Focus Groups Results

Community Perspectives on Columbus State University Graduates

Executive Leadership Team - 8 March 2016
Focus Groups held: 9
Organizations represented: 17
Participants providing feedback: 77
Questions for Consideration

- Who or what influences your decision to hire a CSU graduate?
- Tell me about positive hiring experiences you've had with CSU graduates?
- Tell me about disappointments you've had with CSU graduates?
- What do you consider a barrier to hiring a CSU graduate?
- If you had to pick only one thing CSU could do to improve programs for students that made you want to hire them, what would it be?
- What skillsets/competencies are you looking for in a CSU graduate?
- What is the top skill you wish more CSU graduates had?
- What is the top skill you expect to see in a CSU graduate?
Questions for Consideration

- Which field of study (degree programs) do you hire CSU graduates from?
- Does the type of degree matter for non-specialized jobs?
- Do you know who to contact when you have questions about hiring a CSU graduate for a specific position?
- Which of the following skillsets and competencies are mission-critical for you? Rank them in order of importance: Communication, Critical Thinking, Quantitative Reasoning, Collaboration
- On a scale of 1-5 (1 being the lowest, 5 being the highest), how do CSU graduates rank on the following skillsets and competencies? Communication, Critical Thinking, Quantitative Reasoning, Collaboration
Key Findings

Most Wanted by Employers:

- Team Spirit
- Soft Skills
- Communication
- Trustworthiness
- Empathy
- Assertiveness
- Self-Confidence
- Inquisitiveness
- Creativity
Key Findings

Most Wanted by Employers:

PROFESSIONALISM

When Knowledge, Wisdom, and Intelligence Are No Match For a Great Looking Tie.
Key Findings

Generational Gap is Acute
Key Findings

Few students understand the importance of shared values and fit with organizational culture, resulting in higher turnover.
Key Findings

Extra-curricular student experiences = Higher quality employees
Key Findings

Unclear processes to link businesses with qualified candidates (students/alumni) – Some contact Career Center, some leverage personal contacts in departments.
Key Findings

Businesses welcome more opportunities to engage with students – inside AND outside the classroom, such as short-term project-based learning.

“Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work.”

- Thomas Edison
Key Findings

Personality assessments and career counseling integrated with Academic Advising for ALL students could have a great impact on long-term success.
Questions?

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?