NACE® RESEARCH

Job Outlook 2012 Spring Update

MARCH 2012

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About the Survey

NACE conducted the *Job Outlook 2012 Spring Update* survey from February 8 - March 19, 2012; the survey was sent to 949 employer members; 160, or 16.9 percent, responded.

By region, 24.4 percent of respondents are from the Northeast, 31.3 percent are from the Southeast, 33.1 percent are from the Midwest, and 11.3 percent are from the West.

Data are calculated on the number of respondents to each specific question. Totals may not equal 100 percent due to rounding.

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Final results: hiring up 10.2 percent

Employers responding to the NACE *Job Outlook 2012 Spring Update* report that they will hire 10.2 percent more new college graduates in 2011-12 than they did in 2010-11. (See Figure 1.)

Figure 1: Hiring expectations, 2012 vs. 2011

Recruiting Year	Total # of Hires	Average # of Hires	Percent Change
2011-12	29,237	190	10.2%
2010-11	26,529	172	

Figure 2: NACE Job Outlook hiring projections, 2007-2012

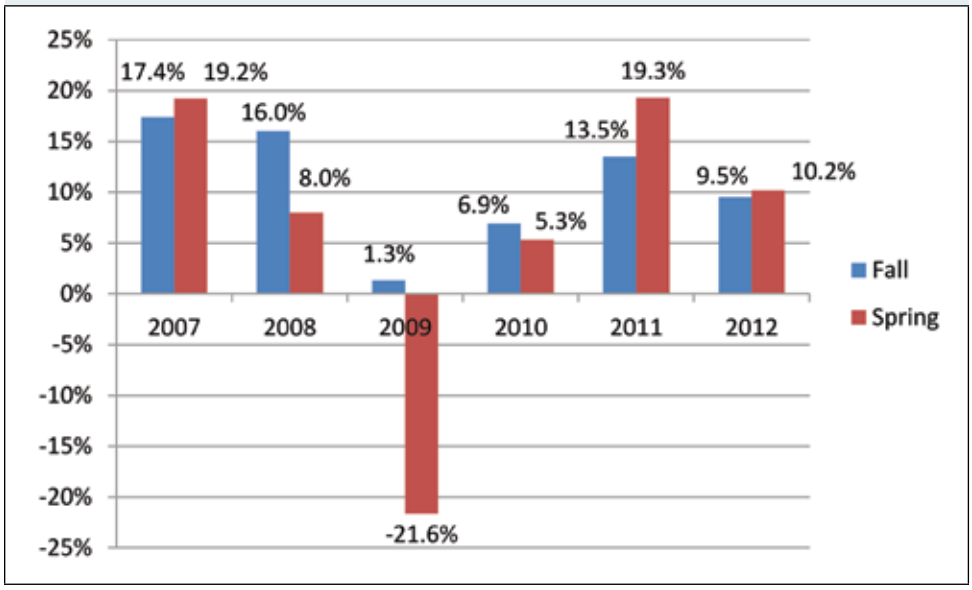

Figure 3: College hiring by region

Region	Number of Hires 2011 (actual)	Number of Hires 2012 (projected)	Percent Change
Northeast	9,589	10,221	6.6%
Southeast	4,120	4,861	18.0%
Midwest	11,456	12,343	7.7%
West	1,364	1,812	32.8%

That's a slight increase over their initial projection—9.5 percent—and marks the second consecutive year in which employers have adjusted their hiring expectations upward. (See Figure 2.) Hiring is up in all regions, as Figure 3 indicates. Employers in the West report the biggest increases; in fact, most of the employers in this region expect to increase their college hires or maintain college hiring at last year's levels.

Job postings, applications up

Results of the latest survey also show an increase in the average number of jobs employers are posting (up 10.5 percent since last year), and an increase in the average number of applications received (up 54.5 percent), further evidence over the steady recovery of the job market for new grads. (See Figure 4.) As Figure 4 illustrates, more telling, perhaps, is the change in average number of postings and applications since the 2009-10 academic year, when the job market for new graduates was just starting to come back from its 2008-09 drop.

Figure 4: Job postings vs. applications, 2012 vs. 2011, 2010

Recruiting Year	Total Number of Job Postings	Average Number of Job Postings	Total Number of Applications	Average Number of Applications per Posting
2011-12	15,767	116	514,181	32.6
2010-11	14,341	105	303,242	21.1
2009-10	5,174	45	209,852	40.5

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Degrees and majors in demand

The demand for new college graduates is mostly evident at the bachelor's degree level, with more than 90 percent of respondents planning to hire these particular graduates. (See Figure 5.) In addition, more than half of respondents expressed some interest in hiring graduates at the master's level, and almost one-quarter have plans to recruit at the doctorate degree level. Respondents whose hires will consist entirely of bachelor's degree graduates account for just over one-quarter of total respondents.

Among responding employers, engineering and business fields are of most interest, reflecting the specific needs of participating organizations. (See Figure 6.)

Figure 5: Hiring expectations by degree level

Degree Level	Average Percent of New College Hires	Number of Respondents Hiring	Percent of Total Respondents Hiring
Associate	9.4%	17	10.6%
Bachelor's	83.8%	150	93.8%
M.B.A.	10.1%	70	43.8%
Master's (Other than M.B.A.)	18.7%	84	52.5%
Ph.D.	10.2%	39	24.4%

Figure 6: Hiring expectations by major

Major	Percent of Respondents Hiring	Number of Respondents Hiring
Engineering	69%	110
Business	63%	100
Accounting	53%	85
Computer Sciences	49%	78
Economics	22%	35
Misc. Majors	20%	32
Physical Sciences	19%	30
Communications	16%	26
Social Sciences	16%	25
Humanities	13%	21
Agriculture	4%	7
Health Sciences	3%	5
Education	3%	5

Key Skills for New College Hires

Figure 7 indicates that the skills/qualities that 2012 respondents see as key match up with those identified by 2011 respondents. In fact, in all but two areas, the responses are identical in terms of ratings, and the exceptions are minor. (Last year, respondents rated technical knowledge at 4.2, while 2012 respondents rated it 4.1; similarly, 2011 respondents rated proficiency with software at 4.1, and 2012 respondents rated this 4.0.)

Figure 7: Employers rate the skills/qualities in new college hires

Skill/Quality	Importance Rating*
Ability to verbally communicate with persons inside and outside the organization	4.6
Ability to make decisions and solve problems	4.5
Ability to obtain and process information	4.5
Ability to plan, organize, and prioritize work	4.4
Ability to analyze quantitative data	4.3
Technical knowledge related to the job	4.1
Proficiency with computer software programs	4.0
Ability to create and/or edit written reports	3.7
Ability to sell or influence others	3.5

*Weighted average. Based on a 5-point scale where 1=Not at all important; 2=Not very important; 3=Somewhat important; 4=Very important; 5=Extremely important

Employer expectations for spring 2012 recruiting

Employers anticipate a busy spring: More than 85 percent have plans to recruit for full-time and/or internship positions. (See Figure 8.)

Figure 8: Spring 2012 recruiting

	Number of 2012 Respondents	Percent of 2012 Respondents	Number of 2011 Respondents	Percent of 2011 Respondents
Full-time, only	22	13.8%	21	12.3%
Intern, only	21	13.2%	19	11.1%
Both intern & full-time	93	58.5%	97	56.7%
On-campus presence – not hiring	8	5.0%	9	5.3%
No presence – hired during fall	10	6.3%	18	10.5%
Not hiring this year	5	3.1%	7	4.1%
Total	159	100.0%	171	100.0%

Employer expectations for fall 2012 recruiting

The Fall 2012 recruiting season also looks promising for new graduates, as nearly one-third of respondents have plans to hire more students in the fall. Also positive news: As Figure 9 illustrates, there is a trend away from uncertainty surrounding fall recruiting. Organizations that are unsure of their fall recruiting plans now account for less than 20 percent of respondents, down from 24 percent in 2011 and nearly 32 percent two years ago, indicating that employers are more confident in their hiring plans.

Figure 9: Expectations for fall 2012 compared with expectations for fall 2011 and 2010

	Number of 2012 Respondents	Percent of 2012 Respondents	Percent of 2011 Respondents	Percent of 2010 Respondents
Hire more	52	32.7%	28.9%	29.3%
Hire fewer	14	8.8%	5.8%	9.2%
Hire same	65	40.9%	41.0%	29.9%
Unsure	28	17.6%	24.3%	31.6%
Total	159	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Summary

The final hiring update for the Class of 2012 graduates is optimistic, with employers recalculating their fall hiring projections upward in the spring for the second consecutive year. Although the increase for the Class of 2012 is slight, the upward movement is a positive indication of an improving job market for new college graduates.

Other positives: Hiring is up across all regions, employers are expressing interest in undergraduates and graduate-level hires, and spring recruiting activity looks strong.
Finally, early indications for the Class of 2013 look positive, as employers gain more confidence in their ability to hire new college graduates.

Survey respondents

The list below contains the names of the organizations that responded to the NACE *Job Outlook 2012 Spring Update* Survey. (Although 160 organizations responded, the list below includes 116, as 44 organizations preferred not to be listed.)

Advanced Micro Devices, Inc.
Agilent Technologies, Inc.
Alcatel-Lucent
Allscripts
American Airlines Inc.
American Axle & Manufacturing Holdings, Inc.
ARAMARK
ArcelorMittal USA
ATI Allegheny Ludlum Corporation
Avant Energy Services
Baker Tilly Virchow Krause, LLP
Bechtel Plant Machinery Inc.
Belden, Inc.
Bell Helicopter Textron Inc.
Brady Corp.
Broadcom Corporation
C&S Wholesale Grocers, Inc.
Carpenter Technology Corporation
CGI Federal
Chevron Corporation
Chevron Phillips Chemical Company LP
Cirrus Logic
CNA Insurance
Cognizant Technology Solutions
ConAgra Foods, Inc.
Consolidated Graphics
Country Insurance & Financial Services
Crowe Horwath LLP
Dick's Sporting Goods
Dow Corning Corporation
Duff & Phelps LLC
dunnhumbyUSA
DuPont
E. & J. Gallo Winery
eBay Inc.
Enterprise
Ernst & Young LLP
FirstEnergy Corporation
Fluor Corporation
Foster Wheeler AG
Freddie Mac
Fujitsu Network Communications Inc.
GAF Corporation
Genworth Financial
Giant Eagle, Inc.
Global Tax Management, Inc.
Great Lakes Dredge & Dock Company
Hajoca Corporation
Hitachi Consulting
HNTB Companies
Honeywell International Inc.
INEOS
JV Tyler Engineers
Kearney & Company
KLA-Tencor Corporation
Kronos
L'Oreal USA
Lennox International Inc.
Lhoist North America, Inc.
Liberty Mutual Insurance Company
Macy's, Inc.
Maximus
Mercer
Messer Construction Co.
Michelin North America
Modern Woodmen of America
Musco Sports Lighting, LLC
National Instruments
Naval Acquisition Career Center
Navistar, Inc.
Nestle Purina Petcare
Nestle USA
NetApp
Newmont Mining Corporation
Norfolk Southern Corp.
Northrop Grumman Corporation
Office of Legislative Audits
Oregon Department of Transportation
Owens-Illinois Inc.
ParenteBeard
Pariveda Solutions Inc.
Phillips Plastics Corporation
Polaris Industries, Inc.
Precision Castparts Corp.
PrimeSource Building Products, Inc.
Procter & Gamble Co.
Progressive Insurance
Questar Corporation
Return Path, Inc.
Rogers Corporation
Roux Associates, Inc.
SABIC Innovative Plastics
Savannah River Nuclear Solutions
Schlumberger Oilfield Services
Seagate Technology
Shaw Industries, Inc.
Shawmut Design and Construction
State Street Corporation
Stryker Corporation
SWIFT
Teradata Corporation
The Northern Trust Company
The Rehmann Group
The Royal Bank of Scotland
The Timken Company
The Vanguard Group
Tindall Corporation
Total Quality Logistics, Inc.
Toys "R" Us, Inc.
Trinity Consultants Inc.
Turner Construction Company
Veristic Technologies, Inc.
VistaPrint USA, Inc.
W.W. Grainger, Inc.
Welch Allyn Inc.
Wipro Technologies

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