

OVER 80% EMPLOYERS PRAISE THE TEAM SPIRIT OF TKU GRADUATES

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Results of two surveys conducted by the Office of Alumni Services and Resources Development have been released to provide a glimpse to the employment situation of TKU graduates in the past few years. One survey investigates the employment rates of 2007 graduates and it was found that nearly half of the graduates (46.4%) were employed at the time of the survey (March, 2008)—a slight rise from the figure of 2006. Among those who were not employed, 83.5% of them were in fact in further studies or serving in the military (for male graduates). Graduates that had found work upon graduation but left to become unemployed at the time of survey put down their reasons as “no interest”, “want to have more time to prepare for national exams or relevant professional certifications”.

Among those who were employed by the time of the survey, most of them worked in hi-tech, finance, and education sectors. The reasons for their choice of work were firstly a good match to their specific academic field, secondly work location, and thirdly interest. 83.5% of them chose to work in northern Taiwan, namely, the Taipei metropolitan areas. In terms of compensation, graduates with BA degrees usually received NT\$ 20,000 to 30,000 monthly, graduates with MAs degrees were paid NT\$ 30,000 to 40,000, while graduates with Ph.D could demand NT\$ 50,000 and above.

This survey also addresses the issue how the university can aid future graduates with their employability in terms of professional licenses and certification. Results show that 44.4% of the respondents believed the university should provide resources such as information or courses to graduates to acquire certificates for professional skills, followed by foreign languages (40%), studying abroad (37.1%), and national exams (35.2%). Sye Wen-fa, the Director of OASRD, says that the university will take these feedbacks seriously and offer relevant courses to outgoing

students in the near future.

Another survey deals with Employers' satisfaction for TKU graduates, and found that nearly 85% of employers surveyed were satisfied with TKU graduates, particularly their team spirit (87.7%). The overall satisfaction rate is a slight drop from that of last year (88.2%) nonetheless, in terms of team spirit, professionalism, professional ethics, work productivity, computer skills, and understanding of corporate culture, more than 80% of surveyed employers were pleased with TKU graduates. The respondents of this survey also expressed the criteria they had when recruiting college graduates. 38.2% of them put "professional skills" first. Other criteria include "foreign language skill", and "stability and tenacity". The survey shows that 75.9% of the respondents were pleased with the professional knowledge and skills of TKU graduates, 48.9% of them were happy with TKU graduates' foreign language skills, while 75.5% were content with the ability of TKU graduates to withstand pressure and difficulties, namely, their ability to maintain stability and tenacity in face of troubles.

Such results in some way confirm some of the findings yielded by a similar survey conducted by Cheers magazine. In their survey, TKU graduates didn't get any significant point in their foreign language ability, which indicates that foreign language skill is indeed the weakest link among TKU graduates or any graduate from private universities. The magazine urges private universities to upgrade their students' foreign language skill, which in turn is linked to students' global vision, if they want to compete with graduates from better universities, in this case, national universities in Taiwan (Taiwan is a place where national universities tend to have better academic reputation than private universities).

In response to this, Chen Kan-nan, the Vice President for Academic Affairs of TKU, explains the university is working on improving students' language skill, in this case, that of English by extending mandatory English course

from one year to two years for all students. The university has recently invested heavily in setting up a hi-tech language lab and an interactive language lounge to facilitate better language learning. (~Ying-hsueh Hu)