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Many fields in need of employees

The Associated Press

With unemployment low, the job market should be the applicant's dream. But employers are looking for specific talents and skills. Here are some fields looking for qualified people:

Environmentally sensitive design

Companies now consider the environment when they make and sell new products, and there are new opportunities for engineers trained in "green" concepts of design and remanufacturing technologies, according to Nabil Nasr of the Rochester Institute of Technology in Rochester, N.Y.

"Industry is looking for a new breed of engineers who understand the environmental impact on the total system," says Nasr, who heads RIT's national center for remanufacturing and resource recovery.

RIT estimates salaries for engineers with specialized training in these areas from \$40,000 to above \$100,000. Remanufacturing is now a \$53 billion industry with more than 500,000 employees in the United States, according to a Boston University study.

Business information

Marketing financial or credit data is a field that's developing because of a variety of factors -- technological capacity, global ambitions, and need for accurate marketing information -- so this once staid function is now a "hot" industry, says Jeff Zwiff of Thorndike Deland Associates, a New York search firm.

Candidates, who must have fundamental understanding of pricing, accessibility, platform, content, servicing and analytic elements of business, are being found among those with experience in financial information services or from companies which provide services or products to institutional customers, i.e. "business-to-business," according to Zwiff.

Packaging

You can tell the product by the wrapper these days, since consumers often make their purchase choices on the basis of packaging design and information.

Packaging also helps protect health, safeguards the environment, preserves resources, boosts the economy -- and pays the designer well, according to Daniel Goodwin, chairman of the packaging science department at Rochester Institute of Technology.

Starting salaries in the field range from \$24,000 to \$40,000, with an average of \$35,000, according to a Michigan State University study.

Health care advocates

Patients and health care professionals need expert help in negotiating the brave new world of managed care.

"Consumers are beginning to have serious questions about the intentions and integrity of everyone involved in health care, and they need help negotiating the health care delivery maze," says Joan Marks, founder and director of the health advocacy program at Sarah Lawrence College in Bronxville, N.Y.

Future health advocates will find a variety of jobs as patient representatives, hospital administrators, health educators and consultants to community groups, she says. Others will find work on staff at health agencies, as members of ethics committees and medical policy boards, and in drafting legislation relating to health care.

Marketing

To market, to market, to find a good job.

There's been a net 15 percent growth in marketing jobs since 1990, says Howard Bratches of the New York search firm, Thorndike Deland Associates.

"In the early '90s, when the U.S. economy was soft, many companies relied on an aggressive, customer-focused marketing strategy to get them through hard times," he says. This was so successful that marketing professionals now are in demand from nearly every industry. Often they're brought in to turn around a troubled company, he adds.

Raising the roof

It's one of the world's oldest crafts, but roofing is a trade that has not only remained stable but is increasing, according to the National Roofing Contractors Association, based in Rosemont, Ill.

The field is relatively recession-proof, the organization says, because 75 percent of its work is repair and reroofing, necessary to protect property and people regardless of the economy. The field has doubled in volume in the last decade, with 20,000 contractors employing about 138,000 people.

Roofing wages vary according to skill levels, geography and other factors, but weekly pay can range from \$363 to \$711 a week, according to 1996 figures from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

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