

How to identify best and worst entry-level jobs

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FULL TEXT

It's college graduation season, and thousands of newly degreed students are looking for that first post-school job. According to WalletHub, the best entry-level jobs will offer them opportunity, growth potential and on-the-job safety. Based on this criteria, the financial website ranked the best and worst positions available to new grads. The top five include software engineer, electronics engineer, engineer, systems engineer and industrial engineer. Clearly students who graduated with a degree in engineering seem to have the best outlook with lots of immediate opportunity and growth potential and few on-the-job hazards, according to the authors of the ranking.

"When I looked at the list, the best jobs that are in most demand - like working for Amazon or Google - and they're all fighting for people," says Stacie Haller, career expert at ResumeBuilder.com, an online resume creation platform. "What is common among them is that they could all be done remotely with flexible hours, and they typically pay great benefits."

The worst entry-level jobs, however, didn't offer these attributes. According to WalletHub's ranking, they are aircraft painter, building inspector, emergency dispatcher, floor assembler and boilermaker. Compared to the top jobs, the worst cannot be done from home. None offer flexible hours, nor are they likely to pay as well as the jobs that are higher up on the list.

"These worst jobs have to commute, so that's a cost," Haller says. "The salaries are even less if you subtract the commute."

Strong compensation, growth potential and safety sound desirable. But this criteria is also old-school, says Haller, who is a job search coach and career strategist.

"It's not necessarily the criteria of what graduates are looking for now," she says. "The driver for taking a job today can be a lot of different reasons. Maybe it is financial, but I'm seeing millennials who took jobs based on salary coming back to me and say, 'Okay, now I want to do something fulfilling. This isn't working for me.'"

Instead of strictly judging a job by its paycheck, potential and lack of job hazards, Haller says candidates should dig deeper to find the right fit. "A lot of times, you know what you like to do. You just don't know what the job is that lets you do it," she says.

The best job is one where you'll be successful in the role. What might be the best job for one person could be the worst for another. If you're not sure what your best job would be, Haller suggests finding a company that's supportive in helping you start your career, such as one that offers a strong mentoring program. Internships are also a great way to test out roles.

Caption: Shao-chun Wang/ Dreamstime

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