

Job Outlook: The Candidate Skills/Qualities Employers Want

Spotlight for Career Services Professionals

Spotlight for Recruiting Professionals

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When it comes to the importance of candidate skills/qualities, employers are looking for team players who can solve problems, organize their work, and communicate effectively, according to respondents to NACE's *Job Outlook 2014* survey.

Survey participants rated "ability to work in a team structure," "ability to make decisions and solve problems," "ability to plan, organize, and prioritize work," and "ability to verbally communicate with persons inside and outside the organization" as the most important candidate skills/qualities. These are followed by candidates' "ability to obtain and process information" and "ability to analyze quantitative data."

The least important candidate skills/qualities on the list are the "ability to create and/or edit written reports" and the "ability to sell or influence others."

Figure 1: Employers rate the importance of candidate skills/qualities

Skill/Quality	Weighted average rating*
Ability to work in a team structure	4.55
Ability to make decisions and solve problems	4.50
Ability to plan, organize, and prioritize work	4.48
Ability to verbally communicate with persons inside and outside the organization	4.48
Ability to obtain and process information	4.37
Ability to analyze quantitative data	4.25
Technical knowledge related to the job	4.01
Proficiency with computer software programs	3.94
Ability to create and/or edit written reports	3.62
Ability to sell or influence others	3.54

*5-point scale, where 1=Not at all important; 2=Not very important; 3=Somewhat important; 4=Very important; and 5=Extremely important

Source: *Job Outlook 2014*, National Association of Colleges and Employers

NACE collected data for the *Job Outlook 2014* survey from its college recruiting professional members from August 5 through September 13, 2013. A total of 208 surveys were returned for a response rate of 19.8 percent. NACE will release the *Job Outlook 2014* report in the fall.