

Survey of Employers Reveals Important Learning Outcomes and Gaps in Achievement

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In July, Hart Research released a [survey](#) conducted of business executives and hiring managers conducted on behalf of the Association of American Colleges and Universities. All executives and hiring managers surveyed came from companies with 25 or more employees.

The learning priorities that executives and hiring managers considered most important were:

- Able to effectively communicate orally (80% business executives and 90% hiring managers)
- Critical thinking/analytical reasoning (78% business executives and 84% hiring managers)
- Ethical judgment and decision-making (77% business executives and 87% hiring managers)
- Able to work effectively in teams (77% business executives and 87% hiring managers)
- Able to work independently (77% business executives and 85% hiring managers)
- Self-motivated, initiative, proactive, ideas/solutions (76% business executives and 85% hiring managers)
- Able to communicate effectively in writing (76% business executives and 78% hiring managers)
- Can apply knowledge/skills to real-world settings (76% business executives and 87% hiring managers)

In addition, business executives felt that the largest gaps between important learning outcomes and the preparedness of recent college graduates were in the following areas:

- Critical thinking/analytical reasoning
- Apply knowledge/skills to the real world
- Communicate effectively in writing
- Self-motivated
- Communicate effectively orally

Finally, hiring managers felt that the largest gaps between important learning outcomes and the preparedness of recent college graduates were in the following areas:

- Apply knowledge/skills to the real world
- Self-motivated
- Communicate effectively orally
- Critical thinking/analytical reasoning
- Able to work independently