



2018

## Job Hopping Analysis: Trends by Generation & Education Level

A Study Conducted by **LiveCareer** in Conjunction with **TIRO Communications**

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# Defining the Problem

## Is There a Job-Hopping Problem?

Every January, predictions abound that it's the "year of the job hopper." This year, with unemployment at a 17-year low and wage growth only incrementally increasing, it would follow that 2018 would be a great time for workers to abandon their current posts and hop over to the next best thing.

To illustrate the point, it's merely necessary to turn to a recent study by Gallup, which reveals that almost half of the workforce believes now is a good time to find a quality job, and more than half say they are searching for new jobs or watching for openings.<sup>1</sup>

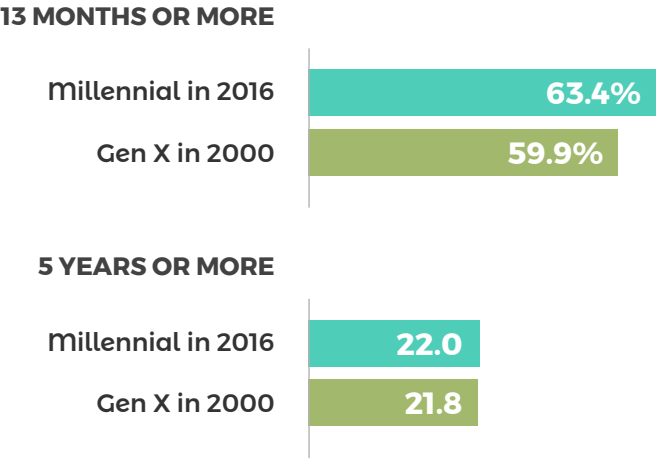
Add in the fact that Millennials, a demographic often dubbed the "job-hopping generation," now comprise over half the U.S. labor force, and it would seem one would be safe to assume that employers are in the midst of a job-hopping epidemic—and one that is only going to worsen.

This kind of reality could spell huge costs for business owners and hiring leaders who know they need to expend significant time and resources to onboard and train workers.

Yet, other studies claim job churn is overblown. An article in *Wired* compares job churn today to what it was in the 1950s, finding that it is 62 percent less today than what it was between 1950 and 2000.<sup>2</sup> The same article also makes the claim that median job tenure today is comparable to what it was in the 1950s.

Recent research also counters assertions about Millennial retention rates, showing that this generation is no more—and no less—likely to change jobs than Gen Xers and Baby Boomers were at the same stage of their careers.

### MILLENNIAL VS GEN X JOB TENURE



Source: Pew Research Center

**So, is there a problem with job hopping in the workforce today?  
And, if so, are there demographic factors, like generation or  
education level, that might predict an affinity for job hopping?**

# Our Methodological Approach

As we did with Part One of our three-part series on job market dynamics, which examined the [skills gap](#), Part Two takes a “big data” approach to analyzing thousands of resumes and job ads across the 12 previously chosen designated occupations to reveal key 2018 insights about job hopping and job tenure.

Our analysis looked at both job ads and resumes as singular data sets, as well as compared them across the occupational areas to determine areas of agreement and disagreement.

The methodological approach used numerical and natural language insights, conducted by TIRO Communications using Cognition Insights, its natural language processing (NLP) tool.

# 12 Occupational Areas Analyzed



**Caregivers**



**Accountants**



**Sales Associates**



**Registered Nurses**



**Servers**



**Bartenders**



**Administrative Assistants**



**Customer Service Representatives**



**Software Developers**



**Cashiers**



**Teachers**



**Store Managers**

# Four Generations Analyzed<sup>3</sup>

**Baby Boomers**  
**1946 - 1964**

**Gen Xers**  
**1965 - 1980**

**Millenials**  
**1981 - 1997**

**Gen Zers**  
**1998 - Present**

# Key Takeaways from Our Analysis

## Generational Trends

**Millennials are more educated than previous generations.** Nearly half of Millennials list bachelor's degrees and master's degrees on their resumes, with another 19 percent listing associate's degrees. The level of emphasis on certificates appears to be decreasing, with the apex occurring with Gen Xers (30 percent of workers list certificates on their resumes).

**Younger generations place a greater importance on volunteer experience than older generations.** Specifically, Gen Zers include volunteer work on their resumes 38 percent more often than Millennials, 140 percent more than often than Gen Xers, and 420 percent more often than Baby Boomers. Employers should consider this data point and ensure their job ads include information on corporate responsibility initiatives and programs in order to attract civic-minded younger workers to their organizations.

## Education Trends

**Higher education may be overrated.** Specifically, jobseekers in non-professional, or blue-collar, occupations list higher education at a much higher rate than do employers in job ads. This is likely an indication of underemployment in this segment, and it underscores the fact that a higher education degree doesn't always result in professional employment. Interestingly, the biggest gap relates to associate's degrees, which are not listed in job ads in this sector but are listed in one-quarter of jobseeker resumes.

**There are some fields where employers place no premium on certifications and licenses, despite significant numbers of jobseekers listing them on their resumes.** These include customer service representatives (17 percent), sales associates (13 percent), and software developers (29 percent). For these occupations, jobseekers may want to reevaluate the time and money they are expending on certification and licensing training and testing.



## Job Hopping and Tenure Trends

**The average number of jobs held across all occupations from 2016 to 2018 is 1.3, while the average over five years is 2.3.**

**Workers with only a high school degree tend to job hop less often than those with higher education degrees.**

For example, high school-educated workers stay with their employers 33 percent longer than those with bachelor's degrees (4.4 to 3.3 years).

**Job hopping diminishes with age and career maturation.**

The average amount of time spent per job goes down across generations—Baby Boomers (8 years), Gen X (5.4 years), Millennials (2.4 years), and Gen Z (1.2 years).

When the past five years are examined, similar findings are present: Millennials and Gen Zers have held 2.7 and 2.4 jobs, respectively, while Baby Boomers and Gen Xers have held 1.4 and 1.7 jobs, respectively.

# Educational Trends

## Generational Analysis

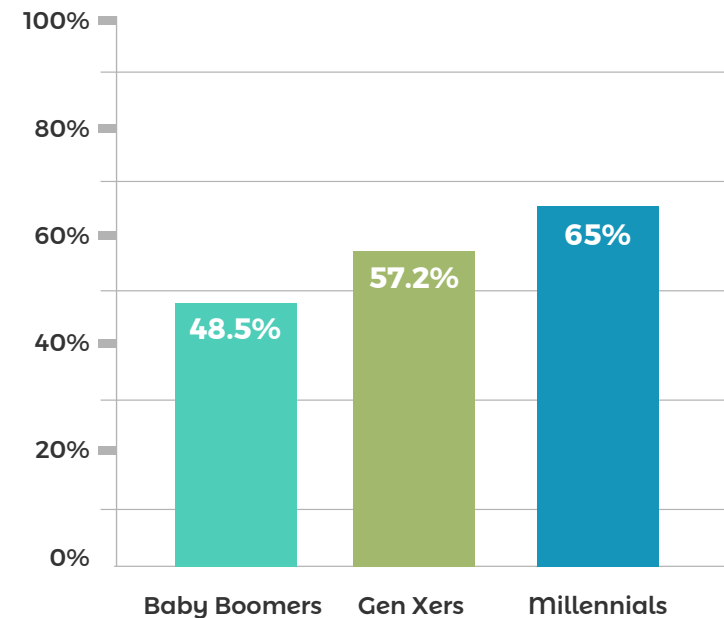
In our quest to understand how education may inform job hopping and job tenure, our analysis revealed interesting insights regarding jobseeker education levels when cross-referenced with generational data.

Millennials and soon-to-be Gen Zers possess higher rates of education than earlier generations. Over one-third of Millennial jobseekers list bachelor's degrees on their resumes (36 percent), and another 10 percent have master's degrees. With another 19 percent having associate's degrees, 65 percent of Millennial workers in our analysis hold some form of higher education.

Gen Xers possess about the same number of associate's degrees (20 percent) and master's degrees (11 percent), but they lag 10 percentage points behind Millennials for bachelor's degrees (26 percent).

Educational drop off is even more precipitous for Baby Boomers (see Education Across Generations). (Note: At this juncture, as only a small portion of Gen Zers have graduated from college, the education percentages for that generation are still outstanding.)

### HIGHER EDUCATION ACROSS GENERATIONS



When it comes to certificates, the data does not follow the same route as higher education (see Certifications Across Generations). Gen Xers appear to place higher emphasis and importance on them than other generations.

Certificates and licenses are listed on 30 percent of Gen X resumes versus 21 percent of Baby Boomer resumes, 26 percent of Millennial resumes, and 16 percent of Gen Z resumes.

## EDUCATION ACROSS GENERATIONS

% of each generation that listed each degree on their resume.

|                    | BABY BOOMERS | GEN XERS | MILLENNIALS | GEN ZERS |
|--------------------|--------------|----------|-------------|----------|
| <b>None</b>        | 0.4          | 1        | 1.4         | 2        |
| <b>High School</b> | 51.1         | 41.8     | 33.3        | 52.9     |
| <b>Associates</b>  | 20.9         | 20.1     | 19.1        | 15.7     |
| <b>Bachelors</b>   | 20.1         | 26.3     | 36.1        | 27.5     |
| <b>Masters</b>     | 7.5          | 10.8     | 10          | 2        |
| <b>Doctorate</b>   | 0            | 0        | 0.1         | 0        |

## CERTIFICATIONS/LICENSES ACROSS GENERATIONS

% of each generation that listed certificates or licenses on their resume.

|                                | BABY BOOMERS | GEN XERS | MILLENNIALS | GEN ZERS |
|--------------------------------|--------------|----------|-------------|----------|
| <b>Certifications/Licenses</b> | 20.9         | 30.2     | 26.3        | 15.7     |

# Resume & Job Ad Divergences in Education

When it comes to higher education, there are some significant differences between the level of importance jobseekers place on degrees and professional certifications as compared to employers in their job ads.

The biggest gap is in non-professional roles, like caregivers, cashiers, bartenders, and servers, where jobseekers list higher education over 36 percent more often than employers do in job ads. In fact, only employers seeking software developers list educational requirements at a higher frequency than jobseekers (75 to 61 percent, respectively).

**This discrepancy provides a likely view into one of the reasons for job-hopping tendencies, at least among the non-professional roles where there is a disproportionate number of jobseekers listing higher education when their employers seemingly do not care (caregivers, cashiers, bartenders, and servers).**

Professional certifications and licenses are another area where jobseekers and employers are misaligned. A little more than one-quarter of jobseekers include at least one certification or license in their resumes.

## EDUCATION PER JOB ADS

| OCCUPATION                       | NONE | HIGH SCHOOL | ASSOCIATES | BACHELORS | MASTERS |
|----------------------------------|------|-------------|------------|-----------|---------|
| Accountants                      | 35   | 10          | 5          | 50        | 0       |
| Administrative Assistants        | 10   | 35          | 25         | 30        | 0       |
| Bartenders                       | 20   | 80          | 0          | 0         | 0       |
| Caregivers                       | 80   | 15          | 0          | 5         | 0       |
| Cashiers                         | 30   | 55          | 10         | 5         | 0       |
| Customer Service Representatives | 5    | 65          | 20         | 10        | 0       |
| Registered Nurses                | 55   | 0           | 30         | 15        | 0       |
| Sales Associates                 | 14   | 64          | 7          | 14        | 0       |
| Servers                          | 30   | 60          | 0          | 10        | 0       |
| Software Developers              | 15   | 0           | 0          | 75        | 10      |
| Store Managers                   | 10   | 70          | 0          | 20        | 0       |
| Teachers                         | 50   | 0           | 0          | 40        | 10      |

## EDUCATION PER RESUMES

| OCCUPATION                       | NONE | HIGH SCHOOL | ASSOCIATES | BACHELORS | MASTERS |
|----------------------------------|------|-------------|------------|-----------|---------|
| Accountants                      | 2    | 13          | 11         | 50        | 23      |
| Administrative Assistants        | 6    | 35          | 19         | 37        | 4       |
| Bartenders                       | 4    | 56          | 23         | 15        | 2       |
| Caregivers                       | 3    | 56          | 25         | 16        | 0       |
| Cashiers                         | 1    | 59          | 24         | 14        | 2       |
| Customer Service Representatives | 2    | 46          | 20         | 26        | 6       |
| Registered Nurses                | 1    | 15          | 31         | 43        | 10      |
| Sales Associates                 | 3    | 44          | 16         | 31        | 6       |
| Servers                          | 3    | 49          | 24         | 21        | 2       |
| Software Developers              | 3    | 6           | 4          | 61        | 26      |
| Store Managers                   | 3    | 48          | 22         | 25        | 2       |
| Teachers                         | 1    | 22          | 13         | 36        | 27      |

# Resume & Job Ad Divergences in Education:

## White-Collar vs. Blue-Collar Occupations

Not surprisingly, white-collar job ads request some level of college education (associate's degree or more) 7.2x more often than do blue-collar job ads.<sup>4</sup> However, when jobseeker resumes are added to the mix, some surprising anomalies between jobseekers and employers emerge:

**White-collar workers list higher education degrees 64 percent of the time, while blue-collar workers include higher education degrees in their resumes 43 percent of the time.**

Based on the ratio of higher education references by employers in white-collar versus blue-collar job ads, one would assume the disparity between how often white- and blue-collar workers list higher education on their resumes to be much greater.

**Twenty-four percent of blue-collar jobseekers list associate's degrees in their resumes, and another 17.5 percent include bachelor's degrees (with another 1.5 percent including master's degrees).**

But no blue-collar employers in our study included an associate's degree as a requirement for employment, and only 5 percent listed bachelor's degrees. This seems to indicate that blue-collar workers place a much higher premium on higher education in general (they were 8.3x more likely to list higher education on a resume than an employer was to list it as a requirement in a job ad).

It also reveals, alarmingly, a segment of the workforce that is overqualified and underpaid, two likely reasons that these workers exhibit job-hopping tendencies.

**A substantial divide also exists between white-collar workers and employers when it comes to higher education: 64.5 percent of workers list higher education, whereas only 42 percent of employers include it in job ads.**

While not as wide as the 730 percent higher education divide blue-collar workers and employers, this 54 percent difference is still quite significant.

It seems to serve as evidence that even in the white-collar world, workers are overqualified and underpaid.

**Surprisingly, 43 percent of blue-collar employers do not list any educational requirements in their job ads.** Yet, only 3.5 percent of blue-collar workers fail to list at least a high school degree.

## EDUCATION: WHITE-COLLAR VS. BLUE-COLLAR

% of workers or employers who list each degree on a resume or job ad.

|                               | NONE | HIGH SCHOOL | ASSOCIATES | BACHELORS | MASTERS |
|-------------------------------|------|-------------|------------|-----------|---------|
| <b>White-collar Employers</b> | 25   | 32          | 11         | 29        | 2       |
| <b>White-collar Workers</b>   | 2.5  | 36.5        | 18         | 35        | 11.5    |
|                               |      |             |            |           |         |
| <b>Blue-collar Employers</b>  | 43   | 52          | 0          | 5         | 0       |
| <b>Blue-collar Workers</b>    | 3.5  | 53.5        | 24         | 17.5      | 0       |



# Resume and Job Ad Divergences Education:

## Soft-centric vs. Tech-centric Occupations

Soft-centric employers place less emphasis on higher education than tech-centric employers: 25.5 percent compared to 47.5 percent. This is expected since tech-centric occupations require knowledge of more teachable skills.

Soft-centric workers view education differently than employers: 52 percent of jobseekers list higher education on their resumes as compared to 25.5 percent of employers.

Tech-centric jobseekers only list higher education 9.5 percent more often than their soft-centric counterparts (61.5 percent). The biggest difference between tech-centric employers and jobseekers is the inclusion of high school diplomas, where jobseekers list them 3.9x more often than employers list them as a requirement in job ads.

Though the difference between how jobseekers and employers list education is small for tech-centric occupations (61.5 to 47.5<sup>5</sup> percent) as compared to soft-centric occupations, the fact that jobseekers in both instances list higher education at a much higher rate than employers corroborates our earlier point that there is a segment of the workforce that is overqualified and underemployed. We will explore these in greater detail in the section on Job Hopping (pg. 23).



### TECH-CENTRIC OCCUPATIONS

are those where the majority of requisite skills are specific to that particular occupation or industry and often require formal training and certification. Four of the 12 occupations in our study are classified as tech-centric: accountants, caregivers, registered nurses, and software developers.



### SOFT-CENTRIC OCCUPATIONS

are those where the majority of requisite skills are shared across occupations and not taught in formal training programs. Eight of the 12 occupations in our study are classified as soft-centric: administrative assistants, bartenders, cashiers, customer service representatives, sales associates, (food and beverage) servers, store managers, and teachers.

## EDUCATION: SOFT-CENTRIC VS. TECH-CENTRIC

% of workers and employers who list each degree in their resume or job ad.

|                               | NONE | HIGH SCHOOL | ASSOCIATES | BACHELORS | MASTERS |
|-------------------------------|------|-------------|------------|-----------|---------|
| <b>Soft-centric Employers</b> | 21.5 | 53          | 8          | 16        | 1.5     |
| <b>Soft-centric Workers</b>   | 2.3  | 23.5        | 20         | 25.5      | 6.5     |
| <b>Tech-centric Employers</b> | 46   | 6           | 9          | 36        | 2.5     |
| <b>Tech-centric Workers</b>   | 2    | 23.5        | 18.5       | 41.5      | 1.5     |

# Career Dynamics

## Volunteer Work

With more and more research corroborating the link between volunteerism and employee engagement, we sought to investigate the prevalence of volunteer work in resumes and job ads, as well as dig into any apparent generational patterns.<sup>6</sup>

Interestingly, the frequency of volunteer work cited in jobseeker resumes increases from the oldest to the youngest generation:

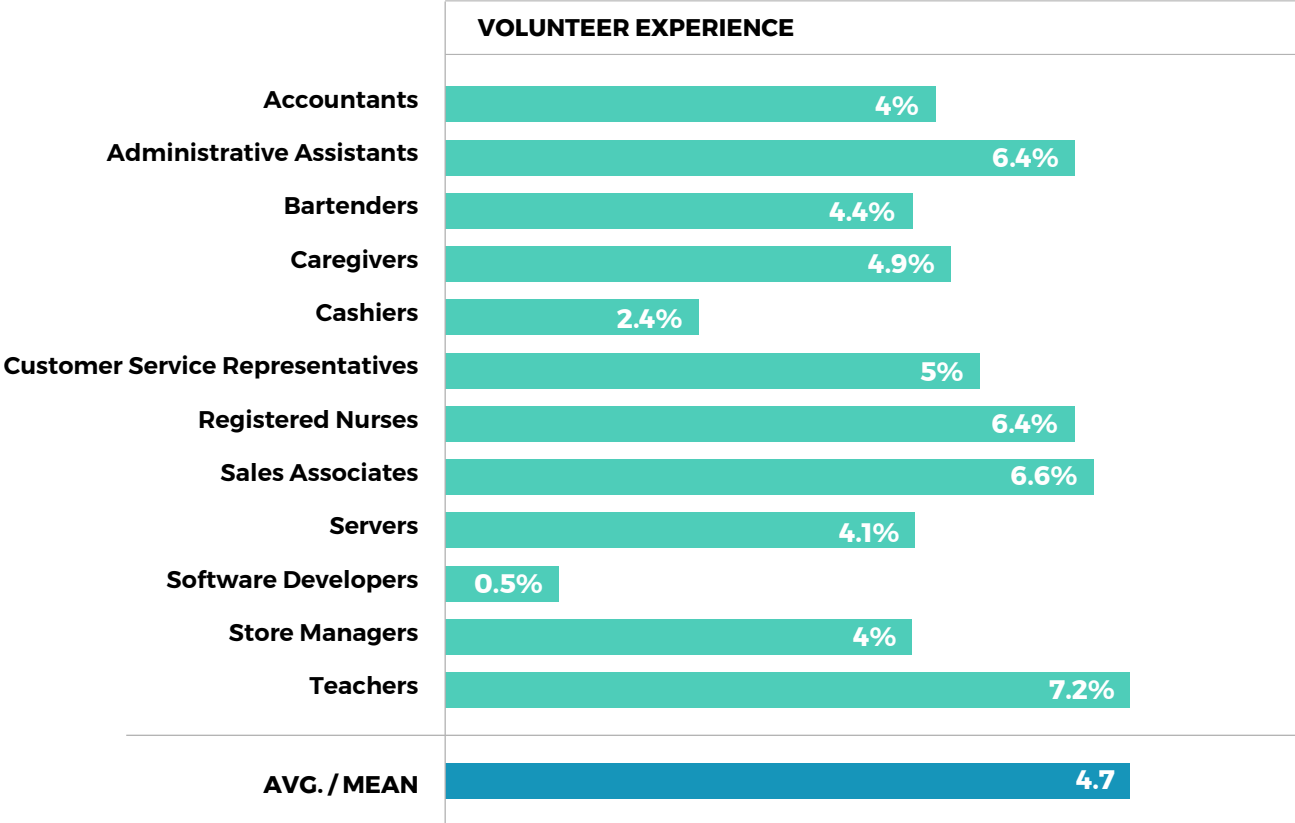
- **Gen Xers list volunteer work 113 percent more often than Baby Boomers**
- **Millennials list volunteer work 78 percent more often than Gen Xers**
- **Gen Zers list volunteer experience 37 percent more often than Millennials (or 4.2x more often than Baby Boomers and 1.4x more often than Gen Xers)**

When volunteer work citations are examined across the 12 occupations, teachers (7.2 percent), sales associates (6.6 percent), administrative assistants (6.4 percent), and registered nurses (6.4 percent) top the list of those occupations that most frequently include volunteer work on their resumes.

### FREQUENCY OF VOLUNTEER WORK ACROSS GENERATIONS

|           | BABY BOOMERS | GEN XERS | MILLENNIALS | GEN ZERS |
|-----------|--------------|----------|-------------|----------|
| Frequency | 1.5%         | 3.2%     | 5.7%        | 7.8%     |

## FREQUENCY OF VOLUNTEER WORK CITED BY JOBSEEKERS



# Professional Certifications and Licenses

Jobseekers list professional certifications and/or licenses in their resumes an average of 27 percent of the time (across all 12 occupations). There are certain occupations where they are referenced more often than others:



**64%** of registered nurses



**36%** of accountants and teachers



**33%** of caregivers



**29%** of software developers

Employers include professional certifications and licenses in job ads 27 percent of the time across all 12 occupations. While this is the same percentage of occurrence as what jobseekers include in resumes, there are substantial differences when the individual occupations are examined. Some of the key takeaways include:

There are some roles where there is relatively close alignment between employers and jobseekers: accountants (40 to 36 percent), registered nurses (70 to 64 percent), servers (30 to 22 percent), and teachers (45 to 36 percent). This is not a huge surprise since most of these occupations require some form of licensing to be employed.

Roles where jobseekers place a larger emphasis on professional certifications and licensing than employers do include: administrative assistants, bartenders, cashiers, customer service representatives, sales associates, software developers, and store managers.

**In several cases, the differences are dramatic, indicating that jobseekers in these roles may be spending time and money on certifications and licenses that may not be very important to employers.**

Specifically, in the roles that follow, none of the employers we analyzed list certifications and licenses in job ads, but measurable numbers of jobseekers do: 17 percent of customer service representatives, 13 percent of sales associates, and 29 percent of software developers. Software developers are the biggest surprise in this list, as the field is full of professional certificate programs (the value of which may be overhyped by those selling the training and certifications).

Roles where employers place greater emphasis on certificates and licenses than do jobseekers include accounting (by only 4 percentage points), caregivers (67 percentage points), registered nurses (by 6 percentage points), servers (by 8 percentage points), and teachers (by 9 percentage points). In these instances, jobseekers may want to seek out professional development opportunities to add certifications and licenses to their resumes and to ensure they have the ones they do hold listed. The biggest gap is caregivers. In this field, only about a third of jobseekers are listing their certifications on their resumes.

These numbers should serve as a red flag to jobseekers. Specifically, jobseekers should interpret these findings to mean that they should work towards more certifications and include all of them on their resumes.

## CERTIFICATION ACROSS OCCUPATIONS

■ Fields where jobseekers overestimate the importance of certification and licenses.

| OCCUPATION                       | EMPLOYERS  | JOBSEEKERS |
|----------------------------------|------------|------------|
| Accountants                      | 40%        | 36%        |
| Administrative Assistants        | 5%         | 16%        |
| Bartenders                       | 15%        | 21%        |
| Caregivers                       | 100%       | 33%        |
| Cashiers                         | 10%        | 18%        |
| Customer Service Representatives | 0%         | 17%        |
| Registered Nurses                | 70%        | 64%        |
| Sales Associates                 | 0%         | 13%        |
| Servers                          | 30%        | 22%        |
| Software Developers              | 0%         | 29%        |
| Store Managers                   | 5%         | 17%        |
| Teachers                         | 45%        | 36%        |
| <b>AVG. / MEAN</b>               | <b>27%</b> | <b>27%</b> |

# Job Hopping

## Occupational Analysis

The average job tenure across all 12 occupations is 3.8 years per job.

Average job duration ranges from 2.4 years per job for software developers and 2.8 for servers to 4.9 years per job for store managers and 4.7 years per job for administrative assistants.

The total average number of jobs held across all occupations is 4.1. The average number of jobs held across all occupations over the past two years is 1.3, while the average over five years is 2.3.

**Over the past five years, job hopping is the highest among servers and software developers (2.8 jobs held).** With many servers overqualified when it comes to their educational qualifications, their higher tendency to job hop is not surprising. As an occupation in high demand and with 65 percent of workers in the field indicating they are not in jobs they love, it should be no surprise that software developers have the highest tendency to job hop.<sup>7</sup>

Workers **stay at a job** an average of

**3.8** YEARS

Workers **hold**, on average,

**1.3** JOBS every **2** YEARS

Workers **hold**, on average,

**2.3** JOBS every **5** YEARS

Administrative assistants, registered nurses, and store managers have the lowest job-hopping tendencies over the past five years (1.9 jobs held).

When job hopping tendencies over the past two years are examined, servers remain at the top (1.6 jobs held), though software developers fall to the middle of the pack (1.3 jobs held). This may be an indication that the demand for software developers is dropping and/or they are happier in the jobs they hold. Interestingly, job-hopping among teachers is trending upwards (1.5 jobs held).

## JOBS HELD ACROSS OCCUPATIONS

| OCCUPATION                       | LAST 2 YEARS | LAST 5 YEARS |
|----------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Accountants                      | 1.1          | 2.1          |
| Administrative Assistants        | 1.2          | 1.9          |
| Bartenders                       | 1.3          | 2.5          |
| Caregivers                       | 1.3          | 2.1          |
| Cashiers                         | 1.3          | 2.5          |
| Customer Service Representatives | 1.3          | 2.2          |
| Registered Nurses                | 1.2          | 1.9          |
| Sales Associates                 | 1.2          | 2.3          |
| Servers                          | 1.6          | 2.8          |
| Software Developers              | 1.3          | 2.8          |
| Store Managers                   | 1.1          | 1.9          |
| Teachers                         | 1.4          | 2.4          |
| <b>AVERAGE JOBS</b>              | <b>1.3</b>   | <b>2.3</b>   |



As to occupation classification, blue-collar workers have a slightly greater tendency to job hop as compared to white-collar workers: 2.5 jobs over the past five years as compared to 2.2 jobs, respectively. There are virtually no differences between soft-centric and tech-centric occupations when it comes to job hopping (2.3 jobs held compared to 2.2 jobs held over past five years).

## AVERAGE JOB DURATION ACROSS OCCUPATIONS

| OCCUPATION                       | AVERAGE DURATION | TOTAL JOBS |
|----------------------------------|------------------|------------|
| Accountants                      | 3.4              | 4.1        |
| Administrative Assistants        | 4.7              | 3.2        |
| Bartenders                       | 3.4              | 3.9        |
| Caregivers                       | 4.2              | 3.8        |
| Cashiers                         | 3                | 3.7        |
| Customer Service Representatives | 3.7              | 3.8        |
| Registered Nurses                | 5.7              | 4.9        |
| Sales Associates                 | 3.6              | 4.1        |
| Servers                          | 2.8              | 4.1        |
| Software Developers              | 2.4              | 4.4        |
| Store Managers                   | 4.9              | 3.9        |
| Teachers                         | 4.2              | 5          |
| <b>AVERAGE JOBS</b>              | <b>3.8</b>       | <b>4.1</b> |

# Job Hopping

## Education

Education may be a person's passport to the future, but an education doesn't do much for retention. In fact, a worker's average job duration goes down with each educational milestone they reach.

Those with high school diplomas spend an average of 4.4 years per job, while those with associate's degrees hold positions for an average of 4.1 years. Workers with bachelor's degrees, on the other hand, spent 3.3 years per job (33 percent less than high school graduates).

The exception to the trend is with those who hold master's degrees; these individuals tend to exhibit higher rates of retention—staying an average of 3.7 years per job. Also interesting is that those workers who do not list education at all on their resumes have a higher job-hopping ratio (tied with those who possess bachelor's degrees at 3.3 years per job).

When job hopping and education are examined over the past five years, comparable data exists: high school graduates have held fewer jobs than those with higher education degrees (including those with master's degrees having a lightly lower job-hopping tendency than those with bachelor's degrees).

## YEARS PER JOB ACROSS EDUCATION

|                     |                   |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| No Degree Listed    | 3.3 Years Per Job |
| High School Diploma | 4.4 Years Per Job |
| Associate Degree    | 4.1 Years Per Job |
| Bachelor Degree     | 3.3 Years Per Job |
| Master Degree       | 3.7 Years Per Job |

## JOB HOPPING AND EDUCATION

|                     | PAST 5 YEARS | PAST 2 YEARS |
|---------------------|--------------|--------------|
| No Degree Listed    | 2.6          | 1.3          |
| High School Diploma | 2.1          | 1.2          |
| Associate Degree    | 2.2          | 1.3          |
| Bachelor Degree     | 2.4          | 1.3          |
| Master Degree       | 2.3          | 1.3          |

# Job Hopping

## Generations

The average amount of time spent per job goes down across generations—Baby Boomers (8 years), Gen X (5.4 years), Millennials (2.4 years), and Gen Z (1.2 years). When the past five years are examined, similar findings are present: Millennials and Gen Zers have held 2.7 and 2.4 jobs respectively, while Baby Boomers and Gen Xers have held 1.4 and 1.7 jobs respectively. The same is true when the past two years are placed alongside the past five years.

At first glance, this might be interpreted as an indication that Millennials and Gen Zers have a higher tendency to job hop. But as other studies have shown, the job-hopping tendencies of Baby Boomers and Gen Xers were about the same as Millennials and Gen Zers at this juncture in their careers.<sup>9</sup>

**In short, job hopping diminishes with age and career maturation. Other dynamics, such as whether a worker has higher education degrees and certifications, are stronger and more reliable indicators of job-hopping tendencies than generational demographics.**

Additionally, the careers held by Baby Boomers and Gen Xers have a longer “career life” (e.g., registered nurses, accountants, store managers) versus those held by Millennials and Gen Zers (e.g., cashiers, sales associates, servers, software developers).

## OCCUPATIONS HELD ACROSS GENERATIONS

| OCCUPATION                       | BABY BOOMER | GEN X | MILLENNIALS | GEN Z |
|----------------------------------|-------------|-------|-------------|-------|
| Accountants                      | 8.5%        | 28.8% | 61.8%       | 0.9%  |
| Administrative Assistants        | 13.5%       | 25.2% | 59.5%       | 1.8%  |
| Bartenders                       | 6.3%        | 24.4% | 68.8%       | 0.5%  |
| Caregivers                       | 19.7%       | 36.9% | 42.9%       | 0.5%  |
| Cashiers                         | 7.4%        | 19%   | 65.3%       | 8.3%  |
| Customer Service Representatives | 13.7%       | 27.8% | 56.1%       | 2.4%  |
| Registered Nurses                | 15.3%       | 52.5% | 31.7%       | 0.5%  |
| Sales Associates                 | 11.5%       | 21.6% | 61.5%       | 5.3%  |
| Servers                          | 6.2%        | 21%   | 69.5%       | 3.3%  |
| Software Developers              | 3.4%        | 13.6% | 82.4%       | 0.6%  |
| Store Managers                   | 13.1%       | 47.2% | 39.2%       | 0.5%  |
| Teachers                         | 14.8%       | 36.7% | 48.6%       | 0%    |

## PERCENT OF RESUMES PER GENERATION

| BABY BOOMER | GEN X | MILLENNIALS | GEN Z |
|-------------|-------|-------------|-------|
| 11.1%       | 29.7% | 57.1%       | 21%   |

# Concluding Thoughts

Organizations expend significant time and resources trying to solve the problem of worker retention and worker non-engagement. Gallup's annual study on the workplace pegs the number of engaged workers in the United States at 33 percent. And despite organizations placing a substantial spotlight on the problem in recent years, Gallup data shows employee engagement improved only 3 percent from 2012 to 2016<sup>9</sup>.

Based on our analysis of career tenure, education, and generational demographics, we believe that there are additional underlying patterns informing job hopping (and worker non-engagement) other than what is typically discussed:

**Education plays a bigger role in job hopping than generational demographics.** Specifically, there are a measurable number of workers in certain non-professional occupations who are overqualified in terms of education and professional credentials and who are very likely underpaid. The fact these workers have a higher tendency to job hop than other workers is understandable. Employers seeking to identify job hoppers during candidate vetting will be wise to pinpoint and weed out candidates who possess significantly more educational qualifications than what the job requires.

**Data about Millennials having significantly bigger issues with job hopping than previous generations is overhyped.** As the careers of younger generations mature, their job tenure increases. As an example, the job hopping tendencies of software developers (82.4 percent of whom are Millennials in our analysis) improved over the past two years (as compared to the five-year continuum).

**Jobseekers may want to play down educational achievements and professional credentials when applying for certain non-professional roles (e.g., bartenders, cashiers, servers), as they could be perceived as overqualified.** Employers often see overqualified workers as potential job hoppers.

**Employers for certain professions such as registered nurses, accountants, teachers, software developers, et al., need to pay closer attention to what professional certifications and licenses are included in their job ads.** Jobseekers frequently include these in their resumes, and they can be a means for vetting between different candidates. At the same time, jobseekers need to carefully read job ads and pay attention to which professional credentials are being cited by employers in job ads as critical. By adding these credentials to their resumes or by using job ads as a guide to discovering which credentials they might need to attain for success in their role, jobseekers are more likely to get the job they want.

**Carefully studying published job ads for positions they find desirable can help jobseekers zero in on the critical skills, education, certifications, and licensing that employers value.** This enables them to spend less time and money on certifications, licenses, training, and other testing that employers in their field don't find valuable.

**Employers should consider offering credentialing opportunities through employer-paid training and development to develop their existing employees.** Doing so could increase employee engagement, reduce employee turnover, and improve institutional knowledge across the board.

**Younger generations place a higher premium on volunteer and philanthropic work and are attracted to companies that offer these kinds of opportunities to their employees within the workplace.** For example, three-quarters of Millennials in a survey indicated they consider a company's social and environmental commitments when deciding where to work, with two-thirds reporting that they will not accept a job if the potential employer doesn't have a strong corporate responsibility program.

Another three-quarters of those surveyed indicate they would take a pay cut to work for a company with a strong

corporate responsibility program.<sup>10</sup> Since qualified candidates might not apply for a job that doesn't advertise the company's corporate responsibility programs in the job ad, recruiters must be diligent about including these details in job ads to ensure that they are attracting the most qualified candidates possible.

# End Notes

- 1 ["State of the American Workplace Report: 2017,"](#) Gallup, accessed November 15, 2017.
- 2 James Surowiecki, ["The Great Tech Panic; Robots Won't Take All Our Jobs,"](#) Wired, August 2017.
- 3 Generational timetables follow Richard Fry, ["Millennials Overtake Baby Boomers as America's Largest Generation,"](#) Pew Research Center, April 25, 2016.
- 4 Determination of blue-collar and white-collar occupational classification is based on U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, ["Occupational Classification System Manual,"](#) accessed September 30, 2017.
- 5 The concept of tech-centric and soft-centric jobs are taken from ["The Human Factor: The Hard Time Employers Have Finding Soft Skills,"](#) Burning Glass Technologies, November 2015.
- 6 ["Deloitte Volunteer Impact Research,"](#) Deloitte. Accessed January 15, 2018.
- 7 ["Developer Hiring Landscape: A Global Report,"](#) Stack Exchange, accessed December 15, 2017.
- 8 ["Number of Jobs Held, Labor Market Activity, and Earnings Growth Among the Youngest Baby Boomers: Results from a Longitudinal Survey Summary,"](#) Bureau of Labor Statistics, August 2017.
- 9 Jeff Corbin, ["State of the American Workplace,"](#) Gallup, March 7, 2017.
- 10 ["2016 Cone Communications Millennial Employee Engagement Study,"](#) Cone Communications, 2016.



A study conducted by LiveCareer in conjunction with TIRO communications

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**About LiveCareer:**

LiveCareer, a subsidiary of BOLD LLC, is the number one resource for jobseekers to find information, guidance, and support for their careers. Since 2005, LiveCareer has helped more than 10 million people globally boost their chances of finding a job in less time. That includes providing jobseekers with resume templates that can help them build stronger resumes and cover letters, as well as providing interview prep tools and original content that can help candidates target their job search and move forward on their chosen career path.



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The award-winning team at TIRO Communications works with fast-growth startups to large enterprises to help them deliver content marketing, customer marketing, and demand-generation programs that listen to the entire orchestra and not simply the individual instruments. This integrated marketing approach enables clients to generate better business outcomes around brand awareness and engagement, increased lead generation and funnel advancement, and revenue growth. TIRO Communications' Cognition Insights technology-enabled service combines numerical and natural language data to produce actionable insights used by marketing, sales, product, and support organizations. For more information on TIRO Communications, visit [TIROCommunications.com](http://TIROCommunications.com).