

NACE Job Outlook 2026

General Information

Please enter your Contact ID number. This number was provided to you in the e-mail that contained the link for the survey.

- Response to this question is required.

Contact ID:

Please enter your Name, E-mail Address, and Company name.

- Response to this question is required.

Name:

E-mail Address:

Company Name:

Please tell us about your organization:

- For profit - private
- For profit - publicly held
- Non profit
- Government agency

In the United States only, how many employees are in the department/business unit for which you recruit: (If you recruit for a number of different departments/business units, add the number of employees in each department/business unit and select the total.)

- 500 or less
- 501 - 1,000
- 1,001 - 2,500

- 2,501 - 5,000
- 5,001 - 10,000
- 10,001 - 20,000
- More than 20,000

Which of the following best describes the scope of your firm's college recruiting?

- Recruit strictly in the U.S. for American-based operations.
- Recruit strictly in the U.S. for both American-based and international operations.
- Recruit both in the U.S. and internationally for American-based operations.
- Recruit both in the U.S. and internationally for both American-based and international operations.

Projections for the class of 2026

In your opinion, what will the job market be like for 2025-26 college graduates?

- Poor
- Fair
- Good
- Very Good
- Excellent

In your opinion, what will the job market specific to your industry be like for 2025-26 college graduates?

- Poor
- Fair
- Good
- Very Good
- Excellent

For the 2025-26 academic year, my organization plans to (please select one):

- INCREASE the number of entry-level college hires.
- MAINTAIN the number of entry-level college hires.

DECREASE the number of entry-level college hires.

Please describe the key factors that have contributed to your organization's decision to increase your number of entry-level college hires. (Please select all that apply.)

- Increased demand for our products and services
- Company growth
- Anticipated increase in the number of retirements
- Commitment to succession planning/Importance of talent pipeline
- Other (Please explain):

Please describe the key factors that have contributed to your organization's decision to decrease your number of entry-level college hires. (Please select all that apply.)

- Budget cuts
- Inflation
- Uncertain economy
- Reduction in business needs/projects
- Other (please explain):

How many new college graduates does your organization plan to hire for full-time, entry-level positions in 2025-26?

How many new college graduates did your organization hire for full-time, entry-level positions in 2024-25?

In what type of work environment (fully remote, fully in-person, or hybrid, e.g. partially in-person and partially remote) are your **overall** job positions currently performed? (The total of the three percentages should equal 100%.)

% Fully Remote:

% Fully Hybrid:

% Fully In-person:

In what type of work environment (fully remote, fully in-person, or hybrid, e.g. partially in-person and partially remote) are your full-time, **entry-level** job positions currently performed? (The total of the three percentages should equal 100%.)

% Fully Remote:

% Fully Hybrid:

% Fully In-person:

Will your organization hire 2-year, associate degree students from the class of 2025-26 for full-time, entry-level positions?

- Yes
- No

What percentage of your college hiring in 2025-26 will be conducted during Fall 2025?

Full-time, entry-level

Intern/co-op

What percentage of your college hiring in 2025-26 will be conducted during Spring 2026?

Full-time, entry-level

Intern/co-op

AI

What percent of your entry-level jobs now require AI skills? (Please enter a whole number between 0 and 100.)

What percent of your entry-level jobs include AI in the job description? (Please enter a whole number between 0 and 100.)

Does your organization have plans to replace human college entry-level jobs with AI and/or AI bots?

- Yes, we will replace entry-level jobs with AI and/or AI bots in the next 3 years.
- Yes, we will replace entry-level jobs with AI and/or AI bots in the next 5 years.
- No, we will not replace entry-level jobs with AI and/or AI bots.
- We are currently having discussions about the role of AI and/or AI bots.
- I am not sure if we will replace entry-level jobs with AI and/or AI bots.

Please list the entry-level work positions that will be replaced with AI and/or AI bots.

Does your organization have plans to augment, but not replace human college entry-level jobs with AI and/or AI bots?

- Yes, we will augment, but not replace entry-level jobs with AI and/or AI bots in the next 3 years.
- Yes, we will augment, but not replace entry-level jobs with AI and/or AI bots in the next 5 years.
- No, we will not augment entry-level jobs with AI and/or AI bots.
- We are currently having discussions about the role of AI and/or AI bots.
- I am not sure if we will augment, but not replace entry-level jobs with AI and/or AI bots.

Please list the entry-level work positions that will be augmented, but not replaced with AI and/or AI bots.

Skills-Based Hiring

The questions that follow ask about skills-based hiring. Please use the following definition for this term: Skills-based hiring is the practice of employers setting specific skill requirements for a certain job positions and assessing whether a candidate possesses the skills necessary for the job, prioritizing what an applicant can do rather than the education obtained.

Does your company use skills-based hiring practices when interviewing and evaluating candidates for positions at your company?

- Yes
- No

How often does your organization use skills-based hiring practices?

- Never
- Sometimes
- About half the time
- Most of the time
- Always

At which stages in your hiring process, does your organization use skills-based hiring practices? (Please select all that apply.)

- Sourcing
- Screening
- Interviewing
- Post-hire placement/matching
- Incumbent worker promotions or movement into new roles or areas
- Other (please specify):

Which of the following skills-based hiring practices are you using in your hiring processes?
(Please select all that apply.)

- Competency-based job descriptions
- Interview rubrics
- External recruiting agency
- Internally-created assessment tool
- Externally-created assessment tool
- Game-based assessments
- Digital badges/Micro-credentials
- Other (please specify):

Can you share which externally-created assessment tools you are currently using?

How challenging has it been to implement skills-based hiring practices?

- Not challenging at all
- Slightly challenging
- Moderately challenging
- Very challenging
- Extremely challenging

What roadblocks does your organization face when implementing skills-based hiring?
(Please select all that apply.)

- Lack of assessment tools

- Lack of department time/resources to implement new hiring practices
- Regulatory hurdles
- Cultural hurdles within organization
- Buy-in from hiring managers
- Other (please specify):

What are the most important ways a college student can demonstrate their skills during a skills-based hiring process? (Please select all that apply.)

- Prepare for interviews that demonstrate their skills.
- Participate in experiential learning and/or work during college.
- Create a skills-based resume and/or cover letter.
- Translate college coursework into a skills language.
- Translate extracurricular activities into a skills language.
- Obtain industry-recognized certifications, e.g. Google, Microsoft, etc.
- Obtain career readiness skill certifications, e.g. Communication, Teamwork, etc.
- Create a skills portfolio that demonstrates skills, accomplishments, and work samples.
- Other (please explain):

Signing Bonuses

Did you offer signing bonuses to any of the college students you hired from the class of 2024-25 for full-time, entry-level positions?

- Yes
- No

Do you plan to offer signing bonuses to any of the students you will hire from the class of 2025-26 for full-time, entry-level positions?

- Yes
- No

Which of the following best describes your signing bonus plans for 2025-26 college graduates? (Please select only one response.)

- We will offer signing bonuses to ALL of our full-time, entry-level college hires from the class of 2025-26.
- We will offer signing bonuses only to SELECTED full-time, entry-level college hires from the class of 2025-26.

What is the average signing bonus you plan to offer all new entry-level college hires from the class of 2025-26? (Note: If the bonus will vary, please provide an average estimate or a range.)

Please list below the majors, the degree levels, and the corresponding signing bonuses you plan to offer students from the class of 2025-26. (Note: If the bonus will vary, please provide an average estimate or a range.)

Major 1	<input type="text"/>
Degree Level	<input type="text"/>
Signing Bonus	<input type="text"/>
Major 2	<input type="text"/>
Degree Level	<input type="text"/>
Signing Bonus	<input type="text"/>
Major 3	<input type="text"/>
Degree Level	<input type="text"/>
Signing Bonus	<input type="text"/>
Major 4	<input type="text"/>
Degree Level	<input type="text"/>
Signing Bonus	<input type="text"/>

Salary Increases

Compared with 2024-25, what is your organization's plan for starting salaries to 2025-26 **bachelor's** degree graduates?

- We plan to INCREASE bachelor's degree starting salaries.
- We plan to DECREASE bachelor's degree starting salaries.
- We plan NO CHANGE to bachelor's degree starting salaries.

Please indicate the average percentage increase planned to **bachelor's** degree starting salaries.

Please indicate the average percentage decrease planned to **bachelor's** degree starting salaries.

Compared with 2024-25, what is your organization's plan for starting salaries to 2025-26 **master's** degree graduates?

- We plan to INCREASE master's degree starting salaries.
- We plan to DECREASE master's degree starting salaries.
- We plan NO CHANGE to master's degree starting salaries.

Please indicate the average percentage increase planned to **master's** degree starting salaries.

Please indicate the average percentage decrease planned to **master's** degree starting salaries.

Recruiting Considerations

Do you incorporate social media as a part of your early talent recruiting?

- Yes
- No

Which social media platforms do your organization use to recruit early talent? (Please select all that apply.)

- LinkedIn
- Facebook
- Instagram
- X
- Tik Tok
- Other (Please explain):

In which ways do you use social media to recruit early talent? (Please select all that apply.)

- Advertising of positions
- Building brand awareness
- Searching for candidates
- Checking candidate profiles
- Screening candidates
- Building community
- Networking with potential candidates
- Other (please explain):

Do you screen candidates by GPA?

- Yes
- No

Since you do not screen candidates by GPA, which of the following factors do you consider when hiring new college graduates for full-time, entry-level positions? (Please select all that apply.)

- Academic Major
- School's reputation
- Industry experience
- Has demonstrated proficiency in competencies
- Has completed an internship with your organization
- Has completed an internship within your industry
- Has held part-time jobs while in college to finance education
- Has completed a study abroad program
- Has foreign language and/or intercultural skills
- Has been involved in extracurricular activities
- Has done volunteer work
- Has held a leadership position
- Other (please specify):

In addition to screening candidates by GPA, which of the following factors do you also consider when hiring new college graduates for full-time, entry-level positions? (Please select all that apply.)

- Academic Major
- School's reputation
- Industry experience
- Has demonstrated proficiency in competencies
- Has completed an internship with your organization
- Has completed an internship within your industry
- Has completed a study abroad program
- Has foreign language and/or intercultural skills

- Has been involved in extracurricular activities
- Has done volunteer work
- Has held a leadership position
- Other (please specify):

What is the cut-off (the minimum GPA) you use to determine who is eligible to be considered for a position with your organization? (For example, if you indicate your cut-off is a 3.0 GPA this will be interpreted to mean that you will only consider candidates with a GPA of 3.0 or higher.)

GPA Cutoff:

Which of the following best describes the academic majors that you hire?

- We hire majors that are only exclusive to our industry, e.g. accounting majors hired at an accounting services firm.
- We hire majors that are exclusive to our industry AND other majors that fall outside the realm of our industry, e.g. engineering majors AND English majors hired at an engineering firm.
- We hire ANY majors regardless of whether they relate to our specific industry.
- Other (please specify):

If you have two candidates that are equally qualified for a position, how much would each of the following influence your decision to hire one candidate over the other?

	No influence at all	Not much influence	Somewhat of an influence	Very much influence	Extreme influence
School attended	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Major	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
High GPA (3.0 or above)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	No influence at all	Not much influence	Somewhat of an influence	Very much influence	Extreme influence
Has held leadership position	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Has studied abroad	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Has been involved in extracurricular activities (e.g. clubs/sports/student government, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Has completed an internship with your organization	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Has internship experience in your industry	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Has general work experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Has international work experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Has no work experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is fluent in a foreign language	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Has done volunteer work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other <input type="text"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Experiential Learning

Which of the following experiential learning opportunities do you find most valuable/relevant when looking at a student's resume? (Please select all that apply.)

- Study abroad
- International work experience
- International internships
- U.S. based internships
- Participation in faculty-led research projects
- Microinternships
- Apprenticeships
- Co-Ops
- On-campus student work
- Externships

- Service learning
- Practicum (or clinical) experiences
- Other (please explain):

Research Incentives

We are assessing the ways we incentivize our research at NACE. Do you need an incentive to participate in NACE research?

- Yes
- No

Which of the following incentives would be sufficient for you to participate in NACE research? (Please select all that apply.)

- Free report/dashboard
- Discounted custom report
- Raffle for an Amazon gift card
- Raffle for NACE Credit
- Discount code for a NACE webinar
- Other (please specify):

Were there any concerns or difficulties you encountered while responding to the questions in this survey?

Difficulty/Concern 1:

Difficulty/Concern 2:

Difficulty/Concern 3:

Survey Respondents

In the survey report NACE will provide a list of respondents. Please indicate your preference regarding appearing on the list of respondents.

- Yes, please list my organization as a survey respondent.
- No, please DO NOT list my organization as a survey respondent.

Thank you

After clicking SUBMIT below, you will be redirected to our website. We look forward to releasing the results of this survey in Fall 2025. Thank you for participating in the Job Outlook 2026!

