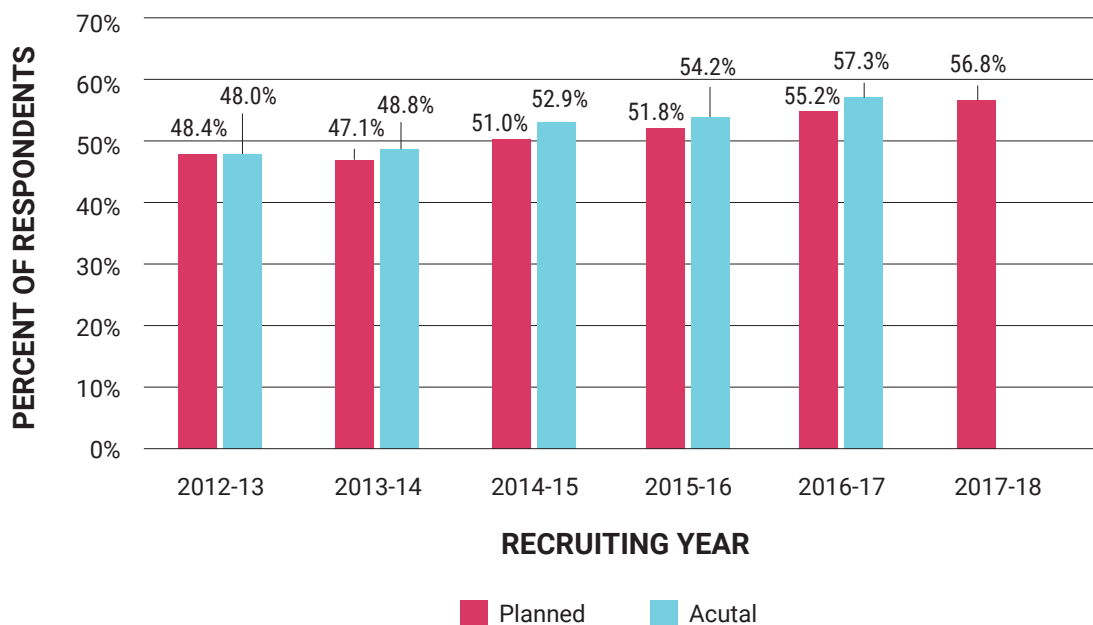
SIGNING BONUSES

Signing bonuses appear to be on the rise. As reported last year in *Job Outlook 2017*, more than 55 percent of respondents had plans to offer signing bonuses to Class of 2017 graduates, reaching a four-year high. This year, the percentage of respondents planning to offer signing bonuses reaches a new high with 56.8 percent of respondents planning to offer signing bonuses to Class of 2018 graduates. (See Figure 45.)

Another peak is shown in the percentage of responding organizations that actually provided signing bonuses to Class of 2017 graduates. Originally, 55.2 percent planned to do so, but more than 57 percent actually gave signing bonuses to Class of 2017 hires. Hopefully, this upward trend will continue.

FIGURE 45

Employers Offering Signing Bonuses



Signing bonuses will go only to a selected group of graduates. More than two-thirds of respondents will offer them only to certain graduates earning preferred degrees. The top degrees in demand—business, computer science, and engineering—will also be those most likely to receive signing bonuses.

By industry, signing bonuses will be offered primarily by respondents within the manufacturing sector. (See Figure 46.) In the food and beverage manufacturing industry, all respondents have plans to offer signing bonuses; in addition, at least 60 percent of respondents among chemical (pharmaceutical), motor vehicle, and computer and electronics manufacturers plan to offer signing bonuses.

By region, employers in the West and Southeast are most inclined to offer signing bonuses to Class of 2018 graduates. In both regions, more than 65 percent of respondents have plans to do so. (See Figure 47.)

FIGURE 46

Percent of Employers Offering Signing Bonuses to 2017-18 Graduates, by Industry

Industry	% offering Signing Bonuses	# of Respondents
Food & Beverage Mfg.	100.0%	5
Retail Trade	87.5%	8
Management Consulting	80.0%	5
Computer & Electronics Mfg.	66.7%	12
Motor Vehicle Mfg.	62.5%	8
Chemical (Pharmaceutical) Mfg.	60.0%	5
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	52.4%	21
Information	44.4%	9
Misc. Mfg.	43.5%	23
Construction	40.0%	5

FIGURE 47

Percent of Employers Offering Signing Bonuses to 2017-18 Graduates, by Region

Region	% offering Signing Bonuses	# of Respondents
West	66.7%	18
Southeast	65.5%	29
Northeast	59.4%	32
Midwest	45.7%	46

Data on projected signing bonus amounts have consistently been limited, but are provided for eight categories this year. (See Figure 48.) While nearly all of this year’s projected bonus amounts appear lower than last year’s projections, the limited data precludes any trend analysis. The data should be used simply as a guideline.

The same is true at the master’s degree level, with even fewer data points provided for M.B.A. and computer science signing bonus amounts. (See Figure 49.)

FIGURE 48

Average Signing Bonus, by Major (Bachelor's Degrees)*

Major	2017-18 Average Bonus (Projected)	# of Respondents 2017-18	2016-17 Average Bonus (Projected)	# of Respondents 2016-17
Accounting	\$2,375	5	\$3,104	12
All majors	\$4,900	5	Not reported	-
Business	\$3,357	7	\$5,429	7
Computer Science	\$6,000	9	\$9,654	13
Engineering (not specified)	\$4,083	6	\$5,188	8
Finance	\$3,917	6	\$3,643	7
Mathematics	\$4,625	5	Not reported	-
Logistics/Supply Chain	\$3,417	6	\$3,750	6

*Where 5 or more data points were provided.

FIGURE 49

Average Signing Bonus, by Major (Master's Degrees)*

Major	2017-18 Average Bonus (Projected)	# of Respondents 2017-18	2016-17 Average Bonus (Projected)	# of Respondents 2016-17
M.B.A.	\$15,500	5	\$21,429	7
Computer Science	\$10,375	5	Not reported	-

*Where 5 or more data points were provided.



WHAT'S AHEAD FOR THE CLASS OF 2018

Hiring updates for the Class of 2018 will be provided in the NACE *Job Outlook 2018 Spring Update* report. Data will be collected in February and March 2018, with results available in April 2018.

Salary projections for the Class of 2018 will be available in January 2018 in the *Winter 2018 Salary Survey*. Salary data collected through this *Job Outlook 2018* survey, which remains open through the end of November, will be the basis for the report.

APPENDIX

FIGURE 50

Respondents by Size of Department/Business Unit

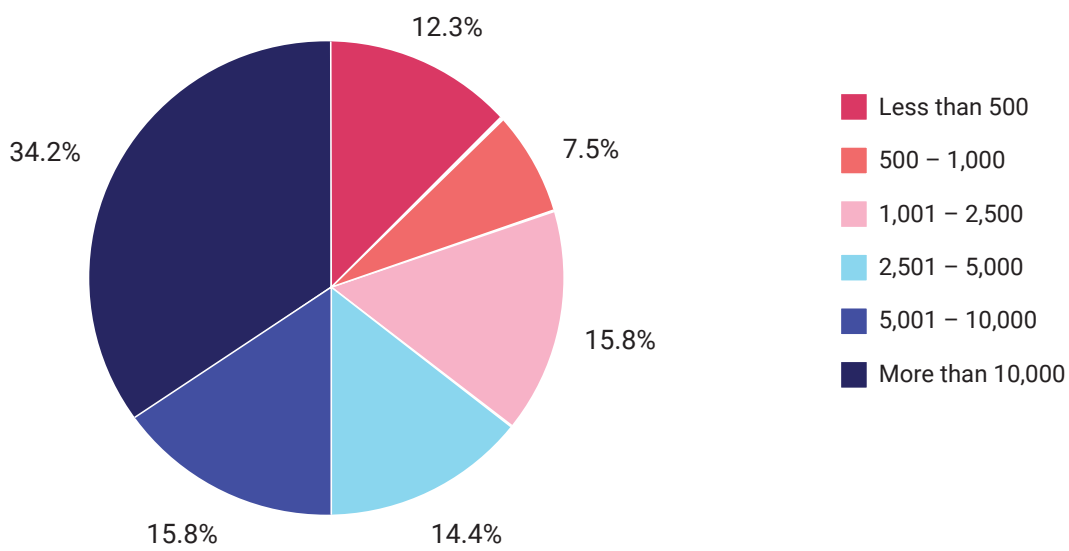


FIGURE 51

Respondents by Industry

Industry	# of respondents	% of respondents
Oil & Gas Extraction	2	1.0%
Utilities	4	2.0%
Construction	6	3.0%
Food & Beverage Mfg.	7	3.5%
Chemical (Pharmaceutical) Mfg.	10	5.0%
Computer & Electronics Mfg.	16	8.0%
Motor Vehicle Mfg.	11	5.5%
Misc. Mfg.	29	14.4%
Wholesale Trade	5	2.5%
Retail Trade	15	7.5%
Transportation	5	2.5%
Messaging & Warehouse	1	0.5%
Information	12	6.0%
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	36	17.9%
Accounting Services	6	3.0%
Engineering Services	7	3.5%
Management Consulting	7	3.5%
Misc. Prof. Services	12	6.0%
Social Services	2	1.0%
Recreation & Hospitality	2	1.0%
Misc. Support Services	2	1.0%
Government	4	2.0%

PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

Below is a list of the organizations that responded to the Job Outlook 2018 survey. *(Please note: Although 201 organizations responded, the list below includes 102, as 99 organizations preferred not to be listed.)*

84.51°	Echo Global Logistics	Orlando Utilities Commission
AB	Edward Jones	Owens Corning
Acme Construction Supply	Emerson	Panduit Corp.
Air Force Civilian Service Talent Acquisitions	Emerson Climate Technologies	Pariveda Solutions Inc.
Altria Client Services LLC	Equinix	Parsons Corporation
Amica Mutual Insurance Company	EY	Paycom
Andersen Corporation	FirstBank Holding Co.	Philips Lighting
ArcelorMittal USA	Fluor	Phillips-Medisize Corporation
Arconic	Fresenius Kabi USA	Polaris Industries, Inc.
Armstrong World Industries	GE Appliances, a Haier company	Protiviti Inc.
Ascend Performance Materials	General Dynamics – MS	PVH
BASF Corporation	General Electric Company	Raytheon Company
Bechtel Marine Propulsion Corporation	Great Lakes Dredge & Dock Company	Recreational Equipment, Inc. (REI)
Becton Dickinson & Company	Harley-Davidson Inc.	RS&H
Berry Global	Heico Construction Group LLC	Save-A-Lot
Blackbaud, Inc.	INEOS	Sears Holdings Corporation
California State Auditor	Ingersoll Rand Company	Selden Fox LTD
Campbell Soup Company	INROADS, Inc.	Simpson Gumpertz & Heger Inc.
Cargill, Inc.	Intuit Inc.	Southern Company
Caterpillar Inc.	Kerry Inc.	Southwest Airlines Co.
Charter Manufacturing Company, Inc.	Kimberly-Clark Corporation	Speedway LLC
Chevron Corporation	KPMG LLP	Stryker Corporation
CIGNA Corporation	Liberty Mutual Insurance Company	Teradata Corporation
CohnReznick	Linde Engineering North America Inc.	Textron Inc.
Compass Group North America	Link-Belt Construction Equipment Co.	The Boeing Company – Strategic Workforce Planning
Con Edison	Macy's, Inc.	The Travelers Companies, Inc.
Continental AG	MAVERICK Technologies	TIAA
Crown Cork & Seal Company USA, Inc.	MGM Resorts International	Tindall Corporation
Dell, Inc. – Operations & Client Solutions	Mondelēz International	U.S. Cellular Corporation
DENSO International America Inc	National Life Group	Union Pacific Railroad Company
Dick's Sporting Goods	Nationwide Insurance	Vertex, Inc.
DST Systems Inc.	Newell Brands	Wells Fargo
Dyson	Nokia	Willis Towers Watson
	OMNOVA Solutions Inc.	Woolpert LLP
		Yelp

