**2011 Graduate Outlook Survey**

**Summary Report for Construction, Mining and Engineering Employers**

This report looks at trends in graduate recruitment for the Construction, Mining and Engineering industries including graduate recruitment trends, graduate skill shortages, graduate program promotion methods used and factors influencing graduate attrition and retention. In total, 87 Construction, Mining and Engineering employers responded to the survey.

The report provides insight into graduate recruitment activities and suggests ways to improve retention rates and capitalise on investing in graduate employees.

# What’s happening in graduate recruitment?

Around nine in ten employers from Construction, Mining and Engineering industries employed graduates in 2011. This is around the same proportion as in 2010 and a similar rate is expected in 2012.

 Of Construction, Mining and Engineering employers in 2011 (see Figure 1):

* Nearly one in ten did not recruit any graduates;
* About four in ten recruited between one and 20 graduates;
* Around five in ten recruited more than 20 graduates.

Again, most employers expect to recruit similar numbers in 2012.

**Figure 1: Graduate intake for C/M/E[[1]](#footnote-1), 2011**

Around one third of Construction, Mining and Engineering employers surveyed would have recruited more graduates if appropriate candidates had been available (see Figure 2) in 2011. The number of employers who would have recruited more graduates if appropriate candidates had been available has been slowly rising since the impact of the Global Financial Crisis in 2009.

Figure 2: Proportion of C/M/E[[2]](#footnote-2) employers who would have recruited more graduates if a higher number of appropriate candidates had been available, 2007-11

# How do you select graduates?

Construction, Mining and Engineering employers were asked to rate which three selection criteria (aside from relevant qualifications) they considered to be *most* important when evaluating applicants. These are presented in Table 1, ranked from most (1) to least (10) nominated and benchmarked against all industry groups for 2011.

The top three most important selection criteria for Construction, Mining and Engineering employers were:

1. Interpersonal and communication skills (written and oral);
2. Passion/Knowledge of industry/Drive/Commitment/Attitude;
3. Work experience.

The top two selected by Construction, Mining and Engineering employers were consistent with the top two ranked by all industry groups. Construction, Mining and Engineering employers were more likely on average to value ‘work experience’ than all industry groups and less likely to value ‘Activities (intra and extra curricular)’ and ‘Leadership skills’.

Table 1: Most important selection criteria when recruiting graduates, 2011 (Rank)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Selection Criteria** | **2011** | **All industry groups** |
| Interpersonal and communication skills (written and oral) | 1 | 1 |
| Passion/Knowledge of industry/Drive/Commitment/Attitude | 2 | 2 |
| Work experience | 3 | 5 |
| Calibre of academic results | 4 | 4 |
| Critical reasoning and analytical skills/Problem solving/Lateral thinking/Technical skills | 5 | 3 |
| Cultural alignment / Values fit | 6 | 6 |
| Teamwork skills | 7 | 7 |
| Emotional intelligence (incl. self-awareness, strength of character, confidence, motivation) | 8 | 8 |
| Leadership skills | 9 | 9 |
| Activities (incl. intra and extra curricular) | 10 | 10 |

# Popular methods to promote your graduate program

When Construction, Mining and Engineering employers were asked about the methods used to promote their 2011 graduate program (see Figure 3), the vast majority of employers, who could select more than one response option, indicated that they promoted their graduate program through:

* Their **organisation’s website** (97.1%);
* **University careers fairs** (89.7%);
* **University careers services** (69.1%).

The use of traditional ‘Newspaper advertising’ is ranked quite low in comparison to other types of promotion methods used.

Figure 3: Methods used to promote graduate program, 2011

## Why graduates leave an employer

Employers were asked to rate each of nine key factors that can impact on graduate attrition. These are listed in Figure 4 below in order of the proportion of employers who rated them as being either quite important or very important.

Employers from Construction, Mining and Engineering believe the top three reasons a graduate leaves their employer are:

1. Their desire for greater professional development;
2. Their relationship with direct manager/supervisor;
3. They are seeking greater opportunities for advancement.

 **Figure 4: Quite/very important factors in graduate attrition, 2011**

# How to retain your graduates

Employers were asked to select the effectiveness of each graduate retention strategies they felt were most effective to not at all effective (see Table 2). These strategies are ranked in terms of the proportion of employers who considered them to be quite/very effective within Construction, Mining and Engineering industries and all industry groups.

Table 2: Quite/very effective graduate retention strategies, 2011 (Rank)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Graduate retention strategy, ranked** | **C/M/E** | **All industry groups** |
| Internal training and development activities | 1 | 1 |
| Support for external training and development | 2 | 2 |
| Mentoring scheme | 3 | 3 |
| Buddy system | 4 | 6 |
| Specific graduate induction program | 5 | 4 |
| Regular performance appraisals | 6 | 5 |
| Leadership development program for identified ‘stars’ | 7 | 7 |
| Graduate-focused social activities | 8 | 8 |
| Performance-based remuneration | 9 | 9 |
| Specific area for graduates on website | 10 | 10 |

Construction, Mining and Engineering employers believed that the three most effective strategies to retain graduates were:

1. ‘Internal training and development activities’;
2. ‘Support for external training development’;
3. ‘Mentoring scheme’.

Professional training and development opportunities can further a graduate’s knowledge and skill-set. Employers using these as retention strategies may also view this as a way to foster a longer-term commitment from a graduate.

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**Further Information:**

The Graduate Outlook Survey is one of a number of graduate outcomes surveys conducted annually by Graduate Careers Australia (GCA).

GCA produce a number of free reports on graduate outcomes data each year, as well as offering tailored reporting and data solutions on graduate recruitment practices and trends within Australasia.

GCA is a not-for-profit organisation whose research work is largely federal government funded. We also produce a number of careers resources for students and graduates, including Graduate Opportunities. For more information about the valuable work we do, please contact the GCA research team on (03) 9605 3700 or research@graduatecareers.com.au or visit our website at [www.graduatecareers.com.au](http://www.graduatecareers.com.au)

1. Construction, Mining and Engineering [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Construction, Mining and Engineering [↑](#footnote-ref-2)