Number of Law Schools—and Students— Raises Concerns

Are there too many law schools - and therefore too many law students - in the United States today? A recent Associated Press article suggests that the verdict might well be “yes” on both counts.

The U.S. recently became the first country in the world to have 200 accredited law schools, and 150,000 students were enrolled in American Law schools last year - an all-time high.

So what’s the problem? Some experts say that the number of law students today is far greater than the number of high-paying law jobs that exist - especially considering that the best-paying firms tend to recruit almost exclusively at law schools ranked in the top 15 nationally.

Indeed, the median annual salary for new lawyers is just $62,000. And new law grads who take public-service jobs can expect to make only about $40,000 a year.

“I think we have this fundamental disconnect between images of lawyers in the popular media - in the courtroom dispensing justice, where everyone seems prosperous and well paid,” says William Henderson, a law professor at Indiana University who studies the job market.

“The reality is that, for a lot of people, law school is a route to trying to start your own private practice, and that’s a very crowded business right now.”

Source: The Associated Press, June 18, 2008

Fewer Students are Majoring in Computer-Related Fields

Despite concerns among some experts, about an impending shortage of information technology workers, fewer college students are pursuing computer-related degrees these days.

In its annual survey of universities with Ph.D.-granting programs, the Computing Research Association found a 20 percent dip this year in the number of students completing bachelor’s degrees in IT fields.

Moreover, enrollment in undergraduate computer science programs is less than half of what it was just five years ago, the CRA study revealed. Meantime, the U.S. bureau of Labor Statistics predicts that 854,000 professional IT jobs will be added to the American economy between 2006 and 2016.


Medical and Health Science Careers

A variety of information on careers in the medical and health sciences is provided by the National Institutes of Health Office of Science Education. Its Web site (http://science.education.nih.gov) features a number of informative displays.

One is a career finder tool designed to help users determine if a career in this field fits their interests and abilities. Another describes in detail around 120 potential careers in the field and a third presents interviews with persons working in a health science field along with details on their educational backgrounds, current salary, and more.
Yes, New Graduates Can Find Jobs in a Tough Market

Black Collegian magazine recently published an article that offers several thought-provoking tips for new college graduates who are trying to land jobs in today’s difficult market.

“Finding a Job in a Recession: It Is Possible!” wisely notes that “in this economy, everyone has had to make adjustments.”

Author Bill Carson - director of the career center at Morgan State University (MD) outlines some of the specific adjustments new grads need to boost their chances of finding a job when times are tough.

Visit:  www.black-collegian.com/career/recession_0808.htm

To Casual Communications, Employers Say: No Thx

If you think today’s college students and recent graduates have (finally) gotten the message about not being too casual in their communications with prospective employers...well, think again.

In a recent Wall Street Journal article, Tory Johnson of New York - based Women for Hire Inc. talks about an eye-opening thank-you note she got from an internship applicant. The note featured words like “hiya” and thanx” - not to mention a smiley-face emoticon with three exclamation points behind it.

“That email just ruined it for me,” says Johnson.

Apparently she’s not alone - in either her attitude or her experience. Smiley faces, hearts, and other icons show up in about 10 percent of the thank-you emails sent to hiring managers at global accounting firm KPMG, according to Blane Ruschak, national director of university relations and recruiting.

“We don’t feel emoticons have a place in any formal communications,” Ruschak Says. “It’s not professional.” David Holtsman, author of the book Privacy Lost: How Technology Is Endangering Your Privacy, says a cultural divide between younger and older workers is at least partly to blame for the growing tensions. Young adults, he says are used to the language of online and cell phone messaging.

“It’s just natural for them,” he stresses. “They don’t realize that it’s perceived to be disrespectful.”

Over the last 30 years, the number of hours on the job has not changed much for United States workers. However, during this period the annual hours worked by Japanese fell by 16 percent; by Germans, 20 percent; and by the French, 16 percent; according to the New York Times.
“Out at College, In at Work” Article Offers Workplace Tips Geared to GLBT Graduates

New college grads who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender can sometimes find that the relatively supportive environment they might have experienced during their college years doesn’t necessarily translate to the world of work.

A recent Monster.com article - “Out at College, In at Work? Making the Transition as a Gay/Lesbian Worker" - offers tips on how to handle such difficulties.

The piece features short snippets of advice from several GLBT interviewees who draw from their own experiences in various work settings and situations.


Resume Tip of the Month...

Follow Up!

So you've submitted your resume for a job you'd really like. Now what? Contact the employer 2-3 business days later to confirm that they received your resume. Follow up with another phone call approximately a week later to see if you can provide any additional information and to reiterate your interest in the position. Don't sit back and wait for the phone to ring--be proactive!

Interview Tip of the Month...

Sit Up!

Sitting halfway to the edge of your seat instead of all the way back, makes you sit up and look more attentive, interested, and professional.