

Why you should recruit from community colleges on Handshake

How community colleges can bring more skilled, experienced, and diverse talent into your workforce

Using Handshake to engage with community college students nationwide and create diverse and talented pipelines is a crucial action toward closing the opportunity gap. [Find out more on our blog](#), and get a summary of key information below.

Quick Facts:

35%

of all students in the US attend community college¹

47%

of community college students are from underrepresented groups²

69%

of students entering community college work full- or part-time³

1 in 3

community college students are first generation college students⁴

285k+

community college students on Handshake (and growing!)

Tips for using Handshake to recruit from community colleges

Students from underrepresented groups are less likely to benefit from established professional networks.² This is even more so the case for underrepresented groups who are community college students. That's why Handshake partners with over 650k+ employers to give these students access to opportunities—**no experience, connections, or luck required**. You can, too, by:

- 1. Developing new school partnerships.** Use Handshake to [build relationships with community colleges](#) as one way to diversify your qualified talent pool.
- 2. Leaning into digital recruitment.** [Maintaining a virtual presence](#) with community college students is helpful for building your brand awareness.
- 3. Asking if students have technical accommodations.** Consider partnering with schools on virtual interview prep events to [ensure there is no digital divide](#).
- 4. Offering virtual events, fairs, and 1:1 meetings.** [Virtual relationship-building can level the playing field](#) by giving community college students a way to fit their internship and job searches into their busy schedules.
- 5. Pursuing skills-based hiring.** Consider weighting skills and aptitudes more heavily than credentials. [Skills-based hiring tactics include eliminating GPA](#) and major, from your candidate searches, and using coursework and skills to filter for talent instead.

¹ <https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/community-college-faqs.html>

³ <https://cccse.org/sites/default/files/WorkingLearner.pdf>

² <https://www.aacc.nche.edu/research-trends/fast-facts>

⁴ <https://www.thinkimpact.com/community-college-statistics>

Top 3 job preferences of community college students on Handshake

- Software Developers & Engineers
- Business Analysts & Management Consultants
- Registered Nurses

Top 3 major categories of community college students on Handshake

- Business, Entrepreneurship & Human Resources
- Health Professions
- Arts & Design



Recruiting tip:

Focus on skills. If a student is upskilling through relevant coursework and can receive additional training on the job, go ahead and reach out to them! For jobs where specialized hard skills are needed, look to technical colleges, trade schools, or bootcamps.



Recruiting tip:

Use language like “Associates degrees welcome,” etc. Avoid language like “those working toward a Bachelor’s degree” which speaks to a four-year university student audience and can exclude community college students.

Top STEM skills for community college students on Handshake

- HTML
- Java
- Microsoft Office Suite
- C++
- Python

Top soft skills for community college students on Handshake

- Organization
- Leadership
- Customer service
- Communication
- Problem solving

[Learn more about how Handshake Premium](#) can seamlessly support your addition of community colleges and technical schools to your early talent recruitment strategy.

Get in touch with your account owner for more information.