

Are The Economic Winds Of Uncertainty Beginning to Blow? Latest Global Research from Universum Reveals Growing Divide Among Gen Z Students

*Well-regarded Survey Uncovers the Brands and Employment Attributes Most Desired by
Business and Engineering/IT Students Across 12 Largest Global Economies*

NEW YORK – (October 4, 2019) – Tariffs, trade wars, climate change and more. According to the latest global annual World’s Most Attractive Employers (WMAE) research from Universum, the career aspirations of a growing portion of students are being influenced by economic uncertainty. Clearly divided into two segments, the research found 53 percent of Gen Z students are security seekers, followed by 35 percent focused on innovating their way through the disruptive challenges the world is confronting now.

This year, 247,235 business and engineering/IT students located across the 12 largest global economies, participated in the annual research that analyzes those companies, industries and employment attributes in-demand by new grads. The study provides critical insights into this highly desirable talent pool, providing employers with a direct view into expectations and aspirations.

Mats Röjdmarm, CEO at Universum, said, “Familiar brands lure Gen Z, with Google taking the top spot for the tenth consecutive year. Continually evolving, Google appeals to Gen Z’s bifurcation: as an employer, it’s dynamic and innovative, as well as large, successful and secure.”

Other key findings regarding employers, students and career plans include:

- Given the momentum of Amazon, one industry – e-commerce – gained ground with business students.
- Improved linkage to innovation, creativity and high future earnings have made the auto industry more attractive and competitive.
- A decreasing proportion of students express a desire for an international career, which probably reflects growing economic uncertainty, rising nationalism in many markets and the general shift in preference towards greater job stability.
- For business students, their top three job-related communication channels are social media, employers’ career websites and online job boards. The response differs slightly from their engineering/IT counterparts, who rely more on career fairs than online job boards.

“The trends we’re seeing are driving the increase in interest in E-commerce and the automotive and tech sectors,” said Claudia Tattanelli, Chairman, Strategic Board at Universum. “In fact, each of them is embracing new technologies at a fast pace and technology that is working very hard at addressing the growing need for flexibility at work, work-life balance, and celebrating fun at work and D&I as key elements of their culture.”

The top ranked employers, as identified by business students are:

WMAE 2019 Business Rankings Top 10:

1. Google (Non-mover)
2. EY – Ernst & Young (3rd in 2018)
3. PwC - PricewaterhouseCoopers (6th in 2018)
4. Deloitte (Non-mover)
5. Apple (7th in 2018)
6. KPMG (5th in 2018)
7. Goldman Sachs (2nd in 2018)
8. Microsoft (10th in 2018)
9. J.P. Morgan (8th in 2018)
10. McKinsey & Company (9th in 2018)

Overall, business students ranked high future earnings as the most attractive attribute for an employer (49.1 percent), followed by professional training and development (43.8 percent), secure employment (39.1 percent) and a good reference for their future career (38.8 percent.) Among their career goals were work-life balance (52.8 percent), to be secure or stable in their job (45.2 percent) and to be a leader or manager of people (35.5 percent).

The top ranked employers, as identified by engineering and IT students are:

WMAE 2019 Engineering/IT Rankings Top 10:

1. Google (Non-mover)
2. Microsoft (Non-mover)
3. Apple (Non-mover)
4. BMW Group (Non-mover)
5. IBM (7th in 2018)
6. Siemens (8th in 2018)
7. Intel (5th in 2018)
8. Samsung (9th in 2018)

9. Amazon (10th in 2018)
10. General Electric (6th in 2018)

While engineering/IT students share business students' focus on high future earnings (47.6 percent), their second most attractive attribute for a potential employer was innovation (44.8 percent), then professional training and development (43.2 percent.) Common themes across their career aspirations were work-life balance (50.4 percent), to be secure or stable in their job (44.6 percent) and to be dedicated to a cause or feeling they are serving a greater good (30.7 percent).

"Attracting and engaging talent in a manner that addresses their key motivators accelerates time-to-hire and, ultimately, improves retention," said Richard Mosley, Global Vice President of Strategy at Universum. "Our annual research helps talent acquisition teams – especially those chartered with multinational recruiting – understand shifting markets, the impact of trade tensions and how cultural nuances drive career choices."

Stefan Müller-Nedebock, Director of Global Employer Branding at Universum, observed, "Today's students enter the workforce with a keen understanding of what they want from their career, actively following the brands and companies they find attractive. Knowing this, employers can develop and implement content and communications that speak directly to potential candidates, building strong working relationships as these students enter the job market."

The research contains additional significant findings by industry and regions. To download the full report, please visit <http://universumglobal.com/wmae-2019>

About Universum

Universum, part of the StepStone Group, is an insight-driven research, consulting and activation firm specialized in employer branding.

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