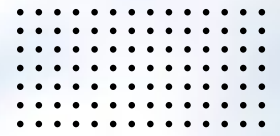


What Employers Really Look for in Recent Graduates



bridgeprep

The logo for Bridgeprep features the word "bridge" in orange and "prep" in grey. An orange arc is positioned above the word "bridge".



The excitement of graduating from college is amazing. This is a huge accomplishment and should be commended. Often students have a great graduation and the next day life in the real-world begins. College graduates are faced with the daunting task of entering an extremely competitive work world. For students currently enrolled in college preparation for work after college is of the utmost importance.

The first challenge for college students is the change in culture. In college the task at hand is clear and straight forward. The professor presents students with a syllabus that outlines the requirements and standards expected throughout the term. The student receives immediate, consistent, and direct feedback. Since grades are standardized students know exactly where stands relative to their peers.

As you might imagine the work culture is opposite to what the student experiences in school. The feedback an individual receives at work is less consistent and often ambiguous. Formal feedback in the form of a review typically occurs annually. The feedback is typically more qualitative than quantitative, which can be confusing. Infrequent feedback that's vague and lacking standards causes frustration.

Companies are more efficient than ever before. It's estimated that millions of jobs in the US are eliminated when automation, outsourcing and technological efficiencies are combined. According to the World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs survey¹, half of today's work activities could be automated by 2055.

This means that the competition for a shrinking number of jobs will increase every year. This situation is magnified when you consider that college graduates enter the workforce with little to no work experience.

Given all the obstacles, what are students to do? A better framed question, what do employers want from students? Employers are operating in a highly competitive, global world so every resource is critical.

Every executive thinks about the giants that have fallen in the last 20-years; Lehman Brothers, Toys R' Us, Blockbuster, Borders, Compaq, Lord & Taylor, and Sports Authority, to name a few. Some of these companies were in business over 100 years. New companies are added to the list every year. Companies know that they could easily join the list of companies that no longer exist.

Because of this all companies are looking to maximize profits and reduce costs through outsourcing, automation, technological advantages and bringing on a few people as possible.



The job market is highly competitive but there are areas that students can prioritize to increase the likelihood of success. Students must consider two elements 1) what are your peers globally doing and 2) what are employers looking for. Below is the list of skills employers are looking for. Students should concentrate on these skills and build as much industry knowledge as possible to prepare for success:

1***Entrepreneurial mindset*****2*****Ability to work in teams*****3*****Strong analytical/quantitative skills*****4*****Strong written and verbal communication skills*****5*****Comfort with ambiguity*****6*****Strong Excel and PowerPoint skills*****7*****Critical thinking skills***