

Bulletin Board: Soon-to-be grads will experience a tough job market

by Amy_Winter

The future currently does not appear bright for the graduates of 2009. They are entering a very difficult job market – several colleges and universities have experienced a decrease in on-campus recruiting.

The highly competitive job market may cause grads to continue with school, work with no pay or look for jobs overseas, according to Challenger, Gray & Christmas, an outplacement agency. Or some grads will most likely need to move home with their parents until more jobs become available.

"Hiring has slowed significantly," says John A. Challenger, chief executive officer. "Companies that are adding workers can be highly selective as the pool of applicants continues to grow.

"Spring graduates will be vying for jobs not only with their fellow classmates, but also with young workers who already have two or three years of experience, returning retirees shocked by a stock market devaluation of savings, and even stay-at-home moms returning to the workplace for economic reasons."

The increased amount of job cuts doesn't seem to be decreasing anytime soon. Employers have declared almost 1 million planned layoffs since last July. Competing with more experienced workers makes it harder for recent grads; the unemployment rate for the 20- to 24-year-old age group was up to 13.5 percent in January.

Some companies and industries can still provide possible jobs for recent grads. Nonprofit organizations will benefit from the increase in skilled job-seekers. Other industries like accounting, nursing and education may offer job possibilities as well.

"It may be necessary to lower one's salary expectations or possibly accept an undesirable position," says Challenger. "However, it is important to remember that this is your first job and does not define the rest of your career path. What is most critical at this stage is getting valuable on-the-job experience."

For more information, visit www.challengergray.com.

LATE EXCUSES

Do you find it hard to get to work on time in the mornings? Whatever the reason for being tardy, some employees consistently arrive late at the office.

Twenty percent of workers, according to a CareerBuilder.com survey that questioned more than 8,000 workers, say they are tardy to work at least once a week, compared to 15 percent from last year's survey. And 12 percent of employees walk into the office late at least twice a week.

"While some employers tend to be more lenient with worker punctuality, 30 percent say they have terminated an employee for being late," says Rosemary Haefner, vice president of human resources.

"Workers need to understand their company's policies on tardiness, and if they are late, make sure they openly communicate with their managers. Employers have heard every excuse in the book, so honesty is the best policy."

Traffic tops the list for tardy excuses with 33 percent of respondents. Other reasons include: lack of sleep, day care, getting kids ready for school, public transportation, wardrobe problems and pet issues.

Hiring managers have heard ridiculous excuses for being late. Here are some examples from employees:

â€” My heat was shut off so I had to stay home to keep my snake warm.

â€” My husband thinks it's funny to hide my car keys before he goes to work.

â€” I got locked in my trunk by my son.

â€” A gurney fell out of an ambulance and delayed traffic.

â€” I was attacked by a raccoon and had to stop by the hospital to make sure it wasn't rabid.

â€” I feel like I am in everyone's way if I show up on time.

â€” A groundhog bit my bike tire and made it flat.

â€” My left turn signal was out, so I had to make all right turns to get to work.

â€” My driveway washed away in the rain last night.

â€” My father didn't wake me up.

For more information, visit www.careerbuilder.com.

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