

# Good News for Engineering Graduates

By Sara Atwood, PhD



+ STEM = \$

Recent students demonstrate good news for graduates of engineering programs, especially those from small, private liberal arts colleges.

- A poll in May by research and consulting firm Millennial Branding showed that 27% of firms are seeking engineering and computer science grads, while 18% are seeking business majors. However, the survey found that over 80% of hiring managers “cited communication skills as a top trait they’re looking for in job candidates, a skill typically in abundance among liberal-arts majors.” (LA Times, <http://www.latimes.com/la-fi-companies-hiring-liberal-arts-majors-jobs-20140521-story.html?track=rss>)
- A new study from the Brookings Institution in July tallied jobs advertised on 52,000 company websites and found that “science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) jobs take more than twice as long to fill as other openings,” and “even more surprising, a high school grad with a STEM background is in higher demand than a college grad without such skills.” (USA Today, [http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/MONEY/usaedition/2014-07-01-Coast-to-coast-STEM-jobs-take-longest-to-fill\\_ST\\_U.htm](http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/MONEY/usaedition/2014-07-01-Coast-to-coast-STEM-jobs-take-longest-to-fill_ST_U.htm))
- For computer engineers, a USA Today analysis of workforce projections by Economic Modeling Specialists in October showed that “computer engineers, data analysts, physician assistants, software developers and petroleum engineers, to name a few, are expected to become the most lucrative and highest demand professions in the next three years.” (USA Today, <http://www.usatoday.com/longform/money/2014/10/14/jobs-for-college-grads-by-metro/16046989/>)
- With an engineering degree, you can also pursue careers in a variety of fields: a US Census Bureau survey released in July, graduates holding STEM bachelor’s degrees “are more likely than other college graduates to have a job,” though nearly 75% “don’t work in STEM occupations.” However, graduates “who focused on engineering, computers, math and statistics” are more likely to work in their field. (Washington Post, [http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/most-with-college-stem-degrees-go-to-other-fields-of-work/2014/07/10/9aede466-084d-11e4-bbf1-cc51275e7f8f\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/most-with-college-stem-degrees-go-to-other-fields-of-work/2014/07/10/9aede466-084d-11e4-bbf1-cc51275e7f8f_story.html))
- And finally, last March the Council of Independent Colleges “applauded” private colleges preparing students for STEM careers. The study found that small private colleges “outpace many of their larger, public peers in preparing students for graduate study and careers in science, technology, mathematics, or engineering” based on “data from the U.S. Department of Education and the National Science Foundation to examine issues such as students’ persistence to a degree in a so-called STEM field after declaring such a major, the time to a bachelor’s degree in STEM fields, and STEM-degree recipients’ plans for graduate study.” (Chronicle of Higher Education, [http://chronicle.com/blogs/ticker/report-touts-private-colleges-performance-in-readying-students-for-stem-careers/74395#disqus\\_thread](http://chronicle.com/blogs/ticker/report-touts-private-colleges-performance-in-readying-students-for-stem-careers/74395#disqus_thread))