

JOB SEARCHING IN A TOUGH ECONOMY

THE GUIDE TO FINDING WHAT POSITIONS ARE AVAILABLE

It's no secret that the state of the economy has had a significant impact on the number of jobs that are available to recent and current graduates. Although the unemployment rate has increased, it is important to note that the unemployment rate for college graduates is expected to climb to 3.7%. The rate for those without a bachelor's degree or better could reach as high as 8.5% (1).

While many students are starting to seek alternative options (i.e. graduate school, volunteer programs), this is certainly not ideal for everyone. For students looking to enter the workforce, we offer a few suggestions, as well as a link to the Career Center web page with online resources and more information.

THE GOOD NEWS

Jobs in health care, education, criminal justice, accounting, and engineering are strong areas of employment, according to career forecasters. Federal government jobs, however, are ex-

pected to be sought the most. Federal government jobs are popular because of the stability, large scope of government activities (thereby allowing more students with varying skills to qualify), and the opportunities available for professional development. Also, due to the prediction that 550,000 government employees will leave the workforce (most to retire) by 2012, the hiring forecast looks promising for new graduates.(2).

Jobs created by stimulus money will be in fields such as manufacturing and construction, as well as information technology. Jobs will be widespread and are likely to be evenly distributed in terms of skill level. Due to the economic stimulus package, it is estimated that approximately 3.5 million jobs will be created over a period of one to two years (3).

Smaller business operations are seeing more success than larger corporations, so students may have a better chance at finding jobs in that area of the economy. Small operations cost less to operate and charge clients less money for services, which keeps them afloat in tough economic times. Students looking for jobs in advertising, marketing, and even finance (particularly mergers, acquisitions, and wealth management) will find the job search much easier, if they look beyond the skyscraping corporations (4).

Job seekers who are not geographically limited may find promising opportunities in cities ranging from San Antonio, Texas to Charleston, South Carolina. In cities across the nation, the retiring baby-boomers are expected to move to areas offering low-cost housing and warm weather. Students interested in cities such as Athens, Georgia, Birmingham, Alabama, and San Antonio, Texas may find jobs that serve the older population, in areas such as **insurance** or **senior housing** (5).

Another area that is expected to grow due to the economic stimulus package is green collar jobs. As the economic stimulus package starts to be implemented, new positions in this area will begin to emerge (6).

THE NOT SO GOOD NEWS

Though a broad range of jobs are expected to open nationwide, many may not start opening until the second half of 2009. Newly created stimulus package jobs are subject to the trickle effect, meaning they won't be available immediately. It will take time for more jobs to open (3).

Overall hiring expectations are declining, with some employers expecting to hire nearly 22 percent fewer graduates than were hired last year. Some are predicting that the job market could be flat for upcoming graduates. The economy is also affecting industries that typically rely on consumers for non-essential spending, for example retail, hospitality, and real estate jobs (1).

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

SUGGESTIONS FOR SUCCESS

- **Start early**
The typical job search can take six to nine months, but in this economy, it's wise to start even earlier.
- **Be open to several positions**
While it's wise to seek opportunities that you're interested in, be cautious of limiting yourself by searching for your 'dream job.' This is your first job, and no job is perfect. Be willing to try something new and be aware that job descriptions often aren't all-encompassing.
- **Be mobile**
You're young, fresh out of college, and likely able to move, so go for it! Be open to a new experience in a new place.
- **Be prepared**
 - Resume must be stellar
 - Interviewing skills must be superb
 - Utilize the Career Center during on-call counseling hours

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