

**Press Release**

**ENGLISH PROFICIENCY CRITICAL TO ENHANCE EMPLOYABILITY OF GRADUATES**

MORE than 90% of respondents to the latest MEF Salary Surveys 2016 indicated the need for graduates to improve on English proficiency in order to become more employable.

At the launching of the salary surveys, MEF President Tan Sri Azman Dato' Seri Haron highlighted that "73.2% of the respondent companies indicated that graduates lacked skills in problem solving as well as communication skills".

"In order to enhance the employability of graduates, he stated that 90.3% of the respondent companies were of the view that it was important to improve the proficiency of English to increase the employability of graduates followed by developing soft skills, such as communication, problem solving and management skills (87%)," said Tan Sri Azman.

The survey findings also revealed that 83.5% of the respondent companies indicated that graduates have high salary expectations – fresh graduates with Diploma qualification expected an average of RM2,070 of monthly basic salary followed by degree qualification (RM2,725), while fresh graduates with Masters degree expected basic monthly salary at RM3,447 as compared with the salary offered by employers at RM1,622 (Diploma), RM2,566 (Degree), RM3,197 (Master Degree).

He said in 2016, 58.4% of the respondent companies recruited graduates to fill vacancies in accountancy and finance followed by human resources (53.7%), administration (49.5%) and sales (42%).

"90.8% of respondents viewed interpersonal skills as important attributes that they look for when hiring graduates followed by prior working experience (90%) and team work skills (78%).

"About 66.8% of those surveyed were of the view that it was important to collaborate with higher education institutions in designing the curriculum and study program," he added.

In addition, 84.6% of the respondents indicated that the higher education institutions should make courses more relevant to the needs of industry in order to improve the employability of graduates, and 77.8% of them indicated that practical experiences should be included in the study courses.

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