

3-1-1991

# Survey of Employers' Satisfaction with Western Washington University Graduates

Jacqueline M. Andrieu-Parker  
*Western Washington University*

Joseph E. Trimble  
*Western Washington University*

Gary (Gary Russell) McKinney  
*Western Washington University*

Carl Simpson  
*Western Washington University*

Robert M. Thorndike  
*Western Washington University*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://cedar.wwu.edu/surveyresearch\\_docs](https://cedar.wwu.edu/surveyresearch_docs)

 Part of the [Educational Assessment, Evaluation, and Research Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

Andrieu-Parker, Jacqueline M.; Trimble, Joseph E.; McKinney, Gary (Gary Russell); Simpson, Carl; and Thorndike, Robert M., "Survey of Employers' Satisfaction with Western Washington University Graduates" (1991). *Office of Survey Research*. 398.  
[https://cedar.wwu.edu/surveyresearch\\_docs/398](https://cedar.wwu.edu/surveyresearch_docs/398)

## ***Report 1991-04: Survey of Employers' Satisfaction with Western Washington University Graduates***

This report compiles information gathered in interviews with a sample of personnel managers and direct supervisors of organizations employing Western graduates from one to three years after their graduation.

Personnel managers were asked to rate their emphasis of nine qualities of potential employees. Work or internship experience received the highest ratings of "great" emphasis. Having a broad liberal arts background received the lowest ratings of "little" or "no" emphasis.

A majority of personnel managers preferred that employees be flexible (47%), or valued skill training and flexibility equally (42%). It was also discovered that while 59% of Western graduates were hired into jobs requiring a Bachelor's degree, another 27% were hired into jobs that required only an Associate of Arts, technical, or high school degree.

When asked how satisfied overall they were with Western graduates, personnel managers overwhelmingly said they were "very" satisfied (81%).

Next, interviews were done with the direct supervisors of the same Western graduates. Direct supervisors were asked to list the two most important specific skills required to do the job Western graduates had been hired into, then to rate from excellent to poor the graduate's performance in those two areas. Direct supervisors rated graduates "excellent to good" in both skills overwhelmingly (90% and 88% respectively).

Direct supervisors were also asked to characterize the skill demands of the job held by Western graduates. They rated reliability as the most important ability in any new employee, and rated reliability in Western

graduates highest of sixteen listed characteristics. Other characteristics most important to the skill demands of the job also generated high ratings by direct supervisors of Western graduates.

When asked how well Western graduates were prepared for the job they were hired to do in relation to what was expected of a typical new employee, direct supervisors rated Western graduates as "much better" or "a little better" in the following areas: mathematical skills (69%); broad educational background (67%); and specific skills required for the job (66%).