**2011 Graduate Outlook Survey**

**Summary Report for Communication, Technology and Utilities Employers**

This report looks at trends in graduate recruitment for the Communication, Technology and Utilities industries including graduate recruitment trends, graduate skill shortages, graduate program promotion methods used and factors influencing graduate attrition and retention. In total, 56 Communication, Technology and Utilities 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?

Five in ten Communication, Technology and Utilities employers surveyed would have recruited more graduates if appropriate candidates had been available (see Figure 2) in 2011. This is a sharp increase from the previous year when only fifteen per cent of employers would have recruited a higher number of appropriate candidates if they had been available.

Figure 1: Proportion of C/T/U[[1]](#footnote-1) employers who would have recruited more graduates if a higher number of appropriate candidates had been available, 2007-11

# How do you select graduates?

Communication, Technology and Utilities 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 Communication, Technology and Utilities employers were:

1. Interpersonal and communication skills (written and oral);
2. Passion/Knowledge of industry/Drive/Commitment/Attitude;
3. Critical reasoning and analytical skills/Problem solving/Lateral thinking/Technical skills.

These three selection criteria nominated by Communication, Technology and Utilities employers, was consistent with that ranked by all industry groups.

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

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

# Popular methods to promote your graduate program

When Communication, Technology and Utilities employers were asked about the methods used to promote their 2011 graduate program (see Figure 2), the vast majority of employers, who could select more than one response option, indicated that they promoted their graduate program through:

* **Employment websites** (e.g. SEEK, CareerOne) (81.8%);
* **University careers services** (75.0%);
* Their **organisation’s website** (75.0%).

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

Figure 2: 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 Communication, Technology and Utilities believe the top three reasons a graduate leaves their employer are:

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

 **Figure 3: 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 Communication, Technology and Utilities industries and all industry groups.

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

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Graduate retention strategy, ranked** | **C/T/U[[3]](#footnote-3)** | **All industry groups** |
| Mentoring scheme | 1 | 3 |
| Support for external training and development | 2 | 2 |
| Internal training and development activities | 3 | 1 |
| Buddy system | 4 | 6 |
| Regular performance appraisals | 5 | 5 |
| Specific graduate induction program | 6 | 4 |
| Leadership development program for identified ‘stars’ | 7 | 7 |
| Performance-based remuneration | 8 | 9 |
| Graduate-focused social activities | 9 | 8 |
| Specific area for graduates on website | 10 | 10 |

Communication, Technology and Utilities employers believed that the three most effective strategies to retain graduates were:

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

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. Communication, Technology and Utilities [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Communication, Technology and Utilities [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Communication, Technology and Utilities [↑](#footnote-ref-3)