

# Why hire a Liberal Arts major?

You are seeking a candidate with strong skills in writing and speaking; one who can solve problems independently, work well with others, adapt to new environments and possesses a passion for new endeavors and experiences.

Have you considered hiring liberal arts majors? They might be just what you are looking for.

Sure, it may be tempting to hire that student with a pre-professional major in your company's field. But before you toss the resume of that English, History, Philosophy or Sociology major aside, consider what a liberal arts student can contribute to your organization. Students studying in the liberal arts are trained to be lifelong learners, who have been taught to think outside the lines, consider the bigger picture and develop creative solutions to problems.

Alan Greenspan, Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, had this to say about the liberal arts: "Creative intellectual energy is what drives our [American] system forward. The ability to think abstractly will be increasingly important along a broad range of professions" (Liberal Education, 2003, p. 53). In lieu of this changing perspective, the liberal arts will be the driving force behind tomorrow's economy.

So, why hire a liberal arts student? Read on...

## 1. Liberal arts majors are passionate, self-motivated learners

Most liberal arts students chose their major not because it would lead to outstanding salaries or prestigious careers. For the vast majority of students, they felt a pull to a certain discipline because they truly loved learning about every aspect of that particular subject.

In the workplace, this passion can be further ignited. Liberal arts students have been taught to love and appreciate learning and knowledge, and will generally approach new ideas or projects with undeniable enthusiasm. By nature of its curriculum, the liberal arts assists students in developing the ability to gather resources, perform research and learn new materials independently. Excited by learning, these students will impress you with their willingness to take on the unfamiliar.

## 2. Liberal arts majors are tolerant, culturally-aware and globally knowledgeable

In a world where tolerance is held in high-esteem, hiring a liberal arts major will help your company or organization to think on a global level. Throughout their education, liberal arts students are challenged to consider multiple perspectives, respect the opinions of others and develop an awareness of cultural and global issues.

Liberal arts majors are trained to consider not only immediate factors when considering ideas or decisions, but the bigger picture as well. They have experience analyzing situations for cause and effect correlation, and can consider the input of others with an uncanny tolerance. These skills are crucial in today's workplaces, where a marketplace of ideas exists and sensitivity is highly valued in working relationships.

## 3. Liberal arts majors possess exceptional communication skills

A good liberal arts education includes a strong core of courses that help students develop transferable skills in the areas of written, verbal and foreign language communication. Generally, students studying disciplines such as English, History and Political Science are communicating through writing or speaking nearly every semester. These experiences add up- and you the employer can reap the benefits of this type of education.

Liberal arts students don't blink an eye when asked to present, write or research. Activities such as these have become naturally routine, and they have developed exceptional abilities in these areas. Not only are these students able to think broadly and innovatively, but they are able to communicate those ideas to others as well.

In contrast to many pre-professional majors, liberal arts curriculum requires most students to study a foreign language. This ability to communicate, even on the most basic level, with individuals from around the globe is an important skill for any company or organization to consider when hiring.

#### **4. Liberal arts majors are not limited by specialization**

While many pre-professional majors are trained to work in a focused area of specialization, liberal arts majors are adaptable to change and open to new opportunities. They are willing to learn, to explore and to take risks, and will respond well to your organization's training programs.

A sound liberal arts education provides employees with the ability to jump in head first into new tasks. Having someone with this type of background on your team will ensure that your company can respond to new trends quickly, and adapt to new situations. Chances are, they will even motivate others to take on daunting new opportunities right along with them!

#### **5. Liberal arts majors need you!**

If you haven't realized it yet, liberal arts majors may be just what you are looking for when seeking to fill internship and entry-level positions. The move to hire a student with extensive and broad talents is a positive one that is sure to be a rewarding decision for your organization.

But the truth is, liberal arts majors benefit from your decision too. The best way to sell the package of a liberal background is to couple classroom learning experiences with valuable and transferable skills. Liberal arts majors know this, and are ready and willing to get out there and take the work world by storm. They need for you and your organization to find value in their outstanding abilities, to help them develop their professional experiences, and most importantly- give them a chance to shine!

Taking a second look at that English major with the excellent writing sample, the History major with a passion for economics, or the Philosophy major with the sharp creative mind might provide you with that perfect match!