

## Students choose governments, high-tech firms as top employers

*Most young people also keen to work for one employer for whole career: Survey*

BY SHANNON KLIE

EVERY YEAR, accounting and professional services firm Deloitte hires about 500 to 600 new graduates from its campus recruitment initiatives. This represents about one-half of the Toronto-based firm's annual hiring, said Tiffany Wilson, lead of campus programs at Deloitte.

That, coupled with tough competition from other firms such as Ernst & Young, make campus recruitment a year-round activity for Deloitte, said Wilson.

"We engage our professionals year-round in activities to raise awareness about our brand and what we do," she said. "We also want to get to know the students and build those long-term relationships rather than just showing up to fill a job."

This includes working closely with faculty, career services centres and student associations. Deloitte also offers a three-and-a-half-day leadership conference in the summer where students are invited to a resort in the Muskoka region of Ontario to learn more about the business and their own leadership potential, said Wilson.

That holistic approach to recruitment is what makes an employer successful in appealing to the younger generation, said Graham Donald, president of Brainstorm Consulting in Victoria.

Every year, Brainstorm Consulting and Decode — both consulting firms focused on the recruitment and retention of young workers — survey post-secondary students to uncover insights into students' career aspirations, goals and decision-making. The *From Learning to Work Report* also features a list of Canada's Top Campus Employers, including breakdowns by area of study (see sidebar on page 11).

This year, 16,688 students were surveyed and Deloitte was ranked 25th overall, fourth among undergraduate business students and seventh among

MBA students.

The Government of Canada, provincial governments and Health Canada topped the overall rankings, with Google, Apple and Microsoft as the only for-profit organizations in the top 10.

While these employers have been at the top of the list since its inception in 2004, more students are choosing non-profits such as the Hospital for Sick Children, the Canadian Cancer Society and the David Suzuki Foundation, said Donald.

With students ranking work-life balance, job security, challenging work and working for a cause or common good as their top four career goals, the top employer list makes perfect sense, he said.

"This generation volunteers more than any generation preceding them," said Donald. "It's of significant importance to them, doing something worthwhile."

Employers might also be surprised to learn the majority of students (53 per cent) want to find an organization where they can spend their whole career.

But job security doesn't mean stagnation, said Donald. This generation wants a variety of challenging work.

"You really need to paint a picture of all the different places in your organization that students can go," he said. "The onus is on you. They're interested in staying in one place for a long period, but are you an organization worthy of their staying?"

To be worthy, organizations need to offer challenging, meaningful work, provide work-life balance — flexible work arrangements in particular — and development opportunities, said Donald.

One reason young people will leave a job, even if all those other conditions are met, is a lack of feedback.

"To this generation, silence means: 'I'm not doing very well,'" said Donald. They feel their days are numbered and start looking for work elsewhere before

they're let go, he said.

When trying to recruit new graduates, organizations shouldn't rely too much on the Internet and social networking sites such as Facebook.

"The misperception is that because (young people) spend so much time online, they don't value in-person interaction," said Donald. But employers that don't visit campuses are missing out on a valuable opportunity, he said.

Once on campus, organizations need to ensure representatives are outgoing and warm individuals. Representatives also need to share their own experiences at the firm to make it personal for the students, said Donald.

To make the interaction even more relevant for students, organizations should send recent hires back to campus to talk to students or even use student ambassadors — summer or co-op students — who can provide a year-long connection between other students and the organization, he said.

Even if not hiring because of the recession, employers need to maintain campus profiles or risk being forgotten when the need for talent returns.

"The biggest mistake organizations made over this past year was to just simply disappear," said Donald.

While the economic downturn has increased Deloitte's focus on cost effectiveness, it hasn't affected campus recruitment because the firm needs to ensure it has the right professionals in place to meet clients' needs as the economy improves, said Wilson.

"We can't just stop the machine. The recruitment we're doing isn't just for now. It's for this three- to five-year plan for developing new professionals for our business," she said.

Campus recruitment doesn't have to be expensive because throwing money around isn't the best way to attract students.

"For us, it's about how much time can we invest with these students in helping them and ensuring they're informed," said Wilson.

### EMPLOYERS OF CHOICE

## Top campus employers by area of study

### Top employers chosen by university and college students

1. Government of Canada
2. Provincial government
3. Health Canada
4. Google
5. Apple
6. The Hospital for Sick Children
7. Municipal government
8. Microsoft
9. Canadian Cancer Society
10. David Suzuki Foundation
11. Air Canada
12. Big Brothers Big Sisters
13. Research In Motion
14. CBC
15. University Health Network
16. Canadian Institute for Health Information
17. Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS)
18. L'Oréal
19. Electronic Arts
20. WestJet
21. Bombardier
22. IBM
23. Public Service Commission
24. Deloitte
25. Oxfam

### Top employers chosen by liberal arts students

1. Government of Canada
2. Provincial government
3. Big Brothers Big Sisters
4. Health Canada
5. Municipal government
6. CBC
7. The Hospital for Sick Children
8. David Suzuki Foundation
9. Google
10. Apple

### Top employers chosen by undergraduate business students

1. Government of Canada
2. Google
3. Apple
4. Deloitte
5. Ernst & Young
6. KPMG
7. PricewaterhouseCoopers
8. Provincial government
9. Research In Motion
10. Bank of Canada

### Top employers chosen by MBA students

1. Google
2. McKinsey & Company
3. Apple
4. Boston Consulting Group
5. Government of Canada
6. L'Oréal
7. Deloitte
8. Goldman Sachs
9. RBC Financial Group
10. Research In Motion