

In general, however, it appears that new college graduates fall somewhat short in delivering on the skills employers prize most highly. When asked about those skills/qualities in connection with their new college hires, responding employers reported satisfaction ratings that largely hovered in the lower end of the “somewhat to very satisfied” realm. In addition, in comparing top five skills prized against the top five skills in terms of satisfaction, only teamwork and analytical skills make both lists. (See Figure 39.)

**Figure 39: Employers rate their satisfaction in the skills/qualities of their new college hires**

Skill/Quality	Weighted average rating*
Computer Skills	4.29
Teamwork skills (works well with others)	4.10
Analytical Skills	4.06
Technical skills	4.03
Interpersonal skills (relates well to others)	3.93
Friendly/outgoing personality	3.89
Problem-solving skills	3.86
Communication skills (verbal)	3.86
Initiative	3.76
Organizational skills	3.75
Self-confidence	3.75
Strong work ethic	3.74
Leadership skills	3.70
Communication skills (written)	3.66
Detail-oriented	3.66
Creativity	3.60
Sense of humor	3.58
Flexibility/adaptability	3.57
Tactfulness	3.55
Entrepreneurial skills/risk-taker	3.41
Strategic planning skills	3.37

\*5-point scale, where 1=Not at all satisfied; 2=Not very satisfied; 3=Somewhat satisfied; 4=Very satisfied; and 5=Extremely satisfied

Where is the biggest gap between what employers value and what their new college recruits bring to the workplace? Number one this year is the work ethic of their new recruits. Employers rate this attribute as very important, but their satisfaction with the recruits’ work ethic is only middling. This concern over new recruit attitudes toward the job may in fact be related to a real drop in the commitment to the job recent graduates have displayed since the recession in college hiring. NACE’s 2010 *Student Survey* found that the percent of seniors who are willing to put in more than 40 hours per week on the job has declined along with the decline in average starting salary.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> *Moving On: Student Approaches and Attitudes Toward the Job Market for the College Class of 2010.* National Association of Colleges and Employers.