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# Understanding Employer Needs and Expectations from the Perspective of Human Resources

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## ABSTRACT

This pre-test study attempts to understand employers' current needs and expectations of recent graduates from a 4-year business program at higher education institutions from the perspective of human resource managers/specialists. After conducting a literature review and a pre-test survey, the authors developed scale items that measure the importance of certain knowledge and skill sets as well as behavioral traits from the perspectives of human resource specialists. The feedback received from the human resource specialists who participated in pre-test survey identified additional skill sets, knowledge areas, and behavioral traits that are most important to employers' needs. After pre-testing the measurement items and improving the survey for the main study, the data were collected through an online survey built in Qualtrics from a convenience sample. The sample was comprised of human resource managers/specialists who were the members of a human resource management organization located in central Pennsylvania. The survey results reveal the skill sets and knowledge areas that are most important to employers' needs, and the behavioral traits employers are currently seeking in addition to new and emerging trends in these areas. The demographic data of the human resource managers/specialists were also captured for classification purposes. The study compares the results to the findings of prior research, discusses the implications of the findings, and offers suggestions for future studies.

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**Tulay Girard** (Ph.D., Florida Atlantic University) is a Professor of Marketing at Penn State Altoona. Her research focuses on product classes, retailer attributes, perceived risk, Internet security/privacy, brand equity in banking, higher education, and private-label branding. Her publications can be found at [www.tulaygirard.com](http://www.tulaygirard.com). She has received several best paper awards and grants.

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