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# PITTSBURGH BUSINESSTIMES

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## Personnel heads say new grads coming with higher expectations

Pittsburgh Business Times - by [Tracy Carbasho](#)

Recent college graduates are entering the work force with more than a degree. They're bringing a bit of moxie.

A new generation of workers is keeping human resources officials on their toes by seeking a high degree of job responsibility with enough flexibility to enjoy a personal life.

"Companies really have to sell themselves today and be up front about the type of work-life balance programs and opportunities for advancement they offer," said Cheryl Bean, president of the Wexford-based **Compass HR Solutions LLC**. "Employees coming from college want to move up the ladder quickly, so it's important for companies to keep the work challenging."

One of those new workers is 23-year-old Ryan Moore, who graduated from **Thiel College** in Greenville, Pa., in May and began working in July as a software support engineer at **Matrix Solutions**, a software developer on the North Side. With a triple major in management information systems, Web development and e-commerce, he wanted to work at Matrix because he knew there were opportunities for advancement.

"When I interviewed for the position, they asked me about my plans for the future and told me I wouldn't be in tech support for long," Moore said. "I'd like to move into a consulting position in the future where I would be responsible for communicating between the customers and the technicians."

Bill Thomas, partner and vice president at Compass, said economic stability is also important to young workers, making retention a bit tricky for companies.

"Employers will have to get more creative with their compensation and benefits packages," Thomas said. "They will have to develop different ways to deliver economic stability to these young people."

In addition, Bean said, young employees are accustomed to using technology for both personal and professional reasons, and some companies have limited the use of high-tech tools, such as iPods and text messaging, during business hours.

"We've written policies for companies stating that the use of such technology has to be work-related," she said. "Companies also want to make sure that e-mails sent from their computers meet the standards of the company and do not contain any improprieties."



Joe Wojcik

Bill Thomas, a partner at Compass HR Solutions LLC, works with Matrix Solutions Human Resources Manager Holly Grabowski at a planning workshop.

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Being a technology company, Matrix naturally welcomes the use of the latest high-tech gadgets.

"I've heard horror stories from companies where employees surf the Internet all day for personal reasons, but I believe technology can sometimes help employees do their jobs better," Matrix President D.J. Cavanaugh said. "For example, one of our software developers and some people in quality assurance use headsets for music because it helps them focus on their jobs rather than listening to the noise around them."

**Sisterson Inc.**, a Downtown accounting firm, is addressing the work-life balance issue by letting employees work a week of four 10-hour days, offering part-time and temporary assignments, letting senior staff members with at least two years of experience work from home once a week and giving newer employees the chance to work from home one day a month.

"The majority of our new hires are straight from college," said Harry Keefe, director of finance and administration at Sisterson. "The new employees today want to move up quicker, but as long as everyone is contributing to the organization, everyone has the opportunity to move ahead, so there is no competition between the new employees and the older workers."

*Tracy Carbasho is a freelance writer.*

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