

▶ Latest Trends in IT & Engineering Staffing and Solutions

BLS Jobs Report: The Good, The Bad and The Hopeful

The recent monthly report from the Bureau of Labor Statistics brought plenty of news, both good and not so great. Job growth slowed in August, with the economy adding only 156,000 jobs – quite a few short from the expected 180,000. In contrast, IT jobs grew 0.1 percent sequentially, with engineering employment increasing by 0.2 percent.

Though Hurricanes Harvey and Irma had no effect on the current report, they likely will impact jobs numbers soon. CNBC expects the storm's effects to appear in several weeks as people begin filing unemployment claims. As expected, the restoration effort will add construction and other jobs. However, those jobs will be disbursed over time as government aid and insurance money trickle in.

But projections for our economic near future are hopeful. The Washington Post reported that PNC chief economist Gus Faucher sees no cause for concern ahead, based upon these findings. CNN Money takes a buoyant position as well, citing the wide distribution of job growth across the economy. Nearly two-thirds of industry sectors added jobs in the previous month, most notably, health care, construction and auto plants. And despite more anemic job growth in the overall labor market, both IT and engineering job growth increased in August.

Source: CareerBuilder

10 Key Tech Skills and Certifications That Boost Salaries

The certifications and other credentials after tech professionals' names often resemble alphabet soup, making it difficult to determine which skills matter most. To an employer, certifications and skills mean having a worker who can meet challenges head-on. For employees, those letters can mean big increases in salary.

The following tech skills and certifications can give you a robust resume and a bigger paycheck:

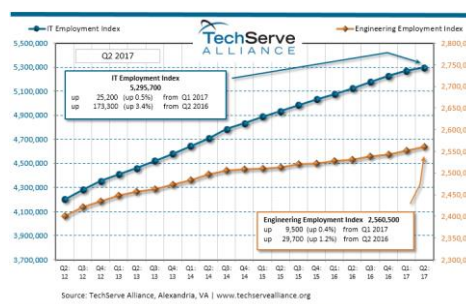
Top-Paying Tech Certifications

- Certified Information Security Manager (CISM): \$128,156
- AWS Certified Solutions Architect – Associate: \$125,091
- Certified Information Systems Auditor (CISA): \$115,471
- Certified in Risk and Information Systems Control (CRISC): \$111,470
- Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP): \$109,650

Top-Paying Tech Skills

- Software Engineers Using Java: \$168,000
- HBase: \$123,934
- Cassandra: \$123,459
- Apache Kafka: \$122,728
- Structural Query Language (SQL): \$110,000

IT And Engineering Job Growth Strengthens



The number of IT jobs grew 0.5% sequentially last quarter to 5,295,700. On a year-over-year basis, IT employment grew by 3.4% since Q2 2016, adding 173,300 IT workers. Engineering jobs increased by 0.4% to 2,560,500 and are up 1.2%, or 29,700 workers, from Q2 2016.

The State of STEM Funding

STEM funding often seems like a local issue, as we read about schools winning grants and universities expanding their STEM programs. While it surely is a local endeavor, STEM education funding is at its core a policy issue with a reach well beyond our communities.

According to U.S. News & World Report, the Trump Administration's position on STEM funding remains uncertain. Based on its initial budget proposal, we may see efforts to cut STEM funding in fiscal year 2018. STEM programs at the Department of Energy, Department of Defense and National Science Foundation may see reduced funding levels. The future of the Offices of Education at NASA and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration are also unclear.

All of us who work in areas that depend upon knowledge workers with a background in science, technology, engineering and math industries have a duty as it relates to STEM education funding: first is to become informed on the facts, from where we are now to where we are going. Secondly, we need to take actions critical to the success of our sector and the U.S. economy as a whole. Stand up for STEM education by volunteering your time, making a donation, or working to persuade lawmakers that STEM funding should be a national priority.

Unemployment Rates Remain Low in Q3 for High Demand Technical Skill Sets

The unemployment rate for most IT skill sets is below the unemployment rate of the overall workforce; the unemployment rate for engineering occupations is more varied. (see chart)

How is Access to H-1B Visas Faring Under Trump Administration?

The IT skills gap is growing, according to a recent CompTIA study. In fact, out of 600 executives surveyed, 46 percent believe the gap has widened in the last two years.

The impetus for this increase is the United States' deficit of STEM graduates. In 2016, the U.S. graduated just 568,000 students in STEM, compared to 2.6M in India and 4.7M in China. Population size differences aside, it is clear that the majority of the world's STEM graduates are not from the U.S.

IT Occupations (Q2 2017)	
Computer and information systems managers	2.9%
Computer hardware engineers	3.5
Computer and information research scientists	--
Computer network architects	2.7
Computer occupations, all other	3.1
Computer programmers	0.7
Computer support specialists	4.7
Computer systems analysts	2.3
Database administrators	1.9
Information security analysts	4.6
Network and computer systems administrators	--
Software developers, applications and systems software	1.3
Engineering Occupations (Q2 2017)	
Aerospace engineers	3.9
Architectural and engineering managers	1.6
Chemical engineers	5.9
Civil engineers	1.8
Electrical and electronic engineers	4.1
Industrial engineers, including health and safety	1.6
Materials engineers	--
Mechanical engineers	3.4
Mining and geological engineers, including mining safety engineers	4.8
Petroleum engineers	0.4
Engineering technicians, except drafters	2.1
Engineers, all others	2.4
Source: unpublished tabulations of Current Population Survey data furnished by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics	



This is where the H-1B visa comes in. This program helps companies obtain the critical talent they need for their business and supports U.S. economic growth..

Trump's Buy American/Hire American executive order signaled the Administration's intentions to curtail access to the H-1B program. While many of the changes would require legislation or formal rulemaking, a number of interim actions appear to have already had a chilling effect on the use of the H-1B visa in some quarters.

