2011

Recruiting Top Graduates in Saudi Arabia





Introduction

- Employment of young Saudi nationals is now a top priority for the country and for companies at all levels. There is intense competition between employers for attracting, recruiting and retaining the best Saudi graduates.
- Online recruiting firm, GulfTalent, in association with six leading universities in the Kingdom, has conducted a research study on the **employment preferences** of Saudi graduates and which companies they would most like to work for.
- The study is based on a survey of around **2,400 Saudi youth**, both male and female, who are about to graduate from university or have recently graduated.
- It is hoped that the survey findings will help companies evaluate and improve their approach to recruiting Saudi graduates.

Universities Represented in the Survey



King Fahd University of Petroleum & Minerals



King Abdulaziz University



Jubail University College



جامعة عفت

Effat University



AI Faisal University





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Employment Preferences of Graduates



Most Popular Employers

Ranking of Top 50 Employers by Popularity

Based on number of votes received from Saudi graduates surveyed *

- 1. Saudi Aramco
- 2. SABIC
- 3. Schlumberger
- 4. Saudi Arabian Airlines
- 5. Procter & Gamble (P&G)
- 6. General Electric (GE)
- 7. Mobily
- 8. Samba
- 9. Saudi Telecom (STC)
- 10. National Commercial Bank (NCB)
- 11. National Guard Hospital
- 12. King Faisal Specialist Hospital
- 13. Google
- 14. SABB
- 15. Al Rajhi Bank
- 16. Chevron
- 17. Saudi Electricity Company (SEC)
- 18. Baker Hughes
- 19. KPMG
- 20. McKinsey

- 21. Petro Rabigh
- 22. Unilever
- 23. Capital Market Authority (CMA)
- 24. Halliburton
- 25. Ministry of Education
- 26. Satorp
- 27. Microsoft
- 28. PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PwC)
- 29. King Abdulaziz University Hospital
- 30. Ernst & Young
- 31. Saudi Binladin Group
- 32. Royal Commission for Jubail & Yanbu
- 33. Deloitte
- 34. BAE Systems
- 35. Maaden
- 36. HSBC
- 37. Sasref
- 38. Ministry of Interior
- 39. Nestle40. Siemens
- Kinsey

- 41. Sipchem
- 42. Emaar
- 43. Marafiq
- 44. CITC
- 45. Ministry of Health
- 46. Samsung
- 47. King Fahd Armed Forces Hospital
- 48. Savola
- 49. Olayan
- 50. Apple

* Further rankings by segment (gender, region, university, major, and sector) are shown in Appendix. Full profile of respondents available on page 34.

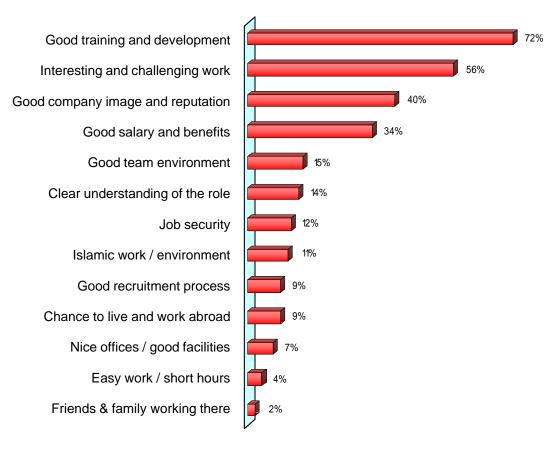
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Basis of Graduates' Career Decisions

What Graduates Look for in Employers

% selecting item as one of the top 3 factors for them



Observations

- **Training and development** is the top factor for graduates when selecting an employer.
- Other top attractions for graduates include:
 - Challenging and interesting work
 - Good public image and reputation of company
 - Attractive salary and benefits
- There is some **diversity** in the range of factors preferred by different graduates.

Source: GulfTalent Survey of Saudi Graduates

Training and Development

Interview Findings

- Graduates **highly value** training provided by prospective employers.
- Types of learning appreciated by graduates:
 - Training courses
 - E-learning modules
 - Opportunity to continue university education in parallel with their work
 - Sabbatical and/or scholarship to do a Master
 - Learning on the job from experienced managers
- Elements of training that attract the attention of graduates:
 - Continuity over several years
 - Overseas component
 - Flexibility, choice and customization to individual needs



- "[Company x] is like a university, it's a learning school. You learn so much working there!"
- "My friend worked there for 3 years and didn't get any training and development. They don't care about the people they are hiring. They are just hiring them because they are Saudi, just because they have Saudization targets and that's it."
- *"I heard they give each person 10 training courses, 5 at home, 5 international. That is really great!"*
- "They give you courses and let you learn. They send you to Dubai and to the US to develop yourself so you can advance in your field."

Interesting and Challenging Work

Interview Findings

- Graduates seek work that:
 - Keeps them busy
 - Uses their knowledge and skills
 - Challenges them intellectually
 - Has variety and diversity
 - Has impact / is important
- Graduates are put off by work that is:
 - Routine and repetitive
 - Bureaucratic; with very slow progress



- "I did my internship with [Company x]. I didn't do anything there, I did absolutely nothing! I don't want to make the same mistake next time, so definitely will not join them after graduation."
- "I have so much education and qualifications. With most companies, it is hard to apply my knowledge, but with [company x] I have the opportunity to apply all my knowledge."
- "I am attracted to audit companies because it is a very tough field - each client has his own difficulties, and you have to keep up with them, and they have a deadline. In some other fields I will not be getting such challenges, it is all routine. "

Company Image and Reputation

Interview Findings

- Graduates like to join companies with a reputation for:
 - Having great products
 - Being leaders in their field
 - Hiring top talent
- Graduates form their view of a company's reputation based on:
 - Media coverage of the company's products and market performance
 - Family and friends / word of mouth
 - Their own experience of the company's products
 - Employees of the company they meet (particularly senior managers)

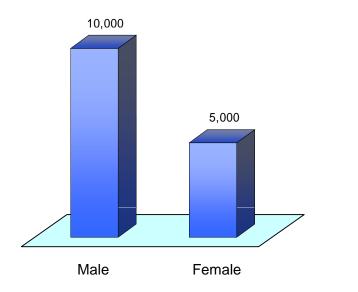


- "I love [Company X]. They've been part of my life all my life, my TV, laptop, games, I know their products and how they do their thing. I would love to work for them."
- "I want to work for [Company X] rather than their competitor, because I am impressed with their products, their marketing, every thing."
- "They have a bad reputation among customers. Their service is very bad. I don't personally use them and I wouldn't like to work for them either."
- "The job I get will stay with me, so I care about the name of the companies I work for, since their names will be in my CV, and I would like to have an impressive record."

Salary Expectations

Median Salary Expectation of Graduates

Saudi Rials per Month, 2011 *



Observations

- Male graduates seek a monthly salary of **10,000** Rials (median expectation).
- Female graduates' expectations are half the level of males, at 5,000 Rials per month – possibly due to the supply demand imbalance, with a large population of female graduates competing for limited female vacancies.
- **Top-quartile** salary expectations (top 25%) are 12,000 Rials for male and 7,000 Rials for female graduates.
- The lower financial expectation of females offers a potential opportunity for employers who are able to absorb this talent pool, though the gap is likely to narrow as opportunities for female graduates increase.

^{*} All guaranteed cash payments, including allowances Source: GulfTalent Survey of Saudi Graduates

Team Environment

Interview Findings

- Graduates are attracted to work environments which are:
 - Cooperative / Team-orientated
 - Dynamic
 - Multi-cultural
 - Merit-based with equal opportunity for advancement
- Graduates are put off by work environments dominated by:
 - Politics / negative competition and back-stabbing
 - Nepotism / favoritism for family and friends



- "There is no point recruiting fresh graduates like us who are motivated and excited and would like to work hard, if the people who are currently working in the company are not motivated."
- "I like to work there, because they have a multicultural environment with many different nationalities."
- "In some companies you find so much politics, groups who don't like each other, etc. It is very important for me to work in a clean environment without too much politics."
- "They have a professional environment. You have the chance to go up in the organization and there is equality of opportunity for all employees."

Recruitment Process

Interview Findings

- · Graduates like companies whose recruiting process is:
 - Transparent: The steps involved and timelines are clearly communicated.
 - **Fair:** Everyone has equal chance based on ability and not their background or connections.
 - Personal: They can talk one-on-one with someone to learn about the company and its career offerings.
 - Holistic: Their individual strengths and abilities are understood (e.g. they are not judged purely on GPA).
 - Efficient: They receive a response / decision within a reasonable time after applying.

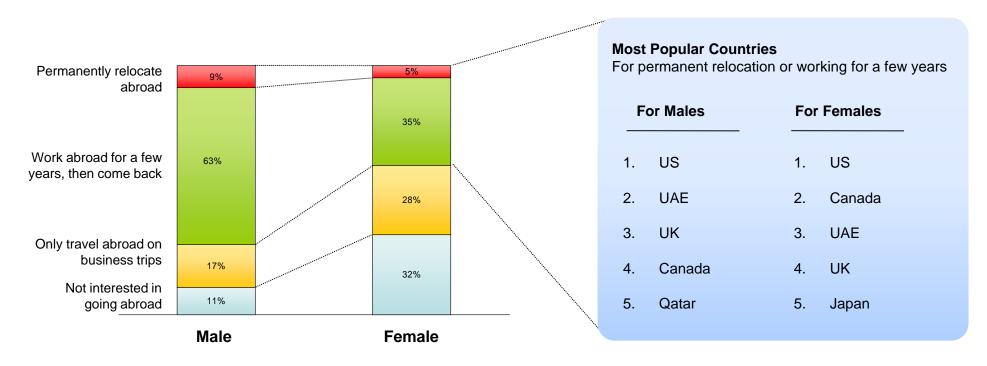


- "They keep telling you after submitting your CV 'We will review it and get back to you', but they never do. They keep students hanging for months!"
- "In the career day, they take a big stand, advertising themselves. Then when we ask them about the company, they just say 'Take this brochure and go online and apply'. It's really ridiculous and not fair for the student. They should meet with us in the career fair, interact with us and talk about the company."
- "They rejected me because my GPA is 2.29 and they need at least 2.30. It means 0.01 made a difference! If they are this demanding from now, I don't know what to expect from them later on."
- "In [company x] they discriminate a lot. Only with 'wasta' you can get a job there. I don't like that. "



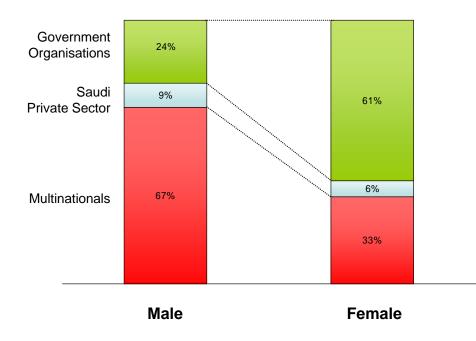
International Exposure

Graduates' Interest in Working Outside the Kingdom %



Multinationals vs. Local Firms

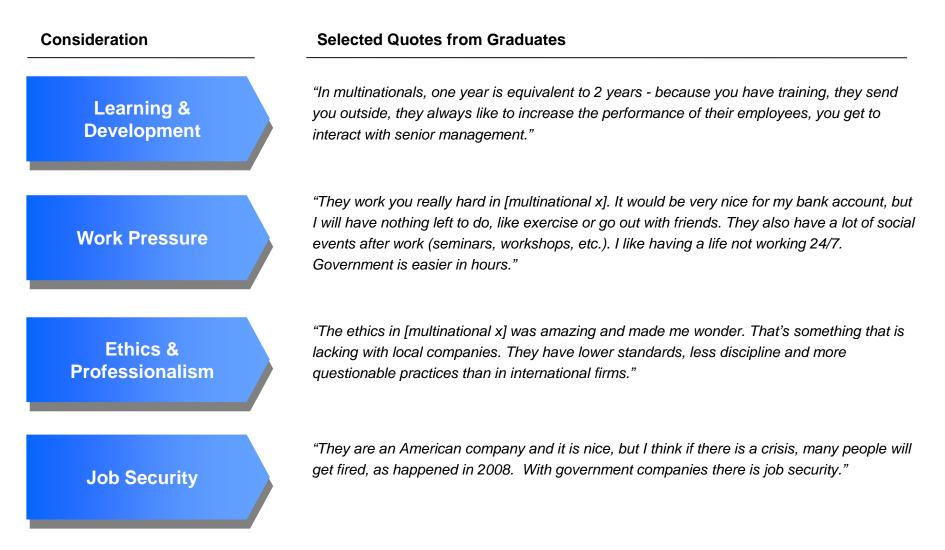
Graduate Preferences by Type of Employer %



Observations

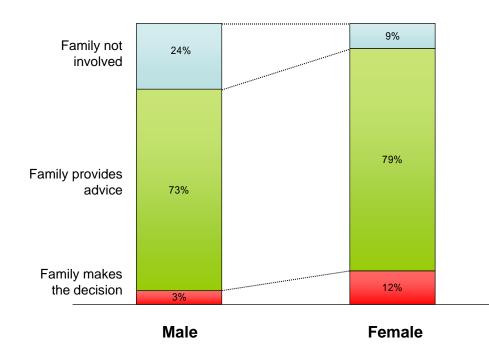
- Multinational companies are the dominant choice for male graduates, preferred over both Saudi private sector and government sector employers.
- Female graduates are more interested in working in the **public sector**.
- **Saudi private sector firms** are the last choice for Saudi graduates, both male and female.

Graduate Perspectives on Multinationals vs. Local Firms



Influence of Family

Role of Graduate's Family in his / her Career Decision %



Observations

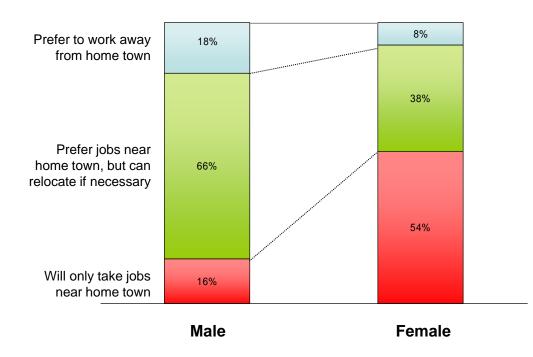
- Family plays a big part in graduates' career decisions, for both male and female graduates.
- The most common role of family is to **influence** the decision through their advice, but in some cases the family actually **makes the decision**, particularly for female graduates.
- It is not sufficient to win the hearts and minds of graduates themselves. Employers that enjoy wide public appeal gain a further advantage by winning the endorsement of graduates' families.
- The family's view is largely determined by the company's public image. However, it is also influenced by the information they receive about the company from the students themselves e.g. parents of many female graduates want to know about the environment in which their daughter will be working.



Impact of Job Location on Career Decisions

Relocation Preferences of Graduates *

%



Observations

- Most graduates prefer to work close to their home town.
- Despite their preference, most male graduates will consider relocating to other parts of the Kingdom if required for their desired job.
- Most female graduates will not relocate at all, or would have a strong preference not to.

* Assuming job location within KSA; excludes international options. See also 'Employer Popularity Ranking by Region' in the Appendix Source: GulfTalent Survey of Saudi Graduates

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GulfTalent

Perceptions of Employment Criteria

Graduates' Perception of What Employers Look For

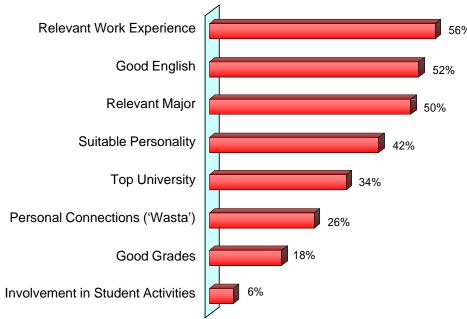
% of graduates believing item is among top 3 factors for employers

56% • Mo

- Most graduates believe relevant work experience (e.g. Internships) to be the most important factor determining their chances of employment.
- Other factors perceived to be important include:
 - Good English

Observations

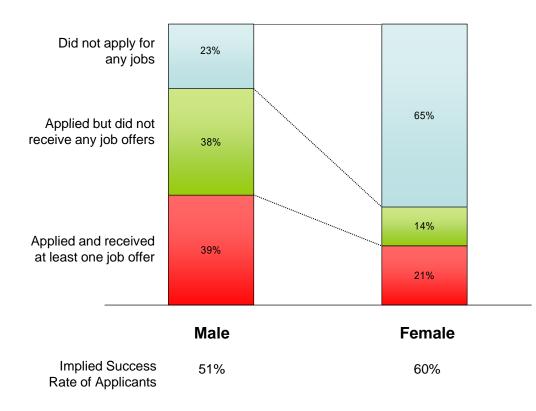
- Relevant major
- Suitable personality
- Around one-quarter of graduates believe personal connections ('Wasta') to be a key factor in the employers' recruitment process.



Job Search Activity

Graduates' Job Search Activity and Results

Status on 31 July 2011, for students who graduated Jan-July 2011 and who indicated they were interested in full-time employment



Observations

- Male graduates are more proactive in job search than females – 77% of males who have graduated recently and seek full-time employment have applied for jobs, compared with just 35% of females.
- Female graduates who do apply for jobs have a **higher success rate** on their applications than male applicants.
- Despite a higher success rate, the overall employment rate of female graduates is lower, due to their lower job search activity.



Strategies for Attracting Top Graduates

Best Practice in Graduate Recruitment

Key Steps for Attracting Top Saudi Graduates *



- Training
- International Exposure
- Salary & Benefits

- Career Days
- Management / Alumni
- Social Networks

- Applications
- Selection
- Follow-up



1 – Creating an Attractive Proposition for Graduates



Create graduate roles with interesting content and clear deliverables.

Define a potential career path, which high-performing graduates joining the company can expect over the next 10-15 years.

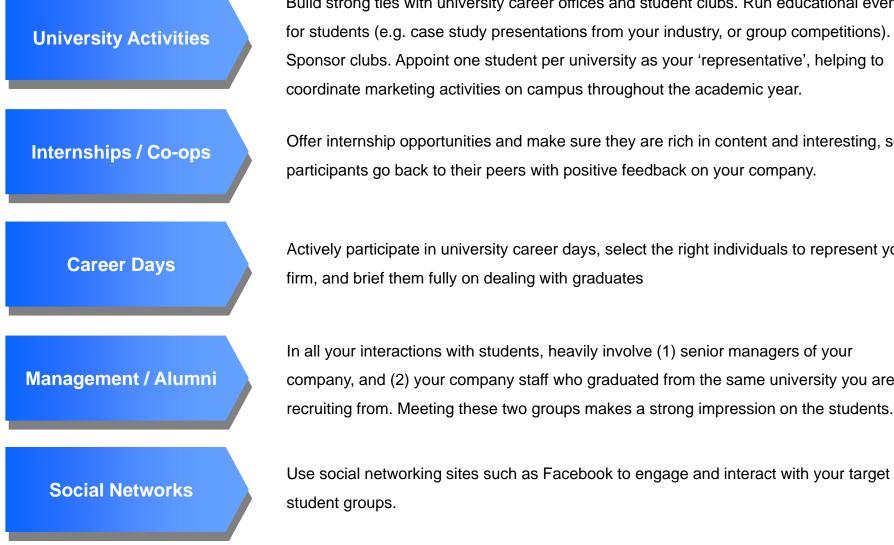
Set up a structured training and development programme – including formal training, on-the-job learning and, if possible, opportunities to continue formal education (such as Masters or MBA scholarships).

Build into the graduate programme opportunities to live, travel or train outside the country.

Ensure your graduate compensation is competitive relative to the market.



2 – Building Company Brand in Universities



Build strong ties with university career offices and student clubs. Run educational events for students (e.g. case study presentations from your industry, or group competitions). Sponsor clubs. Appoint one student per university as your 'representative', helping to coordinate marketing activities on campus throughout the academic year.

Offer internship opportunities and make sure they are rich in content and interesting, so participants go back to their peers with positive feedback on your company.

Actively participate in university career days, select the right individuals to represent your firm, and brief them fully on dealing with graduates

In all your interactions with students, heavily involve (1) senior managers of your company, and (2) your company staff who graduated from the same university you are recruiting from. Meeting these two groups makes a strong impression on the students.

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3 – Handling Applications Effectively



Define a clear process internally, with timelines and accountabilities, for handling different stages of receiving and reviewing graduate applications.

Make sure your recruitment process and timelines are clearly communicated so graduates understand what to expect.

Make it simple for graduates to submit their details to you, while making sure you capture all the information you need from them.

Review applications efficiently and professionally. Regularly communicate with applicants and aim to make your hiring decisions within weeks rather than months.

Many top students receive multiple job offers before they graduate. Once you have made an offer, stay in touch with them to understand any questions or concerns they may have and to address them.



Appendix – Most Popular Employers by Segment

Employer Popularity Ranking – by Graduate's Gender

	Male		Female
1.	Saudi Aramco	1.	Saudi Aramco
2.	SABIC	2.	SABIC
3.	Schlumberger	3.	King Faisal Specialist Hos
4.	GE	4.	National Guard Hospital
5.	P&G	5.	Ministry of Education
6.	Saudi Arabian Airlines	6.	Samba
7.	Saudi Telecom	7.	Saudi Arabian Airlines
8.	Mobily	8.	King Abdulaziz University
9.	Google	9.	Al Rajhi Bank
10.	Chevron	10.	Royal Commission
11.	Baker Hughes	11.	NCB
12.	McKinsey	12.	Ministry of Interior
13.	Saudi Electricity Company	13.	Mobily
14.	Halliburton	14.	Olayan
15.	SABB	15.	P&G
16.	KPMG	16.	King Fahd Armed Forces H
17.	Petro Rabigh	17.	Emaar
18.	NCB	18.	King Fahd Hospital
19.	Satorp	19.	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
20.	Unilever	20.	Capital Market Authority

Employer Popularity Ranking – by Graduate's Region of Origin

For graduates whose home region is:		Riyadh		Jeddah *	Ea	stern Province
Preferred	1.	Saudi Aramco	1.	Saudi Aramco	1.	Saudi Aramco
Employers:	2.	SABIC	2.	SABIC	2.	SABIC
	3.	KPMG	3.	Saudi Arabian Airlines	3.	Schlumberger
	4.	P&G	4.	P&G	4.	Chevron
	5.	PwC	5.	King Faisal Specialist Hospital	5.	Baker Hughes
	6.	Capital Market Authority	6.	NCB	6.	Samba
	7.	Mobily	7.	National Guard Hospital	7.	GE
	8.	McKinsey	8.	Petro Rabigh	8.	Ministry of Education
	9.	HSBC	9.	King Abdulaziz Univ. Hospital	9.	Royal Commission
	10.	GE	10.	Unilever	10.	Halliburton
	11.	Saudi Telecom	11.	Saudi Binladin Group	11.	Al Rajhi Bank
	12.	BAE Systems	12.	Mobily	12.	Satorp
	13.	SABB	13.	Google	13.	Ministry of Interior
	14.	Samba	14.	Schlumberger	14.	Maaden
	15.	CITC	15.	GE	15.	McKinsey
	16.	Unilever	16.	Samba	16.	Samsung
	17.	Al Rajhi Bank	17.	Saudi Telecom	17.	SABB
	18.	Siemens	18.	Nestle	18.	Saudi Arabian Airlines
	19.	Deloitte	19.	Savola	19.	Sasref
	20.	Maaden	20.	King Fahd Armed Forces Hospital	20.	Olayan

* Includes Mecca and Medinah.

Source: GulfTalent Survey of Saudi Graduates

Employer Popularity Ranking – by Graduate's University *

	KFUPM	
1.	Saudi Aramco	1
2.	SABIC	2
3.	Schlumberger	3
4.	General Electric (GE)	4
5.	Procter & Gamble (P&G)	5
6.	Baker Hughes	6
7.	Google	7
8.	Chevron	8
9.	Halliburton	g
10.	Satorp	1
11.	SABB	1
12.	Microsoft	1
13.	McKinsey	1
14.	Saudi Electricity Company (SEC)	1
15.	Ernst & Young	1
16.	Deloitte	1
17.	NCB	1
18.	PwC	1
19.	Samsung	1

20. BAE Systems

KAU

- 1. Saudi Aramco
- 2. SABIC
- 3. Saudi Arabian Airlines
- 4. King Faisal Specialist Hospital
- 5. National Guard Hospital
- 6. Saudi Telecom (STC)
- 7. King Abdulaziz University Hospital
- 8. Mobily
- 9. Saudi Binladin Group
- 10. NCB
- 11. Procter & Gamble (P&G)
- 12. Petro Rabigh
- 13. Samba
- 14. Saudi Electricity Company (SEC)
- 15. Ministry of Education
- 16. Al Rajhi Bank
- 17. Ministry of Health
- 18. King Fahd Armed Forces Hospital
- 9. Savola
- 20. Unilever

 * Shown for the two universities with the largest number of respondents in the survey

Employer Popularity Ranking – by Graduate's Major (1 of 2)

E	ngineering & Science

- 1. Saudi Aramco
- 2. SABIC
- 3. Schlumberger
- 4. GE
- 5. Baker Hughes
- 6. Halliburton
- 7. P&G
- 8. Saudi Electricity Company
- 9. Satorp
- 10. Chevron
- 11. Petro Rabigh
- 12. Saudi Arabian Airlines
- 13. Sasref
- 14. Sipchem
- 15. Unilever
- 16. Saudi Binladin Group
- 17. Deloitte
- 18. NCB
- 19. Bechtel
- 20. Samsung

	Finance &
	Accounting
1.	Saudi Aramco
2.	SABIC
3.	KPMG
4.	SABB
5.	PwC
6.	McKinsey
7.	HSBC
8.	Samba
9.	Capital Market Authority
10.	Al Rajhi Bank
11.	GE
12.	Ernst & Young
13.	Deloitte
14.	NCB
15.	Morgan Stanley
16.	Booz & Co.
17.	Deutsche Bank
18.	Samsung
19.	Tadawul
20.	P&G

Business & Management

- 1. Saudi Aramco
- 2. SABIC
- 3. P&G
- 4. Saudi Telecom
- 5. Saudi Arabian Airlines
- 6. Samba
- 7. NCB
- 8. Mobily
- 9. Unilever
- 10. Ministry of Education
- 11. Capital Market Authority
- 12. Google
- 13. Ministry of Interior
- 14. Nestle
- 15. Saudi Binladin Group
- 16. GE
- 17. Petro Rabigh
- 18. McKinsey
- 19. Siemens
- 20. Chevron

Source: GulfTalent Survey of Saudi Graduates

Employer Popularity Ranking – by Graduate's Major (2 of 2)

IT & Computer Science

- 1. Saudi Aramco
- 2. SABIC
- 3. Microsoft
- 4. Google
- 5. Saudi Arabian Airlines
- 6. Mobily
- 7. Al Rajhi Bank
- 8. BAE Systems
- 9. Maaden
- 10. Royal Commission
- 11. Ernst & Young
- 12. Saudi Business Machines
- 13. Abdul Latif Jameel
- 14. Apple
- 15. Saudi Telecom
- 16. Siemens
- 17. Saudi Electricity Company
- 18. Petro Rabigh
- 19. P&G
- 20. Oracle

Medical & Life Sciences

- 1. National Guard Hospital
- 2. King Faisal Specialist Hospital
- 3. King Abdulaziz University Hospital
- 4. Saudi Aramco
- 5. King Fahd Armed Forces Hospital
- 6. King Fahd Hospital
- 7. Ministry of Health
- 8. International Medical Center
- 9. SABIC
- 10. Saudi Arabian Airlines
- 11. Ministry of Education
- 12. Armed Forces Hospital
- 13. P&G
- 14. King Fahd Center for Medical Research
- 15. King Fahd Medical City
- 16. Ministry of Interior
- 17. Pfizer
- 18. Maternity & Children's Hospital
- 19. Saudi Food & Drug Authority
- 20. Disabled Children's Association

Employer Popularity Ranking – by Sector (1 of 3)

Oil, Gas & Petrochemicals			Banking	Government			IT & Telecom
1.	Saudi Aramco	1.	Samba	1.	Capital Market Authority	1.	Mobily
2.	SABIC	2.	NCB	2.	Ministry of Education	2.	Saudi Telecom
3.	Schlumberger	3.	SABB	3.	Royal Commission	3.	Google
4.	Chevron	4.	Al Rajhi Bank	4.	Ministry of Interior	4.	Microsoft
5.	Baker Hughes	5.	HSBC	5.	Ministry of Health	5.	CITC
6.	Petro Rabigh	6.	Saudi Hollandi Bank	6.	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	6.	Apple
7.	Halliburton	7.	Alinma Bank	7.	SIDF	7.	Advanced Electronics Company
8.	Satorp	8.	Morgan Stanley	8.	Tadawul	8.	Zain
9.	Sasref	9.	Deutsche Bank	9.	Saudi Food & Drug Authority	9.	Sony
10.	Sipchem	10.	Riyad Bank	10.	SAGIA	10.	Saudi Business Machines (SBM)
11.	ExxonMobil	11.	Bank Albilad	11.	Saudi Arabian Monetary	11.	AI-EIm Information Security
12.	Shell	12.	Banque Saudi Fransi		Agency (SAMA)	12.	HP
13.	Samref	13.	Citibank	12.	Jeddah Municipality		
				13.	Saudi Geological Survey		

Employer Popularity Ranking – by Sector (2 of 3)

Div	versified Groups		Healthcare		Construction		Industrial Conglomerates
1.	Olayan	1.	National Guard Hospital	1.	Saudi Binladin Group	1.	GE
2.	Abdul Latif Jameel	2.	King Faisal Specialist Hospital	2.	Emaar	2.	Siemens
3.	Saudi Oger	2		3.	Bechtel	3.	Samsung
4.	Dallah Albaraka	3.	King Abdulaziz University Hospital	4.	ZFP	4.	ABB
5.	Kingdom Holding	4.	King Fahd Armed	5.	Alfanar	5.	Honeywell
		F	Forces Hospital	6.	Saudi Consult		
		5.	King Fahd Hospital	7.	McDermott		
		6.	International Medical Center	8.	JGC Gulf International		
		7.	Armed Forces Hospital				
		8.	King Abdullah Medical City				

Employer Popularity Ranking – by Sector (3 of 3)





Profile of Survey Respondents *

University		Major / Degree Subject	
• KAU	42%	Engineering & Science	31%
KFUPM	37%	 Business & Management 	22%
 Jubail University College 	11%	 IT & Computer Science 	14%
 Prince Sultan University 	7%	 Finance & Accounting 	10%
Al Faisal University	2%	Medical & Life Science	7%
Effat University	1%	 Language & Literature 	5%
		• Other	11%
Nationality		Degree Stage	
Saudi national	100%	 Final-year student 	65%
		Recent graduate	35%
Region of Origin		Gender	
Jeddah	43%	Male	65%
Eastern Province	26%	Female	35%
Riyadh	17%		
Other	14%		

* Total of 2,440 respondents. Showing weighted breakdown. Survey period June/July 2011. Rankings are based on companies with the highest number of votes, out of a total of ~200 firms mentioned by respondents.



About GulfTalent

GulfTalent is the leading online recruitment portal in the Middle East, covering all sectors and job categories. It is used by over 2 million candidates across the region, including 60,000 Saudi professionals and managers, for finding top career opportunities. It is also the primary online recruitment channel for 500 companies in Saudi Arabia, providing them access to both local and expatriate talent within the Kingdom.

Further information is available at:

www.gulftalent.com Tel: +971 4 367 2084

Feedback and comments on this study can be sent to:

research@gulftalent.com

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