

• Employers Want to See These Attributes on Students' Resumes

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Candidate Selection



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[*Spotlight for Career Services Professionals*](#)

Career services practitioners should advise their college students seeking full-time employment after graduation to craft a well-written resume. Why? In part, because employers responding to NACE’s *Job Outlook 2019* survey said they will seek evidence of solid written communication skills on their candidates’ resumes.

When NACE asked employers participating in its *Job Outlook 2019* survey which skills and qualities—beyond a strong GPA—they most want to see on students’ resumes, more than four out of five indicated written communication skills, making it the most sought-after attribute this year. (See Figure 1.)

Problem-solving skills and an ability to work as part of a team are also highly desired.

Attributes showing more significant movement this year are initiative and leadership. Initiative, which was eighth on the list last year, has rocketed to fourth. Nearly three-quarters of respondents are seeking it on resumes this year.

Leadership, on the other hand, has dropped from the fourth most sought-after attribute last year to the seventh this year (tied with verbal communication skills).

Other highly valued attributes that employers want to see evidence of on resumes this year include analytical/quantitative skills and a strong work ethic.

Data for the *Job Outlook 2019* survey were collected from August 1, 2018, through October 8, 2018. A total of 172 surveys were returned—an 18.5 percent response rate. The *Job Outlook 2019* report is available free to members through [MyNACE](#). Nonmembers can purchase the report through the [NACE Store](#).

Figure 1: Attributes Employers Seek on a Candidate’s Resume

Attribute	% of Respondents
Communication skills (written)	82.0%
Problem-solving skills	80.9%
Ability to work in a team	78.7%
Initiative	74.2%
Analytical/quantitative skills	71.9%
Strong work ethic	70.8%
Communication skills (verbal)	67.4%
Leadership	67.4%
Detail-oriented	59.6%
Technical skills	59.6%
Flexibility/adaptability	58.4%
Computer skills	55.1%
Interpersonal skills (relates well to others)	52.8%
Organizational ability	43.8%

Strategic planning skills	38.2%
Tactfulness	25.8%
Creativity	23.6%
Friendly/outgoing personality	22.5%
Entrepreneurial skills/risk-taker	16.9%
Fluency in a foreign language	11.2%

Source: *Job Outlook 2019*, National Association of Colleges and Employers