

**EMBARGOED UNTIL JUNE 13, 2006 AT 9:30 AM**

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## **Research Findings**

May 2006

### **CareerDNA College Seniors Survey**

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## **CareerDNA College Seniors Survey**

### ***Topline Summary of Findings***

**Objectives & Methodology in Brief:** CareerDNA plans to launch a web-based career-guidance program that “integrates self-knowledge and career-guidance management.” At the heart of the offering is the foundational belief that college graduates who pursue a career about which they’re passionate will be more successful. In order to test the need for such a service, TRU was commissioned to conduct survey research among soon-to-be college graduates about their post-graduate plans. The research, conducted over the internet, was fielded April 6-14, 2006. A total of 502 college seniors nationwide participated. The sample is representative of college seniors nationally.

### **Summary in Brief**

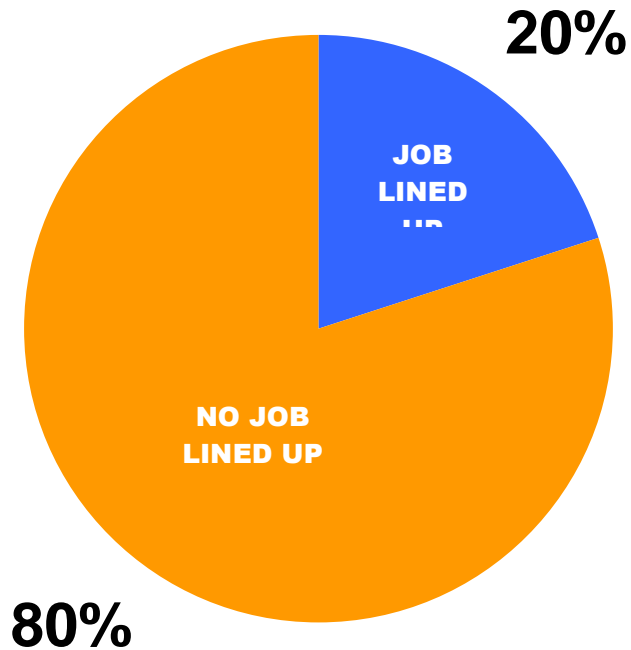
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**J**ust weeks before graduation, the vast majority of college seniors report having no job lined up and no definite plans in place for how to get one. Most respondents say they obtained little guidance from college career centers—and those who did seemed to regard it as of limited value. Even those lucky few with a job lined up worry that it may not be the best career path for them. This research shows that college students have a clear and pressing need for guidance in 1) identifying a career path that fits their specific interests, skills, and passions; and 2) showing them how them to pursue that career.



## Most outgoing college seniors have no solid job prospects

HAVE A JOB LINED UP?



**Q.10:** "Do you have a job lined up after you graduate from college?"

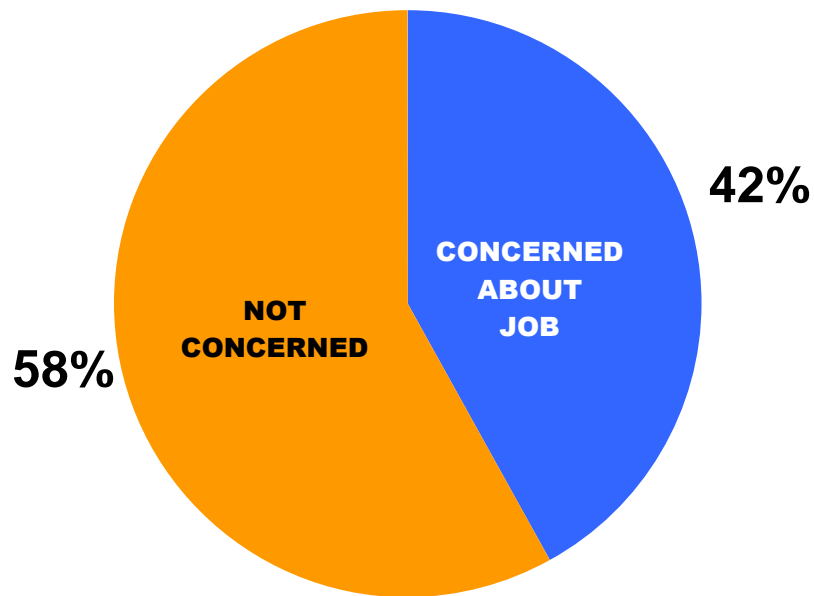
- > On the eve of college graduation, an overwhelming 80% of seniors say they have **not** lined up a job.
  - » Nearly two-thirds (65%) of those who don't have a plan in place for getting a job say they're concerned about not having a plan.

CONCERNED NO PLAN IN PLACE TO GET A JOB	
<b>Concerned</b> ("Somewhat" to "extremely concerned")	<b>65%</b>
<b>Not Concerned</b> ("Not at all" or "not very concerned")	<b>35%</b>

**Q.14:** "How concerned, if at all, are you that you don't have a job lined up?" [**Base:** No job lined up and no plan in place to get one (n=141)]

## Graduating seniors with jobs lined up remain wary

**CONCERNED THAT NEW JOB DOESN'T FIT  
(BASE: HAVE JOB LINED UP)**

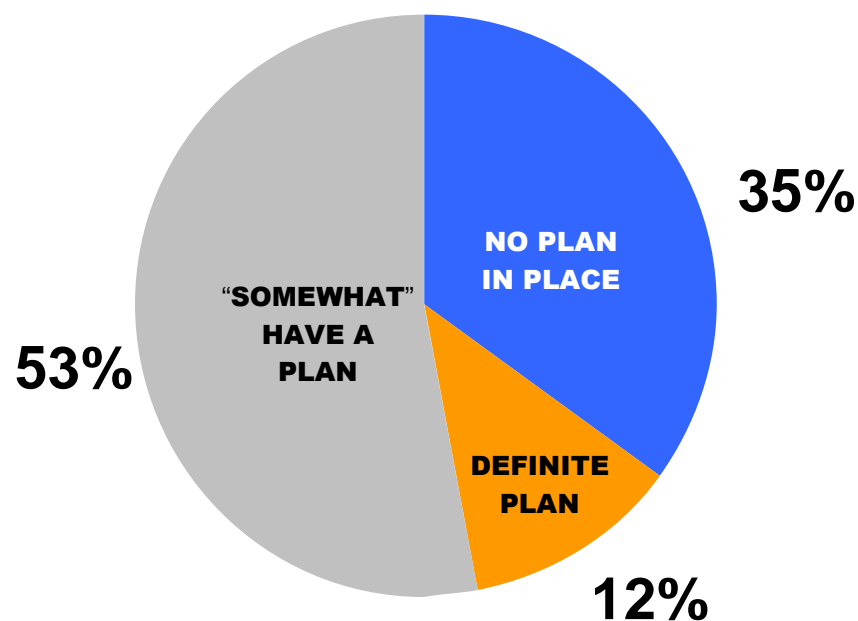


**Q.11:** "How concerned, if at all, are you that the job you have lined up does not fit with your interests, skills, and/or talents?" [Base: Job lined up (n=100)]

- > Even those relatively few graduates who have employment arranged post-graduation say they worry that their new job might not be right for them.
  - » More than two in five (42%) are concerned that their just-adopted career path doesn't fit with their interests, skills, and talents.

## Few jobless seniors claim to have a definite plan to obtain employment

HAVE PLAN FOR GETTING A JOB AFTER COLLEGE?

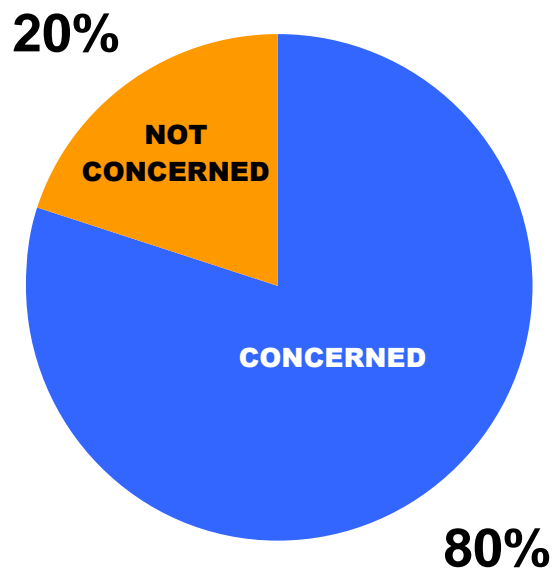


**Q.12:** "Do you have a specific plan in place for getting a job after college?" [Base: No job lined up after college (n=402)]

- > Only 12% of outgoing seniors say they "definitely" have a plan in place to find a job.
- > More than one-third (35%) say they have no plan in place.
- > More than half (53%) equivocated that they have only "somewhat" of a plan.

## Those without a plan worried about their lack of direction

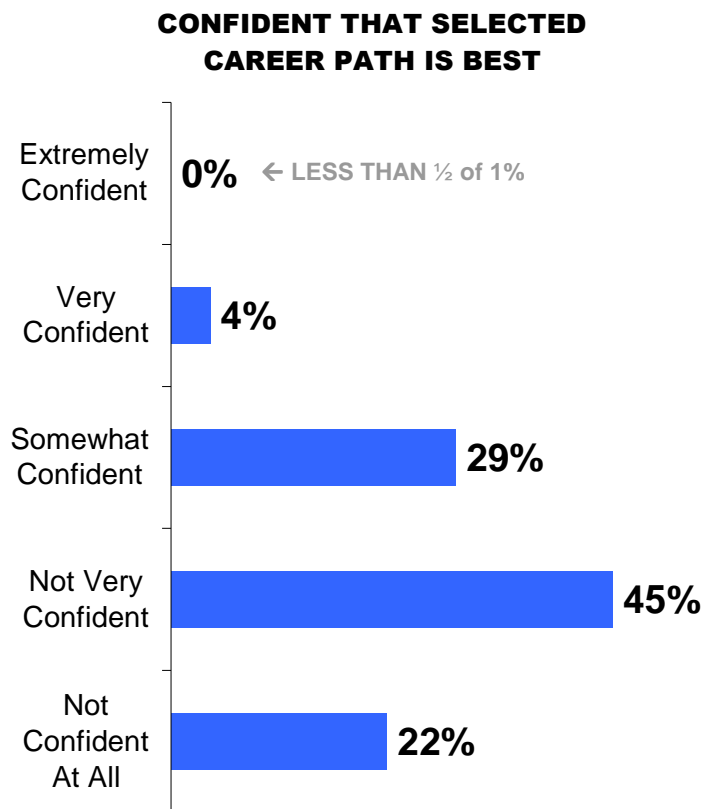
### CONCERNED WHETHER THEIR PLANNED JOB WILL BE A "FIT"



**Q.13:** "How concerned, if at all, are you as to whether the job you're planning to get when you graduate will fit with your interests, skills, and/or talents?" [Base: Plan in place to get job (n=261)]

- > Most respondents without a solid plan to find a job say their lack of direction concerns them.
- > Of those with a plan in place, fully 80% are concerned about whether the job they'll get after graduation will fit with their interests, skills, and talents.
  - » Nearly two-thirds (65%) of soon-to-be graduates with no job and no solid plan say they're "extremely," "very," or "somewhat" concerned about their current position.

## An extreme minority of work-bound seniors claim high confidence in their career path

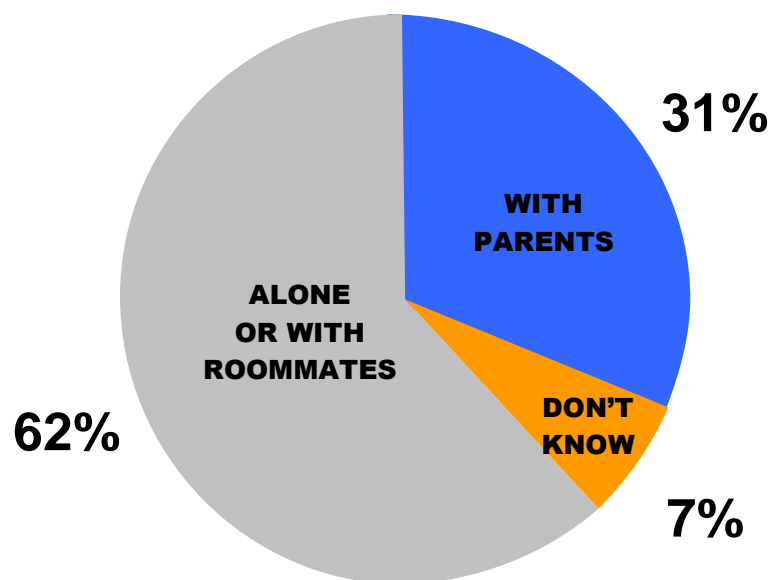


**Question 21:** “How confident are you that you’ve selected the career path that is best for you?” [Base: Career path known (n=450)]

- > Only 4% of students who claim to know their career path say they’re “extremely” or “very” confident that their selected career path is best for them.
- > A staggering 67% say they’re just **not** confident in their chosen career path.

## Facing an uncertain future, many graduating seniors are making fall-back plans

POST-GRADUATE LIVING PLANS

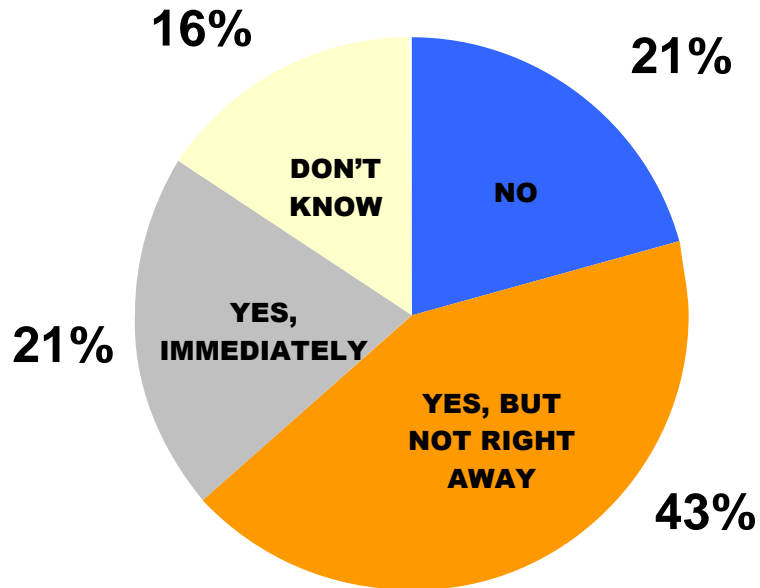


Question 15: "Where do you expect to live once you graduate?"

- > Nearly one-third of outgoing seniors (31%) say they plan to live with their parents after graduation.
  - » Another 7% of respondents simply don't know where they'll live.

**Graduate school often an appealing alternative for jobless, direction-less seniors**

**WHETHER PLAN TO ATTEND GRAD-SCHOOL**



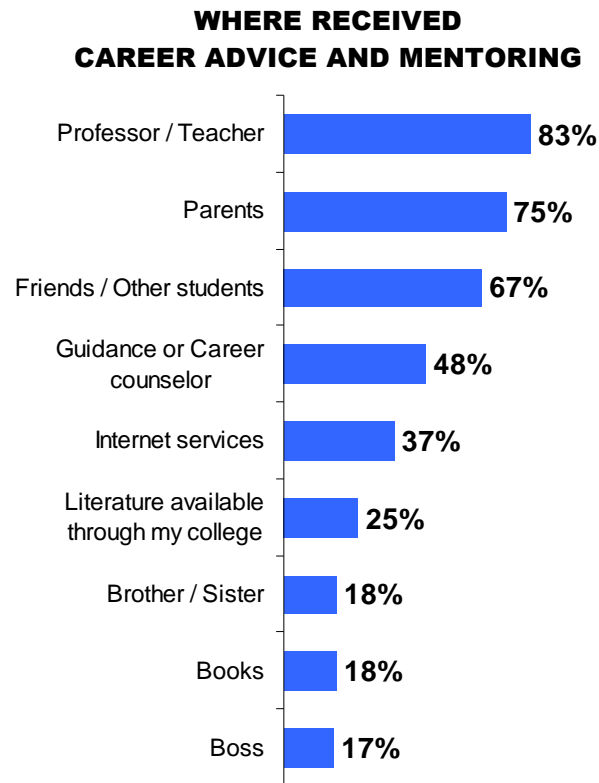
**Question 16:** “Do you plan to attend grad school after finishing your undergrad degree?”

- > Two-thirds of respondents say they plan to attend graduate school at some time, with more than 20% planning to attend right away.
  - » Of those who plan to pursue a post-graduate education immediately, 20% say they simply **don't know what else to do**.
  - » Four in 10 (40%) say they **want to maintain their student lifestyle** for a few more years.

REASONS FOR ATTENDING GRAD SCHOOL	
Don't know what else to do	20%
Maintaining student lifestyle for a few more years is important	40%

**Question 17:** “Thinking about your decision to attend grad school, how much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?”  
 [Base: Plan to attend grad school (n=319); those “strongly” or “somewhat” agreeing reported]

## Students who've sought career advice prefer to obtain it from trusted mentors and authority figures



**Question 9:** "From where have you received your career advice and mentoring?" [Base: received career advice and mentoring (n=395)]

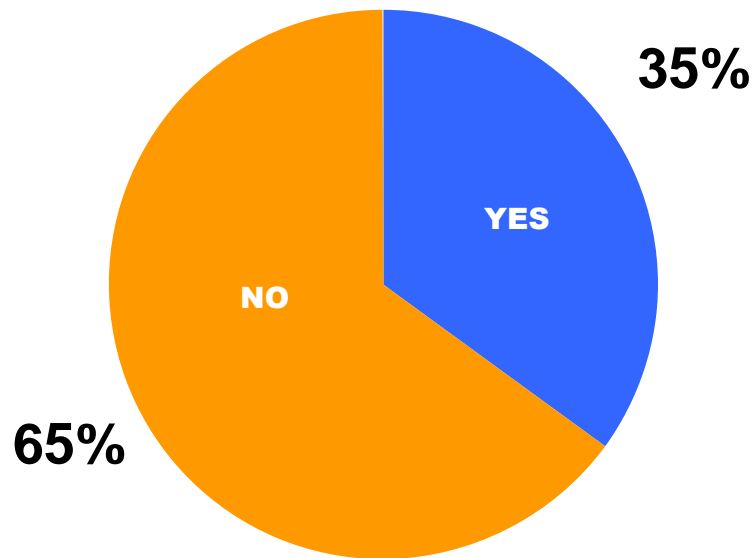
- > College seniors report leaning on professors (83%) and parents (75%) for the bulk of their career advice.
- > Less than half of respondents utilized college guidance or career counselors.
  - » Although students tend to place their trust in mentors and authority figures, more nonetheless have received career advice from inexperienced friends and peers (67%) than from college career counselors (48%).
- > More than one in five college seniors (21%) say they've **never** received any kind of career advice or mentoring.

CAREER ADVICE AND MENTORING RECEIVED	
None	21%
A little	59%
A lot	19%

**Question 8:** "Have you received career advice and mentoring?"

**Nearly two-thirds of graduating seniors have never used their college career center to make post-graduate plans**

**WHETHER USED COLLEGE CAREER CENTER**



**Question 18:** “Did you use the college career center at all for making post-graduation plans?”

**Question 19:** “How helpful was the college career center for...”  
[Base: Used college career center (n=176)]

- > Fully 65% of respondents say they’ve never bothered to use their college career center.
- > Only 35% of outgoing seniors have used college career centers to plan for the future.
- > Of those who have used career centers...:
  - » ...only 28% say they’re helpful for making post-graduation plans.
  - » ...just 22% say career centers help match their *interests* with potential careers.
  - » ...a paltry 18% claim career centers are useful in matching *personal skills and talents* with career options.