

Tech sector jobs are in demand as companies beef up security

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IT jobs and salaries are expected to climb in the coming years, as South Florida's techies tap into demand for better security, more accessible corporate information and mobile applications. So, local educators are offering new classes to meet the demand.

Nova Southeastern University is holding a mobile application workshop in Miami in September to serve the growing interest, said Leo Irakliotis, dean of the NSU Graduate School of Computer and Information Sciences.

Irakliotis said more students also want certifications they can complete in three months to beef up their resumes. These include administration of information security and information systems security.

Maria Poviones-Bishop, director of industry relations for the Miami Dade College School of Computer and Engineering Technologies, agreed that certificates continue to be popular, especially in the areas of network training related to Cisco Systems and Microsoft Corp. software and computer infrastructure. And she is seeing phone and smart device application development gathering momentum.

NSU officials say that corporations are looking for techies who can help their companies keep information safe from hackers, as well as meet legal and industry standards for security. New technology hires must be fluent in cloud migration, meaning moving data and application resources outside of a corporation's brick-and-mortar location.

Knowledge management is also growing in demand. Irakliotis explained that, not only do companies want one centralized location for corporate documents and best practices, but they also want the information easily accessible. Information managers also don't want 10 different versions of a dress code, for example, in emails and floating around the internal network.

Seeking Techies with experience

Deborah Vazquez, CEO of Boca Raton-based **Protech** Staffing, said the companies she works with are looking for people who can analyze systems and provide a cost analysis for upgrades, expansions and the like. Programmers with financial knowledge are in great demand as the financial world continues to get its footing. And techies with experience in digitizing and infrastructure creation are in growing demand as the federal healthcare legislation continues its roll out.

Vazquez said part-timers, who are brought in to work on a single project, are also getting more full-time work as companies begin to end their post-economic meltdown hibernation.

Vazquez is also seeing that corporations are increasingly looking for people with experience, which means techies should be doing pro bono projects, if necessary.

Corporations also want experience from their new hires, which makes life for graduates more challenging, said Lenny Chesal, VP of strategic sales and chief marketing officer for Boca Raton-based Host.net.

Chesal, also VP of the board of directors of South Florida Technology Alliance, noted that the job outlook for techies is very good going forward, despite the overabundance of young and veteran professionals in the market.

Chesal said that having real-world experience is increasingly important, especially for entry-level hires as they run up against a corporate landscape that is ever changing. On a positive note, signing bonuses are making a comeback.

Mary Young, director of the Ziff Career Services Center at the University of Miami School of Business, affirms that techies with blended skills that include financial modeling, are increasingly in demand. She also said that demand for real-world experience, while on the rise, is not the only metric being applied to prospective hires. Graduate students, specifically, are being asked for measurable examples of their work.

“They are given some sort of case they have to analyze and present that traditionally has some sort of IT component,” she explained. “I’m hearing it from recruiters who say that companies want metrics at even an internship level: I did this and it had this financial impact.”