



**Challenger, Gray & Christmas, Inc.**  
The original outplacement company

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Tech Skills Important, But Written, Verbal Communication Is Key** **WHERE THE HOT JOBS WILL BE 2018-2025**

**CHICAGO, September 18, 2013** - As the nation's roughly 2 million college freshmen take the first steps on their career paths, the employment experts at global outplacement consultancy Challenger, Gray & Christmas, Inc., offered some advice on which areas could offer the most fertile employment landscape over the next decade.

"Many freshmen have no idea what career path they want to pursue, relying on a mix of courses in the first year to help point them in the right direction. There is absolutely nothing wrong with that, but it is a good idea to at least be armed with information about where job growth is expected to remain strong in order to make the best decisions about one's course selections going forward," said John A. Challenger, chief executive officer of Challenger, Gray & Christmas, Inc.

"Those who concentrate on courses related to math, science, engineering and technology, will probably have the widest array of options upon graduation. However, it is vital not to overlook critical coursework in writing, public speaking, and courses that sharpen your critical thinking skills. While technical skills are in high demand, employers across the country consistently lament the lack of writing and communication skills that are essential in any profession one might pursue," said Challenger.

Indeed, when human resources executives were asked by the Society of Human Resource Management to identify the skills that 2013 graduates were lacking the most, the largest percentage by far pointed to basic writing skills. Nearly half of the HR professionals said last spring's graduates lacked grammar, spelling and other writing skills. Math, which ranked second in the list of skill deficiencies, was selected by 18 percent of respondents.

“Even if you pursue a profession that is desperate for workers, a lack of fundamental written and verbal communication skills will significantly reduce the chances of being considered, let alone hired,” warned Challenger.

Challenger provided the following list of fields and professions that are expected to experience strong employment gains in the coming years, barring an unexpected shock to the economy.

**Big Data** – Health care, corporations, government agencies, etc., are all collecting massive amounts of information. The demand will be for people who can organize, manage and make sense of all this data.

**R&D** – Technological developments are accelerating the pace of change and significant breakthroughs in all types of fields, from renewable energy to health care, from transportation to home construction. Those schooled in biology, chemistry, math, engineering, design, computer technology, etc., are going to be rewarded with ample job opportunities in research and development.

**Veterinarians** - Pets are more popular than ever, and some of them get medical care that's practically fit for a human. The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that the need for vets to rise 36 percent by 2020.

**Medical technicians** – As medical equipment continues to become more sophisticated, they require highly trained individuals to operate, troubleshoot and repair them.

**Athletic trainers/physical therapists** – These represent two sides of the same coin. They share many of the same fundamental skills and training. Several trends are driving the growth in demand for these workers...the most obvious one being the aging baby boomer population, which will require increased physical care. We are also seeing growth in competitive sports, fitness, etc., that is creating demand for those trained in repairing participants.

**Sales and Marketing** – All of these other growth areas need people to increase demand for their products and services. That's where sales and marketing pros will benefit. You could have the greatest invention ever, but if you don't have a team to get it into the marketplace and create demand, that invention will never see the light of day.

**Human Factors Engineers and Ergonomists** – While these types of jobs need a catchier name, the demand will continue to grow. Where we work, how we work, and when we work have all changed dramatically over the past decade. These will continue to evolve going forward. So, we will need people who specialize in maximizing efficiency, health, cost, quality, etc. We have companies now where more than half of the employees work from home. How do you make sure everyone is on the same page and moving in the right direction? Yahoo couldn't do it, so the company ended its work-at-home option. Companies need strategies for managing such a workforce and these are the people who will do it. These workers will have varied education backgrounds, including psychology, engineering and technology, design, sociology, administration and management.

**Also:** Teachers and education services (as more private learning systems pop up); registered nurses, particularly in specialty areas, such as oncology, pediatrics, and intensive care; finance and accounting; trade crafts, such as electricians and plumbers; information technology and network administration.