****

Anne Unger

DeVry University

[aunger@devry.edu](mailto:aunger@devry.edu)

630-353-7009

**Career Advisory Board Survey Finds**

**Employees Not Proactive Enough in Own Professional Development**

NAPERVILLE, Ill. – Sept. 16, 2019 – The [Career Advisory Board](https://www.careeradvisoryboard.org/), established by [DeVry University](http://www.devry.edu/), revealed the results of its research: Talent Activation 2.0, The Role of the Employee. According to the study, employees, in general, are not proactive enough at driving their own development. The research also found that employers need to do a better job of facilitating a workplace environment where employees are recognized for their efforts to acquire new skills and close their skills gaps.

Although organizations play an important role in activating their talent base, the findings of this research suggested employees should be equally invested in their professional growth and development. Activating talent refers to a proactive effort to develop employee experiences designed to foster a highly engaged workforce from onboarding through the performance evaluation stages of an employee’s tenure.

The Career Advisory Board study surveyed 520 hiring managers on the actions employees undertake to manage their professional growth and achieve meaning in their everyday work lives. Highlights of the findings reveal the following:

* **Effective talent activation is a partnership**. The research reflects an ongoing shift from an employer-driven to an employee-driven skills acquisition model, but only 24 percent of hiring managers cite their employees as “definitely” proactive.
* **Seventy-two percent of hiring managers agree that employees are in the best position to determine how their individual jobs should be performed.** However, companies aren’t universally comfortable when it comes to innovation—when an employee has a new approach to solve a business problem.
* **Proactivity is critically important for new leaders.** Nine out of 10 hiring managers agreed that emerging managers need to take an active role in developing their leadership competencies if they are to be successful.

"In general, fully activated employees work diligently to close their professional skills gaps. It’s not only important, but necessary for companies to shift their culture to reward employees at all levels—entry, mid and senior-level—for actively pursuing professional development opportunities,” said Alexandra Levit, chair of DeVry University's Career Advisory Board. “Companies are doing a better job at offering a variety of resources for skills acquisition, including online courses and webinars to internal educational trainings and tuition reimbursement opportunities, as well as university partnerships. It’s time for employees to take charge of their own development.”

The Career Advisory Board research shows that while hiring managers were mostly optimistic about their employees’ ability to close their skills gaps, they cited obstacles their employees faced, including lack of motivation (60 percent), time (38 percent) or resources (32 percent).

The study also found that companies have challenges that prevent them from having stronger talent activation, including a lack of budget (28 percent), insufficient learning and development resources (30 percent), failure to prioritize talent activation (35 percent) and the lack of executive sponsorship (22 percent).

Based on the findings, the Career Advisory Board recommends the following key actions to help ensure companies promote a proactive and engaged workforce:

**Key Actions for Employers:**

* **Build proactivity into performance expectations.** Reward employees for working on developing new skills and create new experiences that will drive their professional growth.
* **Support employees driving innovation.** Create interesting and diverse experiences to support this form of talent activation.
* **Boost motivation to activate.** Educate employees about the benefits of dedicating time and resources to professional development opportunities to close their skills gaps.

To read the research report and expert commentary, visit [www.careeradvisoryboard.org](http://www.careeradvisoryboard.org)

**About the Career Advisory Board**

Established in 2010 by DeVry University, the Career Advisory Board is comprised of leading representatives from business and academia who deliver valuable insights on today’s most important career trends and provide actionable advice for job seekers. The Career Advisory Board generates original research and commentary, and creates tools, insights and resources to prepare job seekers for success. Its members include executives from DeVry University, Google, Apple, GE, and LinkedIn, as well as nationally recognized career experts. For more information, visit CareerAdvisoryBoard.org.

**About the Talent Activation Survey**

The Talent Activation 2.0 research was conducted online within the United States by DeVry University on behalf of the Career Advisory Board in May 2019. Survey respondents included 520 US-based individuals (56 percent male, 44 percent female) with full-time positions at the supervisor level or above, in companies with more than 1,000 employees (mean company size was large at 22,000). Our respondents primarily hire, develop, and manage employee development at the entry, middle, and executive levels, and 72 percent have been doing so for more than five years.

# # #