

# Students get jump on jobs

by Bob Shanahan

The unemployment rate for recent college graduates is 8 per cent compared with a national unemployment rate of 5 per cent.

With an eye toward this potential obstacle, executives from two large national firms Tuesday attempted to give students a jump on the job scramble.

Jan Stoney, personnel manager for the Bell Telephone System, and John Kirchner Jr., a personnel manager from International Business Machines (IBM), at a seminar told students how job interviews are conducted and how students should prepare for them.

The labor market is depressed, Kirchner said, and the graduate will have to be somewhat flexible in his job expectations for the next couple years.

Stoney explained that in the first interview, usually held on campus, firms look for a "job-match" to see if the individual is compatible with the business.

The second interview is a specific job interview. The third usually is a visit to a plant to acquaint the student with working conditions there.

One question students often ask, according to Stoney, is "how do I prepare for the interview?"

Both Stoney and Kirchner agreed neatness and cleanliness are important. Kirchner added that "first impressions really do count."

"Before the initial interview, think about yourself and what you've accomplished and be prepared to talk about it," Stoney said. "Think about your strong and weak points, your personal goals and how many of them you would sacrifice for a job."

Kirchner advised that the student should be aggressive, have his goals set and have good questions and ideas ready to discuss in the interview.

"In an interview we immediately look at academics, but we temper it with extracurricular activities," Kirchner said.

Stoney said top scholastics aren't an overriding consideration, but trends in scholastics, "good" and "bad" years, are looked for.

A masters degree? Both speakers agreed "it's nice, but not that important. A masters degree doesn't increase a person's salability at this time."

Which businesses should the student consider? Kirchner said students should decide, especially if they're in business, accounting or engineering, just what discipline they want.

Stoney also urged job-seekers to use the placement library when looking for a job.

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