# Fall Recruiting Projections at Penn State

As you prepare for Fall 2021 some of you will be transitioning back to a full in-person experience. To assist you in your transition, Penn State Career Services surveyed employers about their recruiting plans for the upcoming semester.

707 employers completed the survey representing Pennsylvania and regions across the United States. Survey results are dated May 11, 2021.

## Survey Results

### What is your organization’s FA21 recruiting strategy?

* In-person – 36%
* Virtual – 15%
* Uncertain – 49%

### Will your organization have travel restrictions in place for FA21?

* Yes – 20%
* No – 44%
* Uncertain – 36%

### What priorities does your organization have for FA21 in-person events that follow CDC guidelines?

1. Career Fairs
2. Information Sessions/Workshops
3. Information Tables

### What factors will most influence your participation in in-person recruiting in Fall 2021?

* 63% of employers indicated that their own organization policy/restrictions would most influence their decision.
* 29% indicated that COVID rates at the time of the event would influence their decision.
* Only 8% of respondents indicated that mandatory, or status of, vaccinations of Penn State students, faculty, and staff will determine if their organization will attend on-campus events.

## Recruiter Insights

### How will your organization handle work from home and remote work moving forward? What advice do you have that career counselors can share with students as they prepare to enter a hybrid workforce of remote and traditional work?

We are currently exploring options, with nothing set in stone at the moment. But as far as preparing to enter the hybrid workforce, my advice would be to have a dedicated space to your work. Working from bed or somewhere where you're too comfortable can be distracting and affect your productivity. Be professional - be mindful of your background, outside noises, and other distractions. Be on time to meetings and calls.

### What is your biggest challenge with hiring as we move through this world pandemic?

Not being able to meet candidates face-to-face. Not being able to shake hands and really engage with candidates. As a recruiter you kind of feel like one of your hands is tied behind your back in terms of engaging.

### What changes have taken place over the past year in Applicant Tracking Systems? What advice should we give students/alumni about asynchronous video-based interviewing? Specific examples and statistics appreciated.

For video interviewing, overall, just be professional. Check your background, your surroundings, avoid distractions. Dress the part. Look into the camera as much as possible.

### When planning to hire an intern or soon-to-be college graduate, what are your preferred ways of meeting and screening applicants - do you prefer to do this via career fairs, through LinkedIn messages, through introductions from other network members, or from job and internship postings on your organization's website? Where would you recommend we encourage students to place most of their job search time from among these options, or other strategies?

I can't speak for other companies, but we are very flexible. I think that this is also unique to each individual recruiter. I personally like career fairs, although if they become busy it can sometimes mean a rushed interaction with a candidate. Intros within the network definitely give us a starting point and connection or context to start out with, which is also good. I would say that of course you will need to apply for the role you're considering, but relying solely on that won't get you very far. You should utilize one of the other methods...Career Fair, LinkedIn, network intros to follow up on the application.

### What are common deciding factors that help you select among many similarly qualified early-career candidates? And a follow-up question to that - What skills or abilities must you routinely develop in your new hires, and how can colleges fill those gaps?

If you've gotten to the interview stage, the company obviously thinks that your qualifications, at least on paper, meet what they are looking for. So beyond that, I think those decisions are made with intangibles. The things that are not on your resume or cover letter. Having done your research on the company and the opportunity...having built a good rapport with your interviewers...and most of all, being able to tell your story and communicate YOUR unique value proposition.   
  
We work on developing communication skills, things like speaking in front of groups and managers. Time management is critical as well. We have an extensive training program where we teach our incoming class about our technologies, professionalism, how to engage with customers. Anytime they can learn these soft skills in terms of presentations, communication, and networking is invaluable as they transition into the workforce.

How has your company leveraged the skills of early-career candidates with general liberal arts or social science degrees, such as English, psychology, history, art, etc.? How can we help those students find opportunities that will leverage their skills?  
We definitely have programs where liberal arts candidates can find a home. For example, we have a Business Development Consultant Role where we hire across all majors. New hires are trained extensively, so previous knowledge of our technology and products is not required. The best advice I could give in terms of helping them find those opportunities is teaching them how to articulate what they've done as experience that fits the job description. Students have a tendency to get tunnel vision and only see previous experiences for what they are or what they're called, rather than present it in a way that fits what the employer is looking for.

## Recruitment Projections

Dr. Ken Louie, the Director of Economic Research Institute of Erie and an Associate Professor of Economics at Penn State Behrend, recently provided data on the current job outlook. Use these FAQs, based on the results of the survey results above, to guide you in your career and internship search.

### What are the occupational projections for the state of Pennsylvania and the United States?

* [View the occupational projections for Pennsylvania](https://www.workstats.dli.pa.gov/Products/employment-projections/Pages/LTOPStatewideData.aspx)
* [View the occupational projections for the United States](https://www.bls.gov/ooh/fastest-growing.htm)

## What does this mean to me, a Penn State student?

Employers are still working on finalizing their plans for fall recruitment, but they aim to connect with students.

* As a student, you should attend all career fairs (in-person, virtual, and hybrid) where an employer has an internship or full-time position that interests you.
* Employers should know by August, just in time for your fall semester, what their recruiting plans will be.
* Employers are hiring!

Whether you are offered an on-campus interview or a virtual interview, take advantage and put your best self forward. [Utilize Career Services](https://studentaffairs.psu.edu/career/career-offices) to get your resume and cover letter reviewed, receive interviewing tips, work through networking strategies, and learn how to negotiate offers. We are here to help!