

NACE Job Outlook 2026 Spring Update

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
- Nonprofit
- 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

Projections for the class of 2026

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

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

Compared to the initial hiring projections you made in the fall for the Class of 2026, your 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 or turnover
- Commitment to succession planning/importance of talent pipeline
- Other (please specify):

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
- AI replacing entry-level jobs
- Other (please specify):

Resume Attributes

Which of the following attributes do you look for on a new graduate candidate's resume? (Please select all that apply.)

- Analytical/quantitative skills
- Communication skills (verbal)
- Communication skills (written)
- Computer skills
- AI skills
- Creativity
- Detail-oriented
- Entrepreneurial skills/risk-taker
- Flexibility/adaptability
- Fluency in a foreign language
- Friendly/outgoing personality
- Initiative
- Interpersonal skills (relates well to others)
- Leadership potential
- Organizational ability
- Problem-solving skills
- Strategic planning skills

- Strong work ethic
- Tactfulness
- Ability to work in a team
- Technical skills
- Other (please specify):

What do you find **MOST** valuable on a recent college graduate's resume?

- Listing of general skills (e.g., communication, leadership, teamwork)
- Listing of general skills (e.g., communication, leadership, teamwork) with examples in practice/use
- Listing of specific skills related to the job (e.g., SQL database proficiency for databased jobs, proficiency in billing/coding software for specific industries, etc.)
- Listing of specific skills related to the job (e.g., SQL database proficiency for databased jobs, proficiency in billing/coding software for specific industries, etc.) with examples in practice/use

AI -

Approximately what percentage of your entry-level positions require a college degree and AI skills? (Please enter a whole number between 0 and 100.)

Approximately what percentage of your entry-level positions that require a college degree include AI skills in the job description? (Please enter a whole number between 0 and 100.)

Are you specifically seeking entry-level candidates who can use AI in their roles to enhance productivity?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

When seeking entry-level candidates who can use AI in their roles, for which of the

following skills are you searching? (Please select all that apply.)

- Identify and use AI tools appropriate to the task
- Develop effective AI prompts to elicit quality outputs
- Analyze and revise AI outputs as needed
- Develop AI tools to increase work productivity
- Other (please specify):

Has your organization detected AI-generated applications/applicants for open positions?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Have you implemented any tools or processes to detect AI-related assistance in the application, testing, and/or interview process?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

To what extent has AI reduced the need for tasks traditionally assigned to entry-level or early-career workers in your organization?

- Not at all
- Moderately
- Completely
- Unsure

How frequently does your organization **discuss** AI as a substitute for work typically performed by early-career employees?

- Never
- Occasionally
- Frequently

Do you assign interns projects that use AI tools and skills?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Approximately what percentage of intern projects use AI tools and skills? (Please enter a whole number between 0 and 100.)

What conversations about AI are taking place regarding the following aspects of your organization? (Please select all that apply.)

- No meaningful conversations
- Technology exploration only (tools, systems, vendors)
- Productivity or task-level changes
- Job or role redesign
- Workforce size or staffing implications
- Ethical use of AI
- Other (please specify):

Which of the following options best describe your organization's current conversations about integrating AI into your workforce plans? (Please select all that apply.)

- AI has not come up in relation to workforce or staffing decisions.
- AI is discussed in general terms, not connected to specific roles.
- AI is discussed in relation to tasks or functions within jobs.

- AI is discussed in relation to redesigning roles or job structures.
- AI is discussed in relation to whether some positions may no longer be needed.
- Other (please explain):

Competencies

Competency Questions

The following questions ask you about important skills and abilities in the workplace. Please use these definitions for the terms:

Career & Self-development

Proactively develop oneself and one's career through continual personal and professional learning, awareness of one's strengths and weaknesses, navigation of career opportunities, and networking to build relationships within and without one's organization.

Communication

Clearly and effectively exchange information, ideas, facts, and perspectives with persons inside and outside of an organization.

Critical Thinking

Identify and respond to needs based upon an understanding of situational context and logical analysis of relevant information.

AI Skills

A combination of technical, ethical, and durable skills leveraged to understand, develop, and effectively apply artificial intelligence technologies in the workplace.

Leadership

Recognize and capitalize on personal and team strengths to achieve organizational goals.

Teamwork

Build and maintain collaborative relationships to work effectively toward common goals, while appreciating diverse viewpoints and shared responsibilities.

Technology

Understand and leverage technologies ethically to enhance efficiencies, complete tasks, and accomplish goals.

To succeed with your company, how **important** is it for your new college graduates hired (within 1 year) for full-time, entry-level professional positions to have each of the following competencies?

	Not at all important	Not very important	Somewhat important	Very important	Extremely important
Critical Thinking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communication	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teamwork	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Technology	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leadership	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Professionalism	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Career & Self-development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
AI Skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How **proficient** are college graduates who were hired (within the last year) for full-time, entry-level professional positions in each of the following competencies?

	Not at all proficient	Not very proficient	Somewhat proficient	Very proficient	Extremely proficient
Critical Thinking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communication	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teamwork	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Technology	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leadership	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Professionalism	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Career & Self-development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
AI Skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How well-prepared are upcoming college graduates for the roles for which you are recruiting?

- Very well prepared
- Somewhat well prepared
- Somewhat unprepared
- Very unprepared

How closely do the skills of upcoming college graduates align with your current hiring needs?

- Very closely aligned
- Partially aligned
- Poorly aligned
- Unsure

How would you describe upcoming college graduates' preparedness to use AI or advanced digital tools in the workplace?

- Very prepared
- Somewhat prepared
- Somewhat unprepared
- Very unprepared

Fall 2026 Recruiting

For this year's upcoming recruiting season (winter through spring), what are your plans for on-campus recruiting?

- We plan to do LESS on-campus recruiting than last year.
- We plan to do MORE on-campus recruiting than last year.
- We plan to do the SAME AMOUNT of on-campus recruiting as last year.
- Other (please explain):

Have you made plans yet for Fall 2026 recruiting?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Which of the following statements best describes your recruiting plans for Fall 2026?

- We plan to hire MORE positions in Fall 2026 than Fall 2025.
- We plan to hire FEWER positions in Fall 2026 than Fall 2025.
- We plan to hire the SAME NUMBER of positions in Fall 2026 as we did in Fall 2025.
- We are not hiring during the 2026-27 recruiting year.
- Other (please specify):

Have you replaced any on-campus recruiting activities with virtual recruiting activities?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Which on-campus recruiting activities have you replaced with virtual recruiting activities?

Survey Respondents

In the survey report NACE will provide a list of respondents. We will not disclose your responses to individual questions. 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.

Your final survey response will be recorded after you click the RIGHT ARROW below. The results of this survey should be available in April. Thank you for participating in the NACE

Job Outlook 2026 Spring Update Survey!

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