

# **EMPLOYER FEEDBACK SURVEY**

**Employers of the Class of 1999 Graduates  
One and One Half Years After Receiving Their ERAU Degree**

Prepared by:

Tara Battistoni  
Office of Institutional Research  
September 2001



***EMBRY-RIDDLE***  
***AERONAUTICAL UNIVERSITY***



## Table of Contents

	Page
<b>Executive Summary .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Employer and Job Descriptions .....</b>	<b>4</b>
Relation of Job to ERAU Degree .....	4
Field of Work .....	6
Employers and Job Titles .....	8
Number of ERAU Graduates Employers Know Professionally .....	15
Number of ERAU Graduates Employers Supervise .....	15
Employers Who Are ERAU Graduates .....	16
<b>The ERAU Graduate .....</b>	<b>17</b>
Hiring Preference .....	17
Overall Performance of the ERAU Graduate .....	19
Usefulness of General Skills on the Job and Competence of the ERAU Graduate .....	24
Competence of the ERAU Graduate vs. Competence of Graduates From Other Institutions at General Skills .....	32
Degree-Specific Skills .....	35
Employer Comments .....	35
<b>Appendices .....</b>	
Appendix A – Methodology and Response Rates .....	37
Appendix B – Data Tables .....	41
Appendix C – Survey Materials .....	67
Appendix D – IR Preview .....	77



## ***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY***

The Employer Feedback Survey was administered in the spring of 2001 to employers of the class of 1999 graduates from Daytona Beach, Prescott, and the Extended Campus (made up of graduates from College of Career Education centers/sites {CCE} and the Department of Distance Learning {DDL}). The class of 1999 graduates identified their employers for participation on the Alumni Survey. Information presented in the executive summary is for all ERAU alumni employed in a degree-related job. It is based upon the responses of 217 employers to the Employer Feedback Survey, approximately one and one half years after graduation of the recent alumni. Overall results from all campuses combined are provided here, with further breakouts by campus and major presented in the body of the report. Selected highlights include:

### **Employer and Job Characteristics:**

Please note that the following job characteristics do not account for all ERAU graduates. They only define the ERAU graduate whose employer responded to the survey. For complete alumni statistics please refer to the most recent Alumni Survey report published May 2001.

- ◆ 66% of the graduates' positions were "closely related" to their ERAU degree.
- ◆ The largest fields of work were the "Military" (26%), "Aerospace Industry" (17%), and "Airline" (15%). CCE and DDL graduates had a large impact on "Military" employment with 34% of the respondents in each group being employed in this field.
- ◆ 47% of employers knew between two and five ERAU graduates, while 12% knew only their employee. 41% knew over five Embry-Riddle graduates, up from 34% last year.
- ◆ The majority of employers, 53%, supervised only one ERAU graduate (the recent alumnus). 37% supervised between two and five graduates. 10% supervised more than five Embry-Riddle graduates.
- ◆ 17% of the employers who responded to the survey were ERAU graduates themselves, up from 11% last year.

### **The ERAU Graduate:**

- ◆ 41% of employers preferred to hire ERAU graduates (16% "strong preference", 24% "some preference"). Most employers did not have a preference (58%), while only 2% preferred to hire other graduates (2% "some preference", 0% "strong preference").
- ◆ 91% of employers said that the education of the ERAU graduate met their company's needs.
- ◆ 97% of employers agreed that the graduate was a valuable employee in their company.
- ◆ 88% of employers said that the graduate was a good candidate for promotion.
- ◆ 55% of employers said that the ERAU graduate's skill level was higher than that of other graduates (11% "much higher", 44% "somewhat higher"). 42% said that it was equivalent, and only 3% said that it was lower (3% "somewhat lower", 0% "much lower").

- ◆ Rating the usefulness of a set of sixteen general education skills, employers thought that the most useful general skill was ‘Defining and Solving Problems’ (86% responding “very useful”). The least useful general skill was ‘Political and Economic Awareness’ (14% responding “very useful”).
- ◆ Employers felt that ERAU graduates were the most competent at ‘Independent Work’, while they were the least competent in ‘Political and Economic Awareness’ (76% and 41% responding “excellent” or “very good” respectively). Note, however, that ‘Political and Economic Awareness’ was also rated the least useful skill.
- ◆ When comparing the competence of ERAU graduates to graduates from other institutions, employers rated ERAU graduates higher in every general skill. The largest difference was in ‘Understanding Other People and Other Points of View’ (63% responding “excellent” or “very good” for ERAU graduates compared to 36% for other graduates, a difference of twenty-seven percentage points). The smallest difference was in ‘Political and Economic Awareness’ (41% responding “excellent” or “very good” for ERAU graduates compared to 34% for other graduates, a difference of seven percentage points).
- ◆ Employers also rated the usefulness and competence of the ERAU graduate and other graduates at several degree-specific skills provided by the degree program. The results from these questions are not included here; however, they have been submitted directly to the department in a major profile addendum.
- ◆ Employers were asked to provide comments about the ERAU graduate’s strengths and weaknesses. The main strengths of ERAU graduates were: computer skills, organization, aviation knowledge, communication, and quantitative ability. Eight to twelve comments were made about each strength. The main weaknesses of ERAU graduates were: writing skills, speaking before an audience, hands-on experience, respect for others, and aviation knowledge (note that aviation knowledge was also listed as a strength of ERAU graduates). Four to six comments were made about each weakness.

## ***INTRODUCTION***

The Employer Feedback Survey was created to evaluate how well Embry-Riddle's academic programs are meeting employers' needs and expectations. This information is best obtained from the supervisors of recent graduates. The survey instrument used included questions about the supervisor and his company, the ERAU graduate's overall performance, the usefulness of general and degree-specific skills, and the graduate's level of competence at these skills. Employer participation allows Embry-Riddle to tailor its programs in order to produce graduates who are better prepared to succeed in the workplace.

This edition of the Employer Feedback Survey has been administered twice, beginning in the spring of 2000. Prior to 2000 the group of graduates was measured at varying times after graduation ranging from one to five years. The Employer Feedback Survey is now given every spring to employers of recent graduates, approximately one and one half years after graduation. It has been administered a total of six times since its creation in 1992.

The target group was defined as employers of recent graduates whose jobs were "closely related" or "somewhat related" to their ERAU degree, as indicated by graduates on the 2000 Alumni Survey. 389 graduates from this target group provided the full name and address of their supervisor, who was then sent the survey. Of 363 deliverable surveys, 217 (60%) were completed and returned. The results were weighted statistically in order to correct for disproportionate response rates so that findings are representative of all employers in the target group. Due to rounding, minor numeric inconsistencies exist and some totals may not equal exactly 100%.

This report provides figures and tables for the data, sorted by characteristics such as campus and major. In some instances there are too few respondents to give an accurate result based upon a certain characteristic. In such cases the results are not reported. Results for Extended Campus graduates are split into two separate categories: those who received their degree through a College of Career Education center/site and those who received their degree through the Department of Distance Learning. The following abbreviations are used throughout the report: DB (Daytona Beach Campus), PC (Prescott Campus), CCE (College of Career Education Centers/Sites), and DDL (Department of Distance Learning). When possible, comparisons are made to last year's administration of the survey. By continuing regular administrations more trend data will be available for future reports.

Detailed tables are provided in the appendices, along with the methodology, response rates, samples of survey materials, and IR Preview.

There is also a separate major profile addendum for many degree programs. It provides detailed statistics for a specific degree program for the current year and the last two years combined, and also includes employer comments for the current year. The addendum is sent to the Chancellor and Dean of Academics at each campus, department chairs, and program coordinators.