

June 2014 Survey Results

The Working Student

StudentVu

“THEY CALL ME THE WORKING MAN / I GUESS THAT’S WHAT I AM” - RUSH

71% of our StudentVu Panel will be living at home for the summer, without plans for travel (30% simply said ‘no’ to travelling, while 38% stated they didn’t have the money). This leaves a bit of time for relaxing, catching up with friends and, of course, a summer job. We asked the StudentVu Panel about their job plans for the summer, and their answers revealed some interesting things about the summer job market.



OBJECTIVE: IT’S NOT JUST ABOUT MONEY...

Students are looking for a summer job that will both pay the bills now and give them experience for the future. 70% of students thought it was very, quite or somewhat important to find a summer job related to their career goals. Among students looking for employment (23%), finding a job related to career goals was the greatest challenge. Multiple students commented that this was due to a scarcity of jobs in certain fields, especially for those who have not yet completed a degree. Developing a resume/CV was not considered a big challenge (2%).

The highest proportion of students who are working returned to a job they’d had before this summer (32%) rather than attempting to find a new position. Those who found a new job reported that they found their position through family or friends (26%) or through an online job board like Workopolis (21%). Students are primarily working in retail (26%), accommodation and/or food services (22%), or a babysitting, daycare or camp counselor style role (16%) over the summer.

Obstacles to Student Summer Employment

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- 1 Finding job related to career goals
 - 2 Meeting job qualifications
 - 3 Finding an enjoyable/exciting job
 - 4 Finding adequate compensation/pay

POSITION AND EARNINGS: WILL WORK FOR... FREE?

Finding a job for the summer season alone also presented a challenge. One student commented that “most jobs available in [location] are either minimum wage positions or full-time permanent positions for people with completed degrees or diplomas.” Other students found that the few summer positions available were in incredibly high demand, and employers for those positions could narrow their applicants by demanding high qualifications. The inability to meet listed job qualifications was the second most frequent difficulty reported by students (21%).

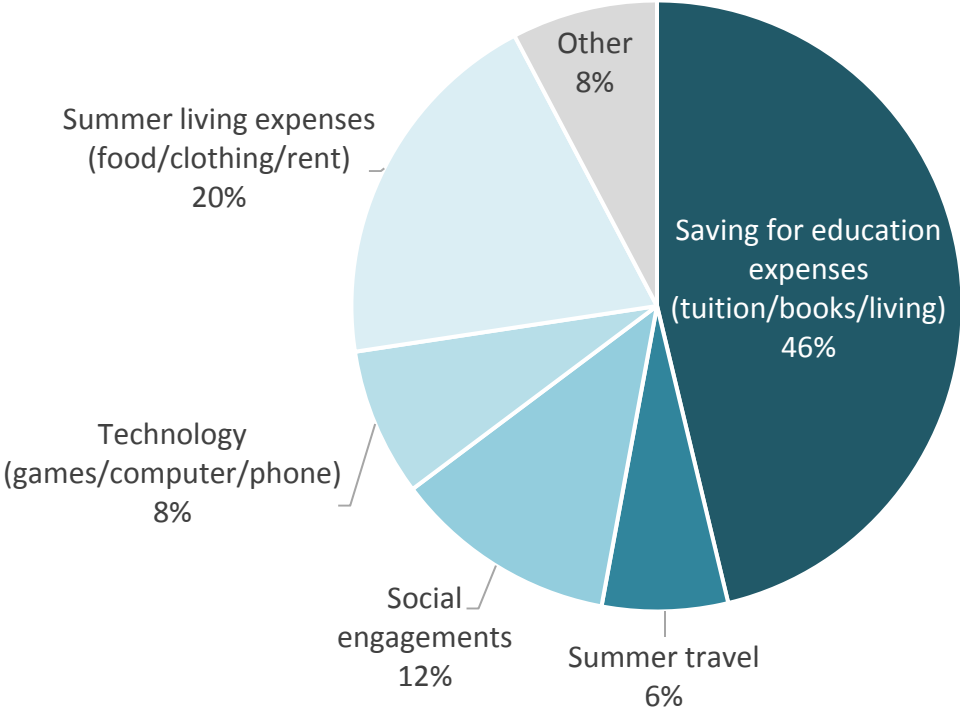
The difficulty in finding a summer job is not related to the students' willingness to work once there. Many more students were likely to report commitment to their summer job for 2-4 months (44%), or into the school year (26%), than they were to a one month (6%) or shorter (1%) length position. They also were willing to put in long hours, as most students reported working over 32 hours a week (33%), or 24-32 hours a week (17%), and were overwhelmingly willing to take on more hours (62%) if they were offered. These earnings are not going towards fun and games, either: The typical budget laid out by a student allotted a large portion of their earnings to education expenses such as tuition and accommodations (46%), with another hefty amount going towards their summer living expenses (20%).

“Many employers are looking to hire summer interns/assistants, but are looking to get work for free from students who lack experience and are desperate to the point of minimal compensation to acquire it.”



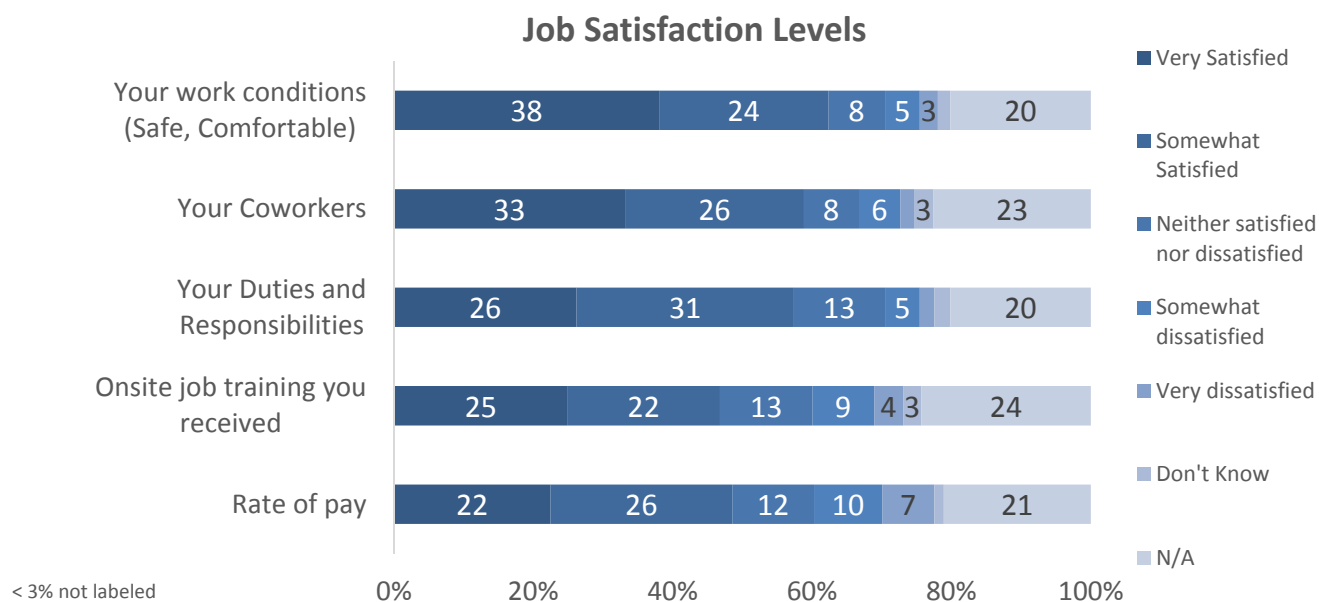
This high work commitment was despite potentially low wages, as students reported an expected income of \$1,001 to \$2,000 (17%) or \$2,001 to \$3,000 (15%). The prevalence of minimum wage jobs bothered many respondents. One student commented that “[m]inimum wage jobs pay well below [the] poverty line while [their] employers often post record profits and expect the highest efforts on their employees’ parts. Meanwhile, the choice of ‘rent, tuition, food: pick two’ is disgustingly common. We take what jobs we can get...”

BUDGET ALLOTMENT



SATISFACTION: NOT TOO SHABBY

Even though many students commented that they would rather be working in another industry or job than the one they were in, they reported fairly high satisfaction with their summer job's work conditions, responsibilities, and their coworkers. Rate of pay and quality of training were tied for the lowest satisfaction levels among students.



CONCLUSION: TAKING WHAT YOU CAN GET

Students are searching for a job that is conducive to their field, will cover their school-year expenses, and have realistic expectations of student qualifications. With the competition and opportunities being what they are, several students appeared to be frustrated with the “unrealistic qualifications” and “lack of opportunities” put forward by hiring companies.

Presently hired students are relatively satisfied with the nature of their current summer jobs, but view them as temporary. They hope to find jobs in the future that offer a more competitive wage and will directly benefit their career path.

This survey was conducted online in English with 1,035 students aged 16+. The survey was completed from June 22 to July 1, 2014.



ABOUT STUDENTVU

A membership based research panel comprised of 5,000 university and college students from across Canada. StudentVu members are highly engaged and eager to share their opinion on a broad spectrum of youth related topics.