

Experienced weapons benefit Lincoln job hunters

By Leslie Boellstorff

Increasingly stiff competition for jobs probably is a major characteristic of the Lincoln job market, said Gene Landkamer, Nebraska Job Service manager. The tightening of the economy is a major cause of this, he said. The shortage of purchasing money has caused fields related to the housing industry to hire fewer people. The same thing has happened to the automobile industry, as well as other fields, he said.

Besides causing fewer people to be hired, a weak economy discourages employers from having entry-level positions, Landkamer said. They often want to hire people with two to three years of experience, he said.

Betty Dankleff, owner and manager of Cornhusker Placement Service, said seven years ago graduates with a couple of courses in data processing would have been hired quickly. However, current graduates from UNL and technical schools have trouble finding jobs in the field because companies want employees with experience.

Chuck Schramm, the owner of AA Personnel Service, said slightly fewer new positions exist in Lincoln than three years ago simply because companies are not expanding as much.

Schramm also said the total number of jobs in Lincoln remains relatively constant, but demand varies.

Experience needed

An employment counselor for Snelling and Snelling Employment Service said companies have fewer openings in data processing for new graduates than they had a year ago.

"Now they're screaming for someone with experience," Sony Lowrey said.

Most employment agency personnel who were questioned had mixed opinions as to the type of education necessary for a career in Lincoln.

"There is really not a lot of anything

available in Lincoln for (those with) college degrees," Schramm said.

Most jobs available in Lincoln are "office support" - secretary, office and clerical work, he said.

"There's a skill level rather than an educational requirement for these jobs," he said. "Individuals must be able to operate at a certain level on certain machines."

Schramm added there is a demand for technical knowledge, especially in electrical, mechanical, industrial and chemical engineering fields.

While Lowrey, Schramm and Dankleff emphasized the need for education in business administration, data processing and accounting, as well as typing and shorthand skills, Landkamer said most employers don't object to any kind of degree - whether it's in business administration or liberal arts.

General education valuable

"It depends on how you look at it," he said. "If you look at it from the standpoint of experience gained from learning good work and study habits, learning to learn, learning to apply and use knowledge, learning to communicate then the graduate can adapt to any type of job."

Students should not allow their choice of major to limit their choice of jobs, Lowrey said. Although law, medicine and other professional programs are exceptions to this, he said, only the best will survive in the specific careers they studied, the others will relate what they learn to another career choice.

Many graduates avoid occupations simply because they put it into their own heads that they aren't capable of them, Lowrey said.

"I would never discourage anyone from going to college for any occupation, but I would discourage people from limiting themselves," he said.

Dankleff said a college education doesn't mean an applicant has a job, but it means he or she has the ability to step up quickly when he or she gets into a position.

She said she felt mental attitude was important in getting a first job.

Company needs


"You have to show a potential employer that you have the ability to concentrate, the energy, and an excitement and interest in the company, relating your abilities to the company's needs," she said.

Dankleff said most local opportunities are in data processing, clerical, engineering and accounting, although some of these fields are filling up. She said there aren't many openings in social fields and teaching, but nurses are in demand locally and nationwide.

Engineering jobs, management trainee positions and nursing jobs are those most readily available in Lincoln, Landkamer said. Although social worker jobs and teaching positions are scarce, Landkamer didn't name any field that has too many job applicants.

Schramm said retail management and technical jobs have the most possibilities. "In technical areas, the supply of jobs exceeds the supply of manpower across the state," he said.

Lowrey listed sales, secretarial work, accounting, data processing and manager training as some of the most available types of jobs in Lincoln.



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Adult education alternatives offered in television classes

By Roger Aden

Telecourses, classes taught using a combination of television, study guides and tests, provide an alternative in adult education, said the UNL official responsible for the courses.

Randall F. Bretz, director of Mediated Instruction, said instruction is presented through a Nebraska Educational Television program, books which come through the mail and a UNL faculty member available by toll-free telephone.

Bretz said the television programs are not like actual classroom lectures. They are produced in a documentary style.

"Television is known for its good production techniques," he said. "We lease some of the programs from other places that use good writers and noted academics for the program. It's really a top-notch production."

"The faculty member has several roles," he said, "and lecturing is just one of those roles. They also answer questions and prepare tests."

Bretz said the Division of Continuing Studies has made arrangements with libraries across the state to proctor the tests.

Tests at home

If a person is unable to make it out of the house, Bretz said the proctor can go to the person's house to give the test.

Like any other class, Bretz said people taking Telecourses read in addition to writing reports, depending on the type of course and instructor.

The televised shows are aired once or twice a week.

Although the shows take up a lot of ETN's air time - eight hours a week -

Bretz said it's mutually advantageous to televise the shows.

"Most of the programs are run on Saturday morning," he said, "so televising adult programs gives them (ETV) an alternative to all the cartoons that are on at that time."

"For us, the Saturday morning time is probable the best time to air the shows because most people don't have any planned activities."

"The other programs are shown late at night and early in the morning when people can concentrate on what's going on."

Several advantages

Bretz said there are several other advantages to the Telecourses, which he said are designed primarily for adults who do not have access to the Lincoln campus.

First of all, students can watch the programs in their own home and take the tests in their school library, he said.

"Secondly, we make all the materials available to them," Bretz said. "They don't have to go to all the trouble of finding the books. We mail them to the people."

"And, many people like the non-threatening environment," he said. "I don't want that to sound wrong, but a campus full of 17- to 22-year-olds is a threatening place for a lot of adults, especially if they've never been on a campus before."

Bretz said the future of programs similar to Telecourses is optimistic, citing this year's coordinated effort by public television and institutions of higher education to offer adult education courses.

"There are over 500 colleges and universities in the nation that are offering television courses for adults," he said.

"The people born during the baby boom are now adults. This makes for a growing adult population."



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