

Key Findings

1 Employers are highly focused on innovation as critical to the success of their companies and they report that the challenges their employees face today are more complex and require a broader skill set than in the past. Notably, employers indicate that they prioritize critical thinking, communication, and complex problem-solving skills over a job candidate’s major field of study when making hiring decisions.

Employers point out that both the expectations and challenges their employees face are greater today than in the past. Majorities say their company/organization is asking employees to take on greater responsibilities and to use a broader set of skills (93% total agree; 52% strongly agree) while facing challenges today that are more complex than in the past (91% total agree; 50% strongly agree).

Employers today are highly focused on innovation and are giving priority to hiring employees who can help in this advancement. Fully 92% agree that innovation is essential to their company’s continued success, including 51% who strongly agree. Additionally, 95% of employers agree (57% strongly) that their company “puts a priority on hiring people with the intellectual and interpersonal skills that will help them contribute to innovation in the workplace.”

To achieve success at their companies in today’s more complex environment, employers are in broad agreement that a candidate’s demonstrated capacity to think critically, communicate clearly, and solve complex programs is more important than his or her undergraduate field of study (93% total agree; 59% strongly agree).

Consensus among employers is that innovation, critical thinking, and a broad skill set are important for taking on complex challenges in the workplace.

