



THE GEN Z JOB SEEKER

◆ FALL 2020 RECRUITMENT TRENDS OUTLOOK ◆

What college recruitment teams should know going into Fall 2020 recruitment about how COVID-19 is influencing Gen Z job seekers



REPORT BY
RIPPLEMATCH

When the oldest members of Generation Z first entered the workforce in 2018, unemployment was at an all-time low and luxurious office spaces were touted as a perk.

Now, the Gen Z job seekers of today face a drastically different landscape. Instead of a candidate-driven market, heading into the Fall 2020 recruitment season they are facing economic challenges even more pronounced than the millennials who graduated into the 2008 recession. Instead of interning and working in all-inclusive office spaces, many are beginning their careers from a laptop in their childhood bedrooms. The external circumstances in which Gen Zers are beginning their careers are undoubtedly shaping their motivations and values in the job search.

To help campus recruitment teams understand how best to connect with and support Gen Z college students in their employment search, we set out to understand what the COVID-era Gen Z job seeker looks like. We surveyed more than 1,000 juniors and seniors from 235 schools about the challenges they're facing in the job search, their views on remote work vs. relocation, what they're looking for in an offer, and how COVID-19 and recent protests against racial injustice have influenced what they look for in their first job or internship.

Read on for the full report of our findings and what it means for college recruitment teams during the Fall 2020 recruitment season.

THE JOB AND INTERNSHIP SEARCH

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- When students are starting their job & internship search
- The top challenges in the student job & internship search
- Timeline expectations for receiving an offer

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- The Gen Z job seeker at a glance

THE JOB & INTERNSHIP SEARCH

Plans and expectations for the year ahead



In a tough job market, many college students have already begun searching for jobs and internships.

Throughout their time in the spotlight, Generation Z has been known as a pragmatic group. Growing up during a recession, they witnessed their older siblings and parents navigate a tough economic landscape, shaping them into the career-focused cohort we have seen enter the job market the past few years. Now, facing an economic downturn like the one they grew up in, they aren't taking any chances on securing a job after graduation.

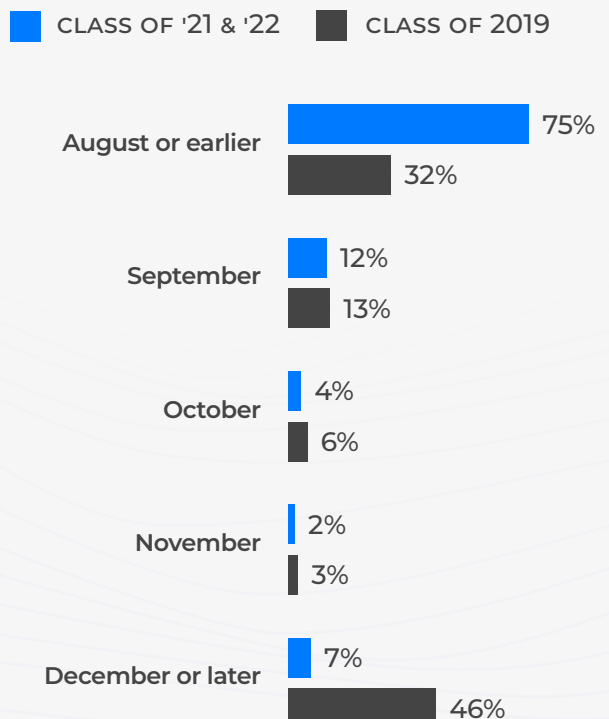
In the survey we administered in August 2020, we asked students when they planned to begin their job or internship search. 75% said they had already begun their job search or planned to begin their search later on in the month. Another 12% said they planned to begin their search in September. That means 87% of respondents are actively searching for a post-grad role or internship as of September. In contrast, [a RippleMatch survey](#) conducted in spring 2019 on 1,100 graduating seniors found that only 45% of students were actively searching for a role in September, and many began their job search in the spring.

Today's Gen Z job seeker is aware that finding the right job or internship in our economic climate will take time. With this in mind, college recruitment teams should begin connecting with students now, even if headcount or hiring needs are not yet finalized. Students will appreciate learning about companies, industries, and potential positions in order to strengthen their job and internship search in the coming months.

STARTING EARLY

When this survey was administered in early August, 75% of juniors and seniors reported that they had already begun their job or internship search, or planned to begin their search by the end of the month. In a RippleMatch survey conducted on the Class of 2019 last year, only 32% of students surveyed at that time reported beginning their job search prior to September, and significantly more began their search in the spring.

WHEN STUDENTS BEGAN THEIR SEARCH



THE JOB & INTERNSHIP SEARCH

RESOURCES USED

Most students are in job-searching mode now – so what tools and platforms are they leveraging to aid in their search? We asked students to select the events, platforms, and other channels they plan to use in their job and internship search. Career fairs – even with the transition to virtual – remain the status quo. However, 84% of students say they plan on checking the job listings of companies of

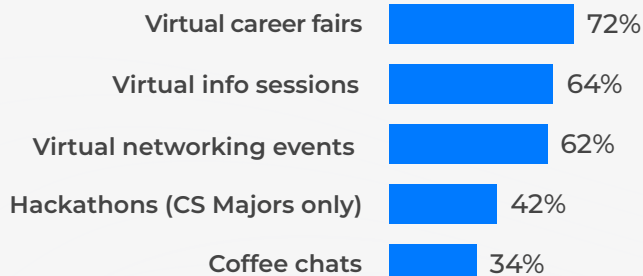
interest, underscoring the importance of a strong employer brand. Finally, 54% of students who aren't sure where to take their career path say they are researching common career paths associated with their major. Campus teams for companies in lesser-known industries should be proactive about educating current students about opportunities for different academic backgrounds.

THE JOB & INTERNSHIP SEARCH TOOLKIT

We asked students to select the events, platforms, and other channels they plan to use in their job and internship search, as well as how students who are unsure about their career prospects research opportunities.

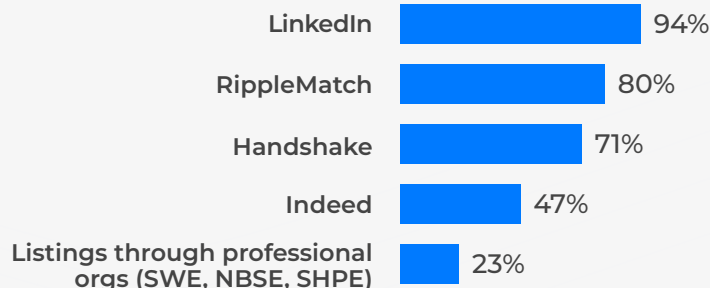
Virtual Events

Career fairs remain a popular way for students to learn about opportunities, even when virtual.



Job Search Platforms

Nearly all students are leveraging LinkedIn to aid in their job search.



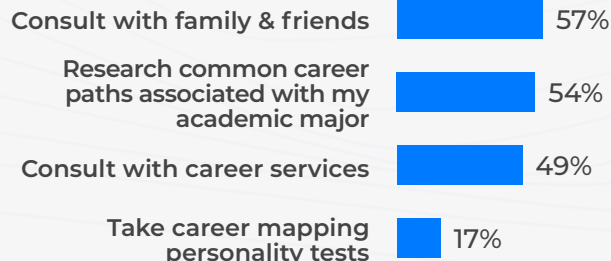
Company-focused outreach

If a student is interested in a company, they check the available listings directly.



Career Research

Students unsure about their career path conduct research online and consult with others.



THE JOB & INTERNSHIP SEARCH

TOP CHALLENGES

In a crowded job market, 73% of seniors and 80% of juniors view having their application stand out to campus recruiters as the biggest challenge. In contrast, [only 55%](#) of Class of 2019 graduates selected 'standing out from other applicants' as a top challenge in their job search.

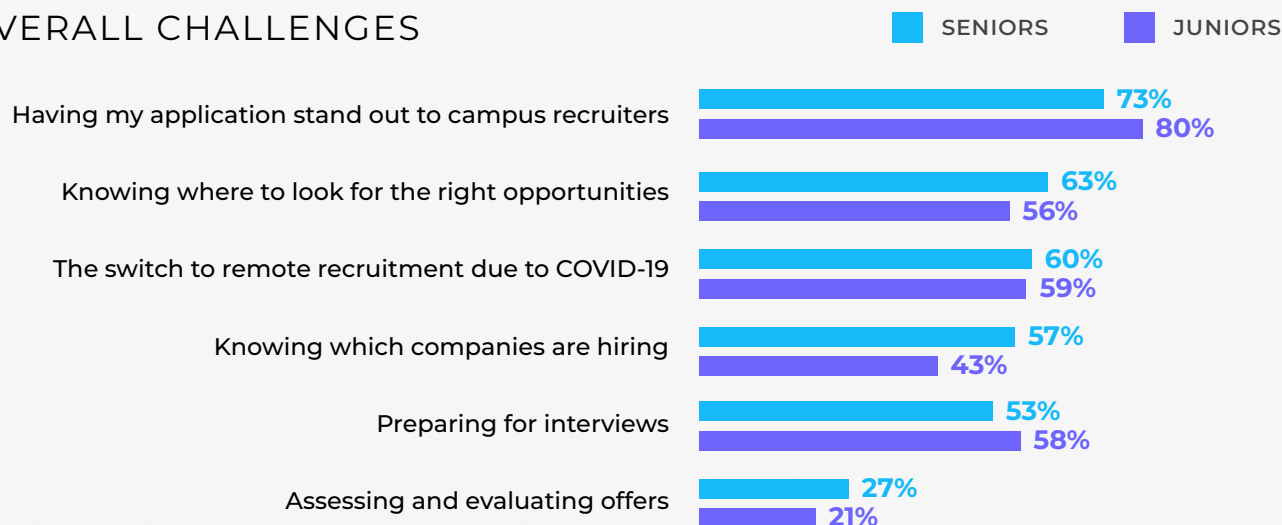
Both juniors and seniors are also concerned that the

switch to remote recruitment will make their job search more challenging. Specifically, students are concerned that there will be less personalized interactions during virtual recruitment events, and that it will be more difficult to convey personality in a hiring process that takes place exclusively over phone calls and video screens.

THE TOP CHALLENGES OF THE JOB & INTERNSHIP SEARCH

We asked students to identify the top challenges they foresee in their upcoming job and internship search. We also asked students to identify what they find most challenging about the switch to remote recruitment.

OVERALL CHALLENGES



CHALLENGES IN REMOTE RECRUITMENT



THE JOB & INTERNSHIP SEARCH







































































OFFER TIMELINES

We asked students when they hope to receive and accept a job or internship offer. With the proactive approach to their job search, most students hope to have an offer secured by early 2021.

Around 50-60% of students in non-technical majors like business, social sciences, or humanities expect to

receive a job or internship offer between October and January. 67% of Computer Science majors, and 76% of engineering students hope to receive and accept an offer by January. Across all majors, about a third of students expect to secure an offer in the spring semester, regardless if they are searching for a job or internship.

EXPECTED OFFER TIMELINES

BY MAJOR	AUG & SEPT	OCT & NOV	DEC & JAN	FEB & MAR	APR, MAY, JUNE
SENIORS	 7%	 27%	 33%	 15%	 18%
Computer Science	 9%	 32%	 35%	 11%	 13%
Engineering	 6%	 28%	 29%	 21%	 16%
Science & Math	 8%	 23%	 34%	 18%	 17%
Business, Econ, Finance	 5%	 31%	 29%	 13%	 23%
Social Sciences	 4%	 16%	 34%	 25%	 20%
Humanities & Other	 7%	 15%	 43%	 11%	 26%
JUNIORS	 9%	 29%	 34%	 20%	 10%
Computer Science	 8%	 38%	 33%	 17%	 5%
Engineering	 5%	 26%	 41%	 20%	 8%
Science & Math	 8%	 26%	 21%	 25%	 20%
Business, Econ, Finance	 13%	 23%	 42%	 13%	 8%
Social Sciences	 20%	 7%	 20%	 40%	 14%
Humanities & Other	 8%	 4%	 42%	 36%	 12%

THE JOB & INTERNSHIP SEARCH

KEY TAKEAWAYS FOR CAMPUS TEAMS

Understanding how Gen Z college students are approaching their job and internship search is essential for an effective campus recruitment strategy – especially in such unprecedented times. Below, we've laid out the key data points college recruitment teams should be aware of, and how the data can be applied to campus talent acquisition strategies.

1

Students are proactive about their job and internship search.

In a competitive job market, Gen Z job seekers aren't taking any chances. As of September, 87% are in active job-seeking mode. In contrast, a RippleMatch survey conducted in spring 2019 on graduating seniors found that only 45% of students were actively searching for a role in September. Even if hiring needs for summer 2021 are not yet finalized, college recruitment teams should connect with students now to familiarize students with their employer brand and the types of opportunities available.

87%

OF COLLEGE STUDENTS
BEGAN THEIR JOB SEARCH BY
OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER

45%

OF THE CLASS OF 2019 BEGAN
THEIR JOB SEARCH BY OR
BEFORE SEPTEMBER

2

Standing out to campus recruiters is a top challenge for student job seekers.

73% of seniors and 80% of juniors view having their application stand out to campus recruiters as the biggest challenge in their upcoming job search. Around 60% of students are also worried that the switch to remote recruitment will make their job search more challenging. Around 80% of those concerned about virtual recruitment said that they are worried that there will be less personalized interactions during virtual recruitment events. Campus teams should address these concerns by going the extra mile to personalize outreach and interactions with students before, during, and after events.

80%

OF COLLEGE STUDENTS THINK
VIRTUAL RECRUITMENT WILL BE
LESS PERSONALIZED

73%

OF SENIORS SAY THE TOP
JOB SEARCH CHALLENGE IS
STANDING OUT TO RECRUITERS

3

Most students hope to receive a job or internship offer by January.

67% of seniors and 72% of juniors are hoping their early start to the job search pays off – the majority of students hope to receive a job offer by January 2021. Campus recruitment teams should keep these expectations in mind when moving students through the interview process by communicating about hiring timelines and sending out offers promptly.

67%

OF SENIORS HOPE TO
RECEIVE A JOB OFFER BY
JANUARY

REMOTE OR RELOCATION

Where Generation Z want to begin their careers

Despite positive experiences interning remotely this past summer, Gen Z students aren't bought in to the idea of a remote-only future.

Since March, remote work and remote learning have been the norm. But Generation Z appears to be holding out hope that by next summer, they will be able to begin their careers with a semblance of normalcy.

We asked students about their location preferences, as well as what would encourage them to relocate for a job or internship. Notably, only 5% of students are looking exclusively for remote jobs, and 43% of students are open to relocating to any location for the right opportunity.

STUDENTS AREN'T BOUGHT IN TO THE IDEA OF A REMOTE-ONLY FUTURE

Only 5% of students are looking **exclusively** for remote jobs or internships.

**% OF STUDENTS EXCLUSIVELY
LOOKING FOR REMOTE JOBS OR
INTERNSHIPS** ■ **5%**

Despite the fact that students had a largely positive experience interning remotely this past summer (as shown on the next page), students have a preference for starting their careers in a large or mid-size city that has a diverse population and thriving social scene. With their later college years impacted by COVID-19, it's not surprising Gen Z wants to begin their careers in-person.



WHERE GEN Z WANTS TO WORK

Students are most interested in moving to a large or mid-size city after graduation, though 43% are open to any location for the right role.

■ ALL STUDENTS

LARGE CITY ■ **86%**

(Ex. NYC, Los Angeles, Chicago, Houston, Philadelphia)

MID-SIZE CITY ■ **82%**

(Ex. Austin, Seattle, Denver, Boston)

ANY LOCATION ■ **43%**

Willing to move to any location for right role

SMALL CITY ■ **34%**

(Ex. Portland, Oklahoma City, Milwaukee)

SUBURBAN ■ **24%**

No main city center

RURAL ■ **6%**

Low population density

REMOTE OR RELOCATION

EXPERIENCE WORKING REMOTELY

Even with the anxieties surrounding remote internships, students rated their experiences highly.

The average rating across all remote internships was 4.2 / 5 stars, and 64% of students said 'good remote work management' from the company contributed to a positive experience. However, the most common reason interns said they had a positive experience had nothing to do with whether or not they were in the office, but the projects they had the opportunity to work on. 73%

of students said that having the opportunity to work on impactful projects made their experience a positive one.

Notably, only 44% of respondents said that community-building with peers was a high note of their remote internship. While job responsibilities and professional development events can be transitioned online, organic relationship-building with peers can be more difficult to recreate in a virtual environment.

REMOTE INTERNSHIPS BRING CAREER DEVELOPMENT, BUT LACK SOME PERSONAL CONNECTIVITY

We asked students to rate their remote internships and select the factors that contributed to a positive internship experience. Students had a great experience professionally, but only 44% said community building with peers was a highlight.

TOP REASONS FOR POSITIVE EXPERIENCE

4.2 / 5.0 
AVERAGE INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE RATING



REMOTE OR RELOCATION

REASONS TO RELOCATE

Despite their interest in moving to large or mid-size cities, 'affordable cost of living' was one of the top factors Gen Z candidates said would positively influence them to relocate to a city. Students searching for an internship are much more likely to be concerned with affordability and stability, with 'proximity to family' and 'relocation bonus' ranking in their top three factors to convince them to relocate for a summer.

Seniors are also concerned about cost of living, but weigh quality of in-person life as well. Students evaluating where to begin their careers after graduation rank 'diverse population' and 'great nightlife' among their top three factors that would encourage them to relocate. These students also rank factors such as 'cultural institutions' and 'access to outdoor activities' as important, on par with a relocation bonus from an employer.

THE TOP REASONS TO RELOCATE - FULL-TIME VS. INTERNSHIP

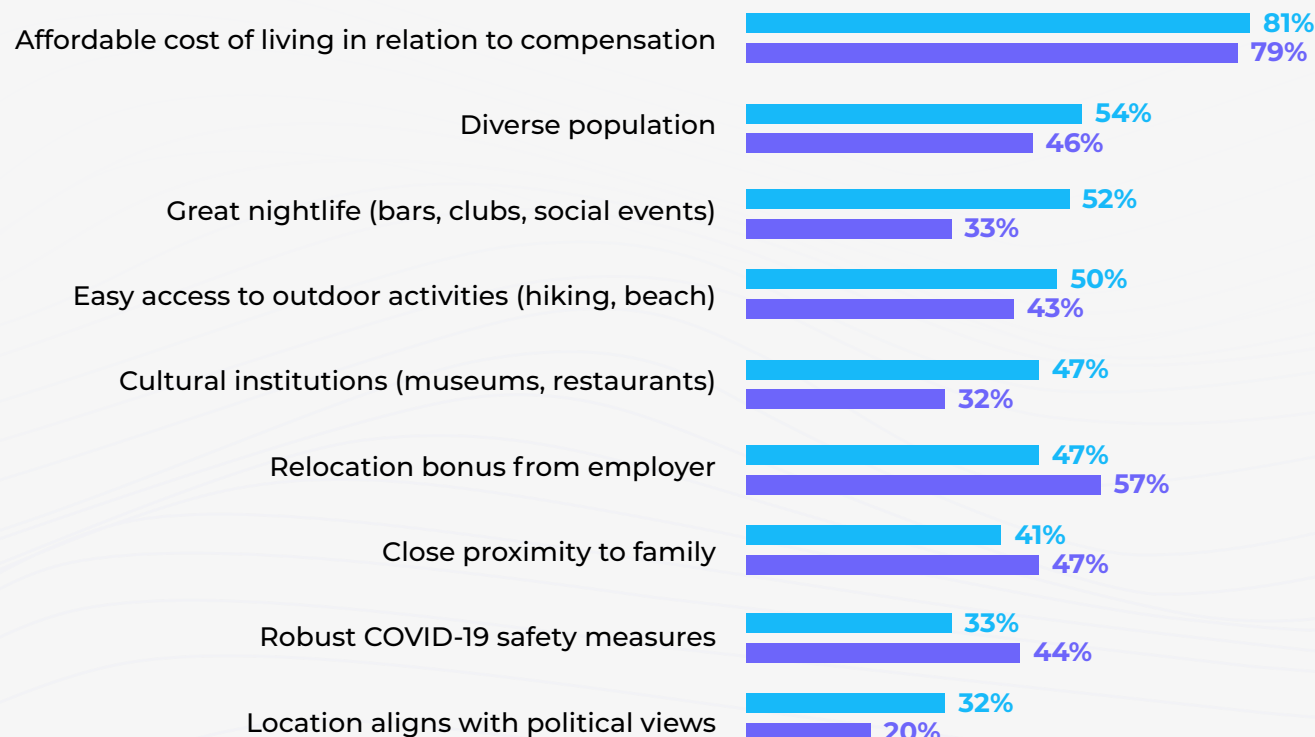
We asked students: Which of the following factors would positively influence you to relocate to a specific location for a summer job or internship?

Full-time role

1. Affordable cost of living
2. Diverse population
3. Great nightlife

Internship

1. Affordable cost of living
2. Relocation bonus
3. Close to family



REMOTE OR RELOCATION

REASONS TO RELOCATE

While there's a difference between what would encourage juniors vs. seniors to relocate, there are also differences in what would encourage women vs. men to relocate.

Both are equally concerned about affordable cost of living, but women care significantly more about moving somewhere that has a diverse population. Women are also more concerned about COVID-19 safety measures

and local politics. 40% of women say a city that has robust COVID-19 safety measures would encourage them to relocate, and 32% would be encouraged to relocate if that location aligns with their political views. In comparison, 29% of men would be encouraged to relocate because of robust COVID-19 safety measures, and only 19% would be encouraged to relocate if a city aligns with their political views.

THE TOP REASONS TO RELOCATE - WOMEN VS. MEN

We asked students: Which of the following factors would positively influence you to relocate to a specific location for a summer job or internship?

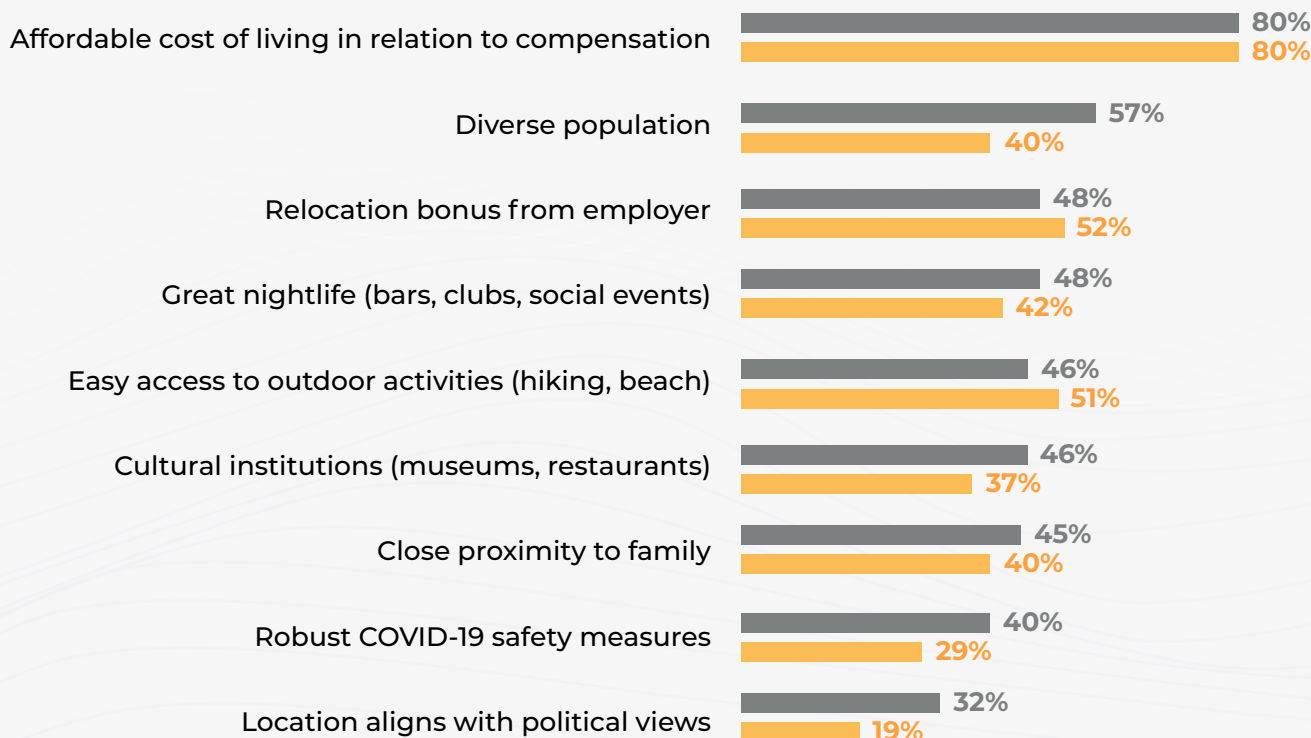
Women

1. Affordable cost of living
2. Diverse population
3. Relocation bonus/Nightlife

Men

1. Affordable cost of living
2. Relocation bonus
3. Outdoor activities

■ WOMEN
■ MEN



REMOTE OR RELOCATION

KEY TAKEAWAYS FOR CAMPUS TEAMS

In our remote reality, should college recruitment teams talk about what their city has to offer if students choose to accept an offer? This is what our data has to say about how students are considering remote opportunities vs. relocation.

1

Even with the logistical challenges, students had fulfilling remote internships.

On average, students rated their remote summer internship experience as a 4.2 out of 5, and said their experience was professionally fulfilling. 73% of students said the opportunity to work on high-impact projects contributed to a positive experience, and 64% said that interactions with senior leaders and other professional development opportunities created a positive experience. Good remote work management also contributed to a positive experience, according to 63% of students. However, only 44% said community-building with peers was a high point.

73%

OF STUDENTS SAID IMPACTFUL PROJECTS LED TO A POSITIVE INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE

44%

SAID COMMUNITY BUILDING WITH PEERS LED TO A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE

2

Students aren't embracing the idea of a remote-only future.

Despite their positive remote internship experience, students are still holding out hope that their next job or internship will resemble pre-COVID times. Only 5% of students are searching exclusively for a remote job or internship, and 86% of students are interested in moving to a large city for their job or internship. While 43% of students are open to relocating anywhere for the right opportunity, half of seniors would like to relocate to locations with social activities and diverse populations.

86%

OF STUDENTS HAVE INTEREST IN RELOCATING TO A BIG CITY

5%

ARE LOOKING EXCLUSIVELY FOR REMOTE OPPORTUNITIES

3

Affordable cost of living motivates both seniors and juniors to relocate – but seniors also want a social life.

While both seniors and juniors would be motivated to relocate if a city has an affordable cost of living, seniors say they would be encouraged to relocate because of the social and cultural institutions a city has to offer, as well as if the city has a diverse population. When students are considering where to accept a full-time offer, be sure to provide information about what makes your city a great place to live and work.

80%

OF STUDENTS WANT AN AFFORDABLE COST OF LIVING

54%

OF SENIORS WANT TO MOVE SOMEWHERE WITH NIGHTLIFE

TOP CAREER VALUES

What candidates look for in a job and COVID-19's influence



Students increasingly value compensation, stability, and company culture when evaluating offers.

Perhaps the biggest indicator of what a candidate values are the factors that influence them to accept job and internship offers. In previous years, professional development ranked as the most influential factor in why candidates accepted job offers. This year's seniors, however, are weighing compensation & benefits, work-life balance, and company culture as their top priorities when evaluating offers. Job stability, while it did not rank

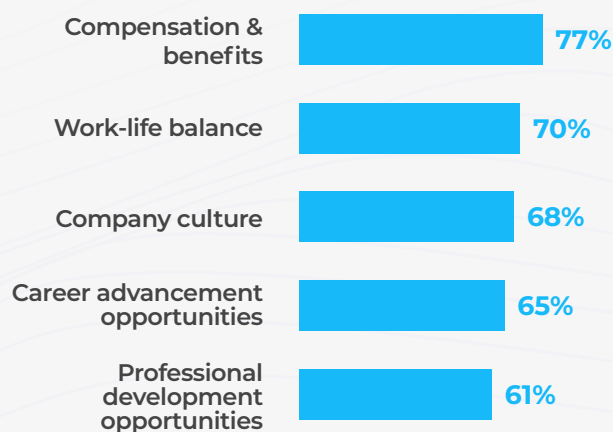
among the top 5 most influential factors for seniors, is significantly more important to the class of 2021 than it was to the class of 2019.

Students searching for internships are much less likely to value compensation, given the temporary nature of the position, and are still most concerned with how the internship can help them grow professionally.

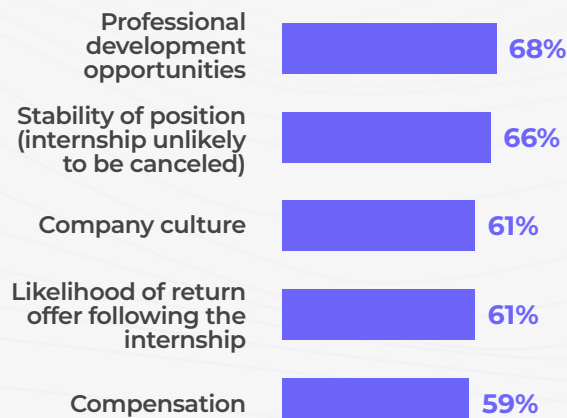
HOW STUDENTS EVALUATE OFFERS

We asked students: Which of the following factors are currently the most important to you when evaluating a job or internship offer?

Seniors



Juniors



TOP CAREER VALUES

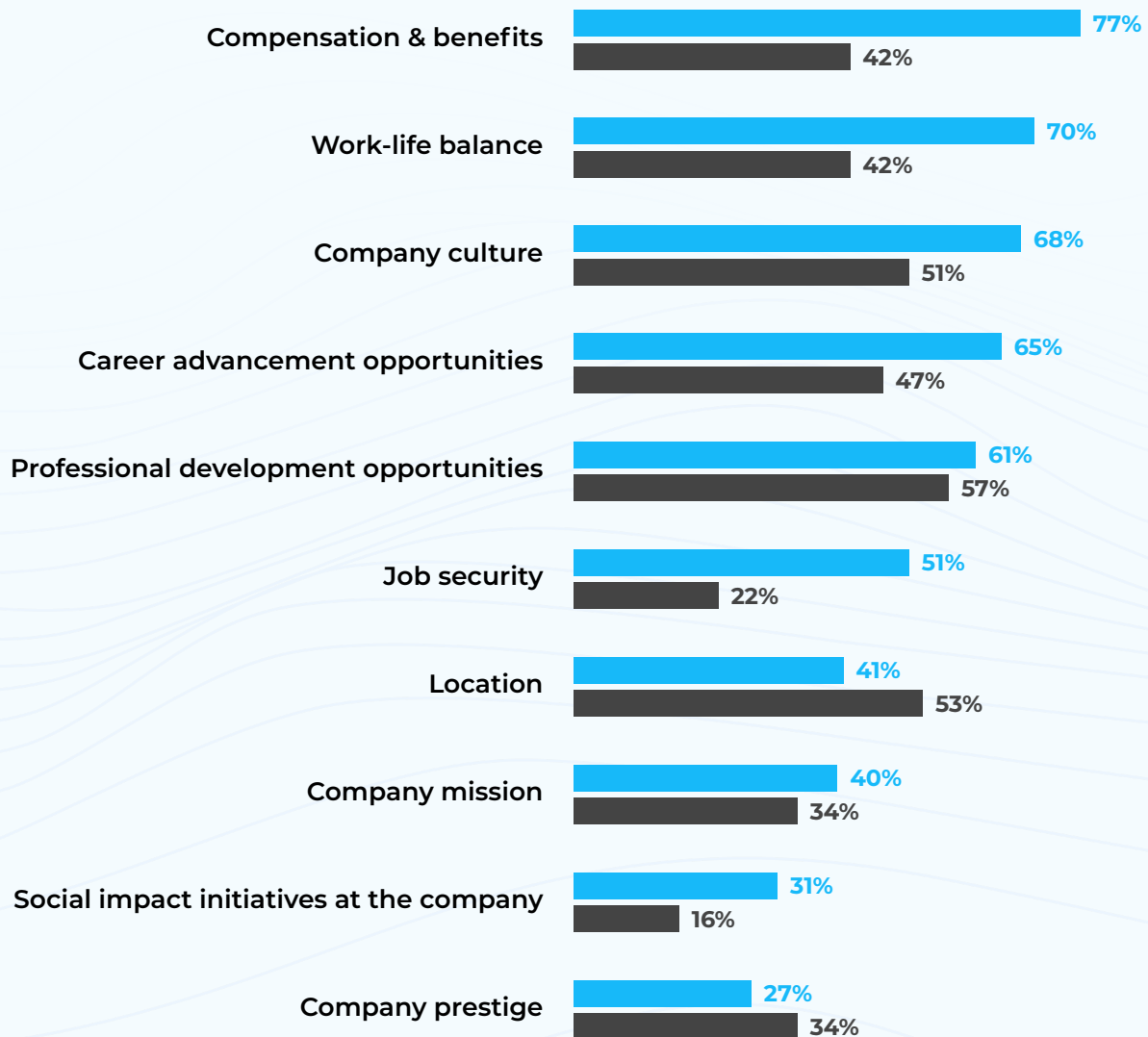
NOW VS. THEN

What Seniors Prioritize: Now vs. Then

In 2019, we [surveyed](#) 1,100 graduating seniors and asked which factors were the most influential to them when evaluating a job offer and listed a number of different factors to choose from. In our most recent survey, we asked the class of 2021 the same question. The biggest evolution in values is the increased importance of compensation, job security, and work-life balance – no doubt a product of the uncertain economic landscape and personal impact of the events of this past year.

CAREER VALUES - NOW VS. THEN

■ CLASS OF 2021 ■ CLASS OF 2019



TOP CAREER VALUES

COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

What Seniors Prioritize: Compensation and Benefits

With compensation & benefits ranking as the top factor seniors consider when weighing a job offer, it's helpful for campus recruitment teams to understand what parts of a compensation package they value the most. **We asked seniors to select the five benefits that are the most important to them when considering a job offer.**

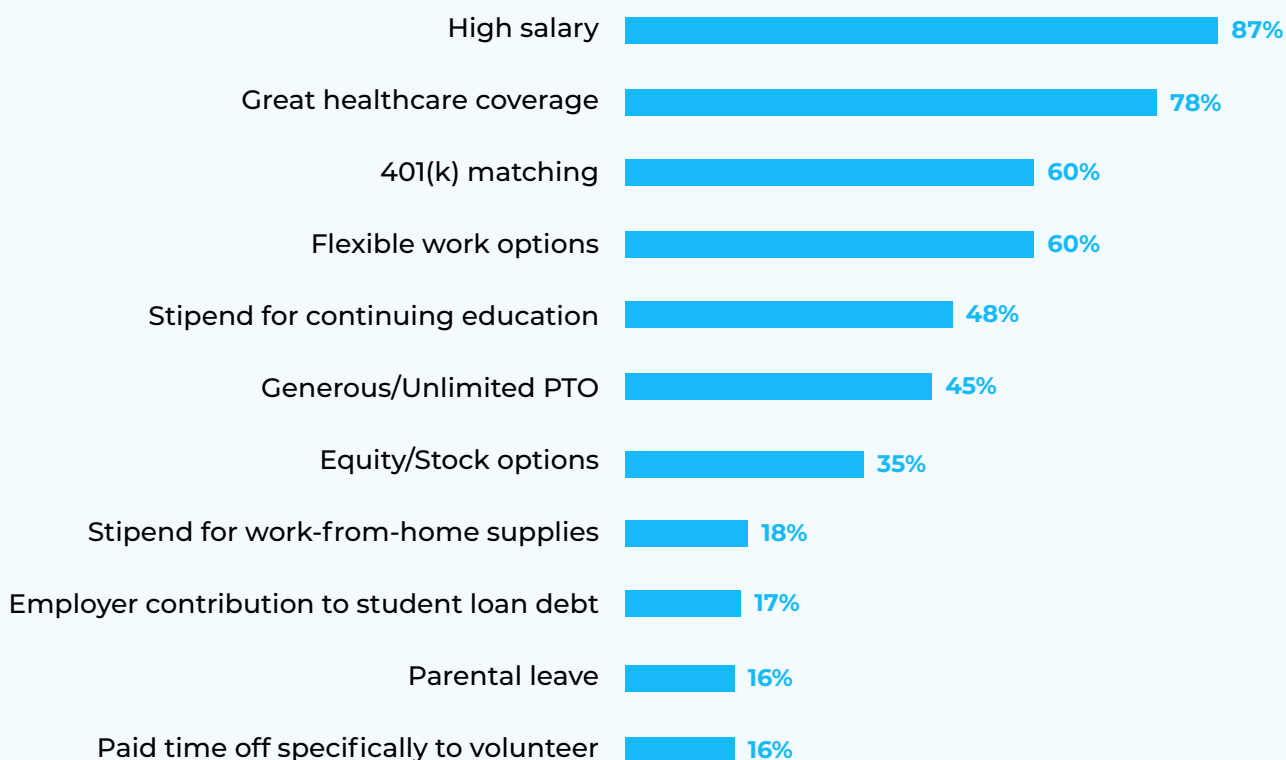
Unsurprisingly, high salary ranked as the most important part of an overall compensation package. This was followed by 'great healthcare coverage,' which was described in the survey question as coverage with a

low deductible and low or no premium. 401(k) matching and flexible work options were tied for third, while a stipend for continuing education outweighed generous/unlimited PTO as a valued benefit.

About a third of respondents said equity/stock options are important (though this varies greatly by gender, as shown in data on page 15). Parental leave, paid time off to volunteer, employer contribution to student loan debt, and work-from-home supplies did not rank particularly high among the most valued benefits, as they were selected by only around 20% of respondents.

TOP BENEFITS

We asked students: When evaluating compensation and benefits in a job offer, which of the following are most important to you?



TOP CAREER VALUES

COMPANY RESPONSE TO COVID-19

Company response to COVID-19: Influence on interest

In addition to the traditional factors students consider when evaluating job offers (like compensation and company culture), this generation is also weighing a company's response to COVID-19. **We asked seniors to select which, if any, of the factors listed in the chart below they are considering when evaluating if they would like to work for a company.** Campus recruiters should keep these factors in mind and proactively provide information to students on the topics they care most about.

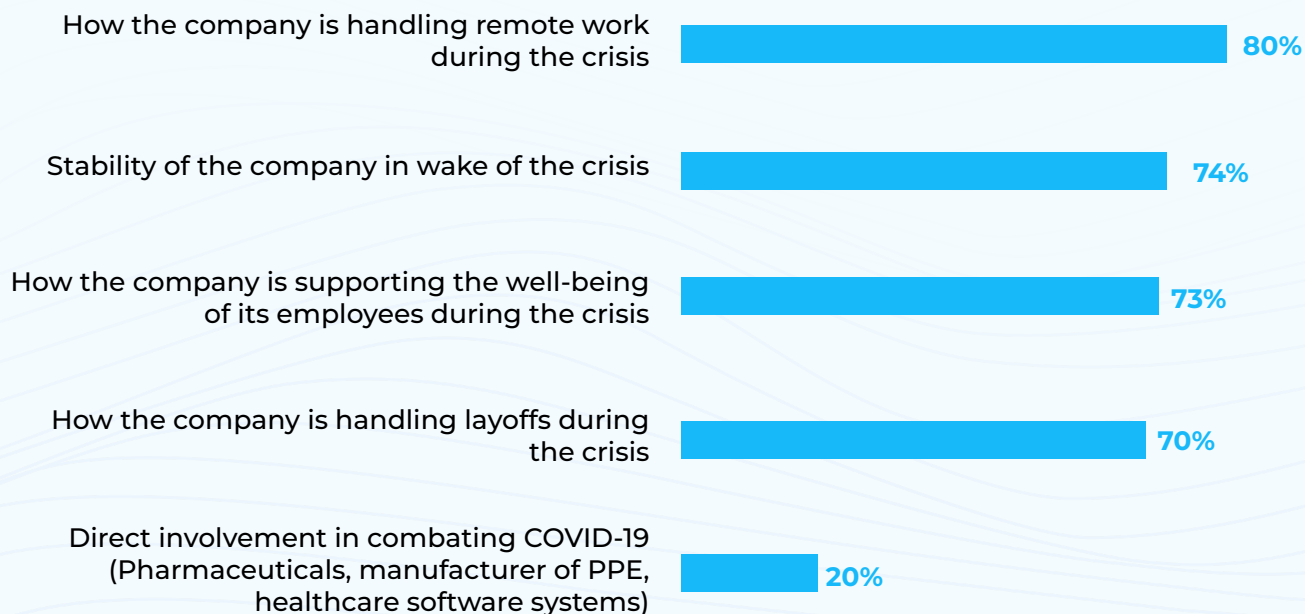
The top concern is how a company is handling remote work during COVID-19 – 80% of students said they are looking into a company's remote work experience and policies. And given the personal impact COVID-19 can

have – on both mental and physical health – 73% of students are concerned with how a company supports the well-being of its employees.

Stability is another concern for students. 74% of students are considering the stability of a company and its industry during this tumultuous economic time, and 70% are looking into how the company has handled layoffs as a result of COVID-19. Despite the interest in stability, a company's role in combating COVID-19 through the creation of pharmaceuticals, healthcare software, manufacturing of PPE, or other means does not play a significant role in whether or not seniors want to work for that company.

CONSIDERATIONS OF COMPANY RESPONSE TO COVID-19

We asked students: In the wake of COVID-19, are you considering any of the following when evaluating if you would like to work for a company?



TOP CAREER VALUES

WOMEN VS. MEN

What Seniors Prioritize: Women vs. Men

■ WOMEN ■ MEN

From our survey results, we know that seniors are looking for a job that offers competitive compensation, job security, and a company culture that supports their well-being. But when we look closer at the data, there are some significant differences between what men and women value in their first jobs.

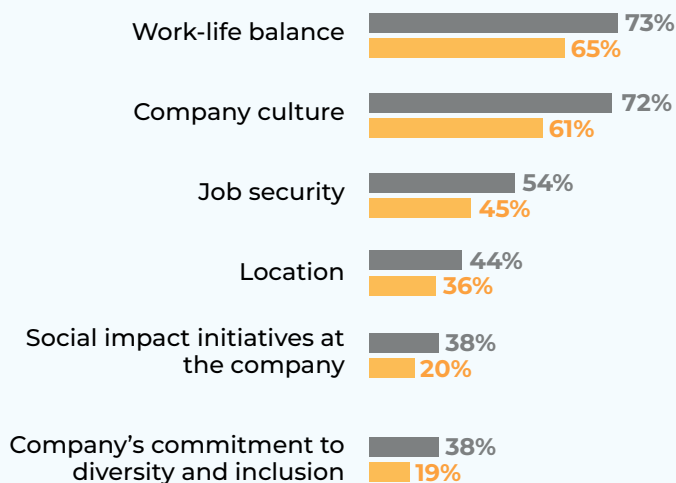
In the sidebar, we highlighted the data points where there was a difference of at least 7 percentage points. As shown by the data, women care more about factors like company culture and work-life balance. This was also evident in how a company's response to COVID-19 influences interest: 79% of women were concerned with how a company supports the well-being of its employees, compared to 63% of men.

Another significant difference between men and women is how they value a company's social impact initiatives and commitment to diversity & inclusion. The share of women who value social impact and D&I initiatives is double the share of men that value those same initiatives when searching for a job.

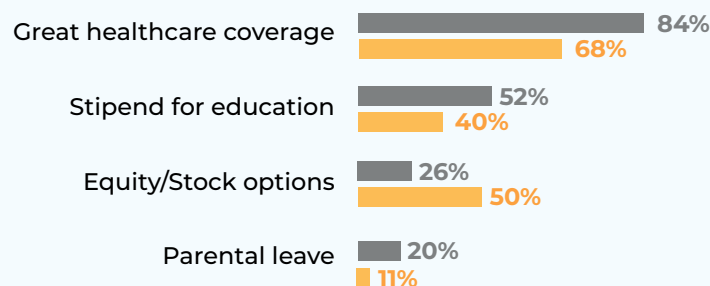
Finally, key differences emerged between what women and men value in a compensation package. 50% of men consider equity/stock options as a valuable part of a compensation package, while only 26% of women said the same. Women value healthcare coverage, stipends for continuing education, and parental leave more than men do.

For campus recruitment teams to position their companies attractively to female candidates – especially in industries where women are traditionally underrepresented – it's important to highlight the company's inclusive culture, commitment to diversity, and support for the well-being of its employees.

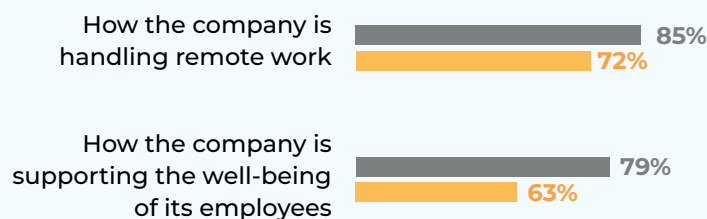
WORKPLACE VALUES



COMPENSATION & BENEFITS



COMPANY'S COVID RESPONSE



TOP CAREER VALUES

COLLEGE JUNIORS

What Juniors Prioritize

We asked juniors: which of the following factors are currently the most important to you when evaluating an internship offer? Unlike seniors, the top priority for juniors when evaluating internship offers is the promise of professional development, rather than compensation. Nearly as important as professional development, however, is the 'stability of the position' aka the likelihood of the internship being canceled. Students will be interested to hear from campus recruitment teams about how the company handles remote internships as well as how the company is faring during COVID-19.

CAREER VALUES

■ CLASS OF 2022



TOP CAREER VALUES

COMPANY RESPONSE TO COVID-19

Company response to COVID-19: Influence on interest

Like we did with seniors, as we asked juniors to select which, if any, of the factors listed in the chart below they are considering when evaluating if they would like to intern for a company. As shown by their career values, how COVID-19 affects internships is a top concern for juniors.

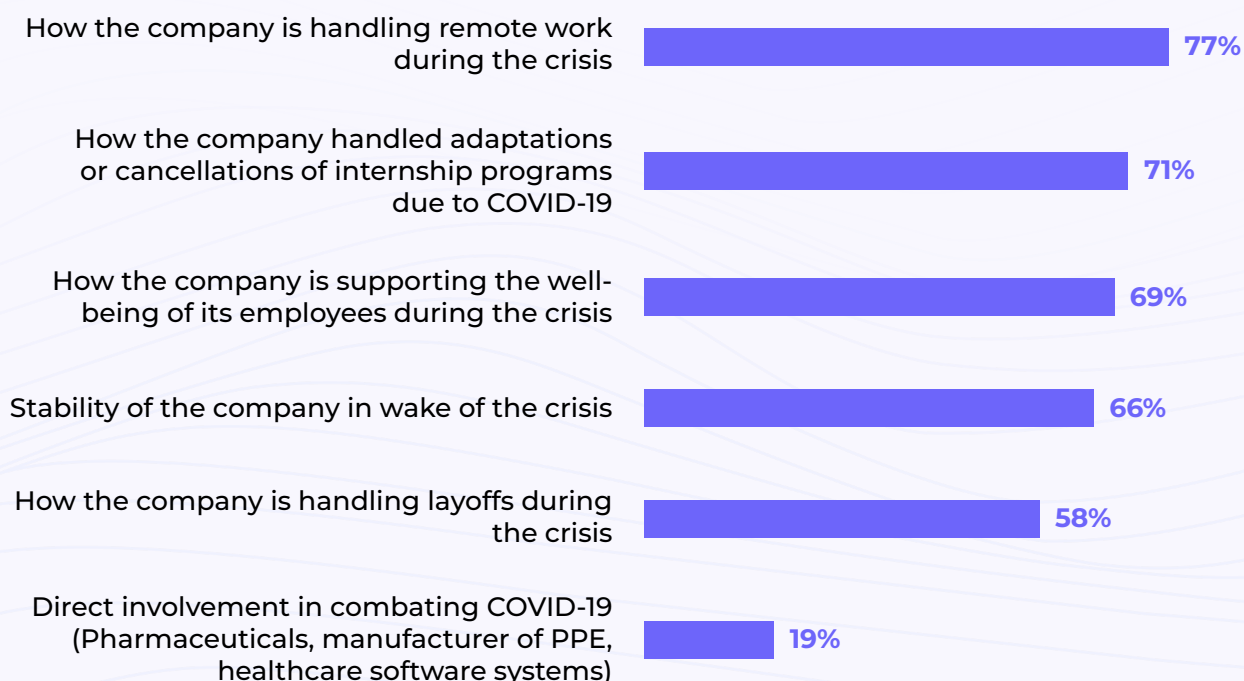
While the top concern (like it was for seniors) is how a company is handling remote work, 71% of respondents are considering how a company handled adaptations or cancellations to internship programs when deciding where to intern next summer, even more than they are considering the relative stability of the company during COVID-19. Campus recruitment teams that pulled off

great remote internships this past summer should leverage those materials to market their internship opportunities for 2021. If a summer internship was canceled, college recruitment teams can focus on how their company supported the well-being of their employees, as this was a priority for juniors as well. 69% said they are considering how a company is supporting its employees through tough times when looking for an internship.

Finally, like the seniors we surveyed, juniors are relatively disinterested in the role a company plays in combating COVID-19 when deciding where they want to intern.

CONSIDERATIONS OF COMPANY RESPONSE TO COVID-19

We asked students: Which of the following factors are currently the most important to you when evaluating a job or internship offer?



TOP CAREER VALUES

WOMEN VS. MEN

What Juniors Prioritize: Women vs. Men

■ WOMEN ■ MEN

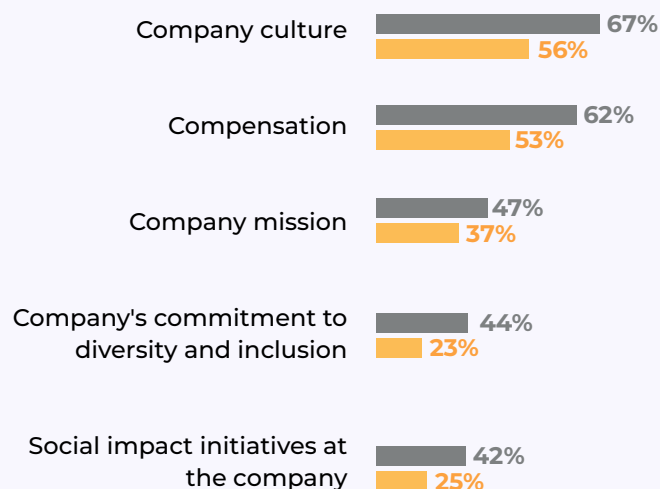
Professional development and stable internship programs are priorities for college juniors – but how do the priorities differ between men and women?

Similar to what we saw with seniors, women value social impact and diversity & inclusion initiatives significantly more than men do. 44% of women searching for an internship said that a company's commitment to D&I is important to them when considering an internship, compared to 23% of men who said the same. There were similar stats for social impact; 42% of women said these initiatives are important, compared with 25% of men.

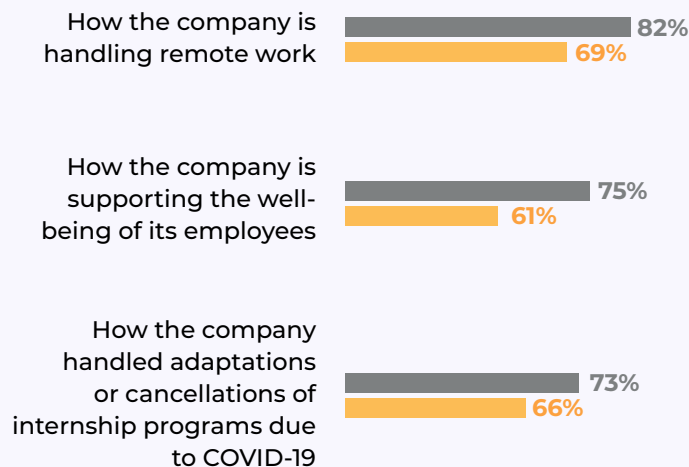
Additionally, women are more mission-driven than men: 47% of women said a company's mission was important when deciding where to intern, compared to 37% of men. The value of compensation also varied. While senior men and women valued compensation equally, women are more likely to consider compensation when evaluating an internship offer than men are.

When considering a company's response to COVID-19, women – like their senior counterparts – are more concerned with how a company treats its employees, from their remote work policies to well-being support to how they handled internship cancellations and adaptations. While men still care about these factors, campus recruitment teams should be sure to provide candidates with robust information on how the company supported its interns and employees during COVID-19 if they want to stand out to Gen Z women.

WORKPLACE VALUES



COMPANY'S COVID RESPONSE



TOP CAREER VALUES

KEY TAKEAWAYS FOR CAMPUS TEAMS

What does the Gen Z job seeker value in a career in the era of COVID-19? Certain factors – such as compensation and job security – have become significantly more important than they were to students who had access to a thriving job market. Below are the most important insights for college recruitment teams to know:

1

College seniors care about compensation, stability, and support from their employer.

The priorities of the class of 2021 have shifted dramatically from the priorities of the class of 2019. While the class of 2019 ranked professional development as their top priority, the class of 2021 ranks compensation, company culture, and work-life balance above professional development, and the share of students who care about job security when evaluating offers has more than doubled. That said, students still value professional development highly; but the economic and personal toll of COVID-19 has clearly underscored the importance of those other factors.

77%

OF STUDENTS IN C/O '21 SAID
COMPENSATION WAS MOST
IMPORTANT IN JOB OFFER

42%

OF STUDENTS IN C/O '19 SAID
COMPENSATION WAS MOST
IMPORTANT IN JOB OFFER

2

Students are weighing an employer's response to COVID-19 when evaluating opportunities.

Both seniors and juniors are considering how companies are handling remote work, supporting their employees' well-being, and staying afloat during COVID-19. College recruiting teams should be prepared to share materials that highlight all of these factors, whether it's a blog post on the company's remote internship program or materials on remote work policies and further support for employees.

80%

OF SENIORS ARE
CONSIDERING HOW A
COMPANY IS HANDLING
REMOTE WORK DURING
COVID-19

3

There are some significant differences between what women and men value in a job or internship.

The share of women who care about a company's social impact and diversity & inclusion initiatives is double the share of men who care about those initiatives. More women than men also care about company culture, work-life balance, and job security. To stand out to Gen Z women, campus recruitment teams should highlight these facets of the company throughout the hiring process.

44%

OF WOMEN IN THE C/O '22
CARE ABOUT D&I INITIATIVES

23%

OF MEN IN THE C/O '22 CARE
ABOUT D&I INITIATIVES

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

How Generation Z wants employers to approach D&I

Generation Z wants to see real results from a company's D&I initiatives.

From COVID-19's disproportionate impact on communities of color to the national protests against racism and police brutality, the events in the second half of 2020 have underscored the importance of having diverse teams and inclusive company cultures. While most top companies have had robust D&I initiatives, the spotlight on racial equality has pushed many employers to review how they can do even more to move the needle on representation and inclusion.

As Generation Z continues to enter the workforce and progress in their careers, their expectations of having diverse teams will only reinforce the importance of these initiatives – and it's essential that college recruitment teams communicate what their companies are doing to build more diverse and inclusive workplaces.

Generation Z is the most diverse generation to date and their political views tend to sway to the left (In a [Pew Research Center survey](#), 61% of Generation Z respondents said they will likely vote for Democrats in the 2020 election). And in the wake of national protests of racism and police brutality, the importance of working at a company that prioritizes D&I has only increased.

We asked students, "Following widespread protests against police brutality and racial injustice these past several months, have any of the following factors become more or less important to you in your job search?" 68% of students said a company's diversity & inclusion efforts have become more important to them in the wake of these protests. On the next page, we look at what initiatives they actually want to see from employers.



VALUES INFLUENCED BY SOCIAL JUSTICE PROTESTS

We asked students, "Following widespread protests against police brutality and racial injustice these past several months, have any of the following factors become more or less important to you in your job search?"

68% of students said a company's diversity & inclusion efforts have become more important to them in the wake of these protests.

■ ALL STUDENTS

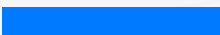
COMPANY'S COMMITMENT TO D&I

MORE IMPORTANT  68%

COMPANY'S SOCIAL IMPACT INITIATIVES

MORE IMPORTANT  65%

COMPANY CULTURE

MORE IMPORTANT  64%

COMPANY MISSION

MORE IMPORTANT  53%

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

TOP INITIATIVES

We asked Gen Z job seekers what they want to see from employers that illustrates the company's commitment to equality, both inside and outside of the company.

It's clear that above all, students want to see the results of a company's D&I initiatives. 69% of respondents want to see diverse executive leadership teams, and 67% want to see that companies are actively hiring and promoting diverse talent. A much smaller share of candidates view the publishing of diversity numbers, statements in

support of equality, and company spotlights on diverse identities at the company an adequate showcase of a commitment to D&I. Finally, 'political advocacy' is one of the least popular choices across the board for a company to illustrate its commitment to D&I.

Diversity & inclusion efforts are important to Generation Z, but the importance of each effort varies widely by demographic group, as shown on the chart on the following page.

WHAT GEN Z WANTS TO SEE FROM D&I

■ ALL RESPONDENTS

We asked students: "Due to national events, many companies have become increasingly vocal about their commitment to supporting the Black community, as well as increasing their commitment to diversity and inclusion within their own ranks. As you evaluate where to begin your career, what do you want to see from companies to illustrate their commitment to equality, both inside and outside of the company?"



DIVERSITY & INCLUSION
























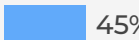

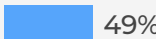

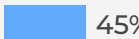







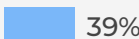








TOP INITIATIVES BY DEMOGRAPHIC

Women care significantly more about a company's D&I initiatives, especially women who identify as underrepresented minorities. In contrast, men who are not part of an underrepresented group care the least about how a company illustrates their commitment to D&I – only 51% said they want to see a company with a diverse leadership team and the hiring and promotion of diverse talent, compared to 85% of URM women.

Women also care significantly more about inclusive health benefits, as well as internal professional development initiatives for diverse groups.

The results of the chart shown below are clear: to attract underrepresented talent, such as women and people of color, companies need to invest in initiatives that prioritize representation at all levels.

DESIRED D&I INITIATIVES - BY DEMOGRAPHIC

INITIATIVES	URM MEN	URM WOMEN	NON-URM MEN	NON-URM WOMEN
Diverse leadership & executive teams	 64%	 85%	 51%	 78%
Hiring and promotion of diverse talent	 65%	 86%	 51%	 74%
Inclusive health benefits (LGBTQ-inclusive healthcare, mental health, parental leave)	 42%	 64%	 41%	 65%
Investment in internal professional development programs for diverse groups	 46%	 59%	 36%	 53%
Pledging money and support to initiatives for underrepresented groups	 35%	 57%	 36%	 51%
Employee resource groups	 30%	 45%	 33%	 45%
A diverse slate of employees conducting interviews	 31%	 49%	 29%	 45%
Statements in support of equality	 32%	 41%	 36%	 40%
Publishing of diversity numbers	 28%	 45%	 30%	 39%
Published stories from diverse identities at the company	 28%	 40%	 21%	 36%
Political advocacy	 23%	 41%	 22%	 27%

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

KEY TAKEAWAYS FOR CAMPUS TEAMS

Understanding what this generation wants to see from corporate D&I initiatives is essential for college recruitment teams to effectively communicate with students during the hiring process. Our data shows that D&I is a priority for students, especially for those who are traditionally underrepresented in certain industries.

1

D&I is more important than ever to this generation.

Gen Z is the most diverse generation to date, as well as one of the most progressive. And in the wake of national protests for racial justice, the importance of equality has only grown: 68% of students say that a company's commitment to diversity & inclusion is even more important to them than it was prior to the spotlight on racial justice.

68%

OF STUDENTS SAID A COMPANY'S D&I INITIATIVES ARE MORE IMPORTANT IN THE WAKE OF NATIONAL PROTESTS

2

Gen Z wants to see real results from company D&I initiatives.

When asked how a company should demonstrate their commitment to equality inside and outside of the company, 69% of students said having diverse executive teams, and 67% said the hiring and promotion of diverse talent. A smaller share of students said that public statements on equality or even published stories from diverse identities at the company would demonstrate this commitment.

69%

OF STUDENTS SAID A DIVERSE EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM DEMONSTRATES A COMMITMENT TO EQUALITY

3

Traditionally underrepresented candidates value D&I initiatives significantly more than candidates who are not traditionally underrepresented in professional fields.

86% of women who belong to an underrepresented group said that a company can demonstrate their commitment to equality by hiring and promoting diverse talent. Only 51% of men who are not part of an underrepresented group said the same. If companies want to increase representation in their ranks, they must show real progress in diversifying their teams and providing an inclusive workplace that retains employees from all backgrounds. And during the hiring process, campus recruitment teams should highlight the action-oriented D&I initiatives companies are taking.

86%

OF URM WOMEN SAID THE HIRING & PROMOTION OF DIVERSE TALENT DEMONSTRATES A COMMITMENT TO EQUALITY

51%

OF NON URM MEN SAID THE HIRING & PROMOTION OF DIVERSE TALENT DEMONSTRATES A COMMITMENT TO EQUALITY

THE GEN Z JOB SEEKER

AT A GLANCE

As the class of 2021 and 2022 navigate the next steps of their professional careers, it's essential for college recruitment teams to stay on top of how this generation approaches their job search and what they want in a career. Zooming out, these are the key themes defining today's Gen Z job seeker.



PREPARING FOR A COMPETITIVE JOB SEARCH

Students are starting their job and internship search much earlier than years prior to gain an edge in the process. With the competitive employment landscape and recruitment taking place virtually, students recognize that standing out to campus talent teams and forming real connections will be a challenge.



CRAVING IN-PERSON CONNECTIONS

With their college experience and internships taking place largely online, students seem to be holding out hope that their careers won't take place remotely, indefinitely. A small share of students are looking exclusively for remote internships, and a majority of students hope to live and work in large or mid-size cities.



SEARCHING FOR STABILITY AND FINANCIAL SECURITY

The priorities of the class of 2021 have shifted dramatically from the priorities of the class of 2019. Compensation, work-life balance, and company culture have eclipsed professional development as a top priority when evaluating offers, and both seniors and juniors are increasingly concerned with the stability of companies in the wake of COVID-19.



DEMANDING RESULTS FROM D&I INITIATIVES

With the national spotlight on racial justice and equality, Generation Z wants to see real results – like having diverse teams at all levels – stemming from company D&I initiatives. This is especially true of candidates who are traditionally underrepresented in the workplace, such as women and people of color.



About RippleMatch

RippleMatch is College Recruiting Made Right

Our intelligent, comprehensive platform for college recruiting makes it easy to build diverse teams and hire the right students virtually.

Learn more by visiting RippleMatch.com/employers

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

RippleMatch surveyed 1,059 college students between August 6, 2020 and August 12, 2020. All survey respondents are confirmed users of RippleMatch and attended 235 unique colleges and universities. Survey respondents represent a wide range of academic majors including computer science, engineering, math, science, business, humanities, and social sciences. All respondents to this survey are slated to graduate between December 2020 and May 2022.