

# World's most attractive employers | 2016

RESEARCH FROM UNIVERSUM UNCOVERS UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' ATTITUDES ABOUT GLOBAL EMPLOYERS AND WHAT DRIVES THEIR CAREER DECISION-MAKING.



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# EACH YEAR, UNIVERSUM SURVEYS OVER ONE MILLION CAREER SEEKERS FROM 57 COUNTRIES, ASKING WHICH EMPLOYERS THEY HOLD IN HIGHEST REGARD.

The rankings not only chart the fortunes of individual companies' talent-attraction efforts, but also document industry-level pressures and students' shifting ideas about what defines an ideal employer.



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For employers, gauging what students find attractive is more important than ever. The 2016 CEO survey from PwC shows **72 percent** of global CEOs cite skills shortages as a threat to their business (up from 46 percent six years ago). And advances in digital media are driving the need for a much greater diversity of skills; **81 percent** of CEOs say they're searching for a wider mix of skills than before.<sup>1</sup>



72%  
**OF CEOs**

CITE SKILLS SHORTAGES AS A THREAT TO THEIR BUSINESS



UP FROM  
**46%**  
SIX YEARS  
AGO



81%  
**OF CEOs**

SAY THEY ARE SEARCHING FOR A WIDER MIX OF SKILLS THAN BEFORE

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.pwc.com/gx/en/services/people-organisation/publications/people-strategy.html>

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Add to this global companies from *all* industries – not just the tech industry – are competing for top technology talent. And disruptive players such as Uber and Tesla Motors are competing with industry heavyweights like Google and Apple for the best students.

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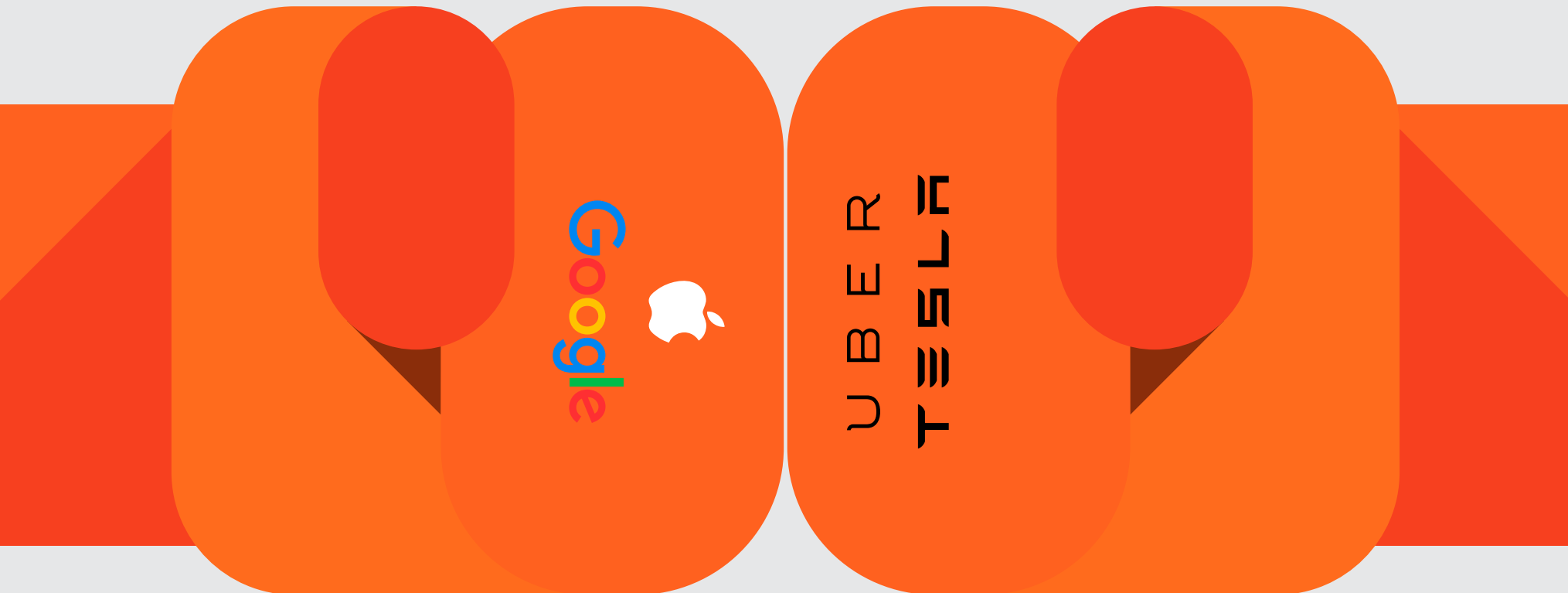
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# THE DATA-DRIVEN INSIGHTS ON THESE PAGES ARE INTENDED TO OFFER INSIGHTS AND DIRECTION TO EMPLOYERS WRESTLING WITH TALENT SHORTAGES.

## ABOUT THE 'WORLD'S MOST ATTRACTIVE EMPLOYER' RESEARCH

Universum's annual survey of career seekers aims to understand attitudes about work life and career goals, and gauge perceptions about the attractiveness of top global employers. To become a World's Most Attractive Employer (WMAE), companies must rank in the top 90 percent of employers within at least six regional markets. (For more information about study methodology, see <http://bit.ly/WMAE16>.)

What we present in this report is a small fraction of Universum's WMAE research analysis and insights. To find out more, visit <http://universumglobal.com/rankings/world/>.

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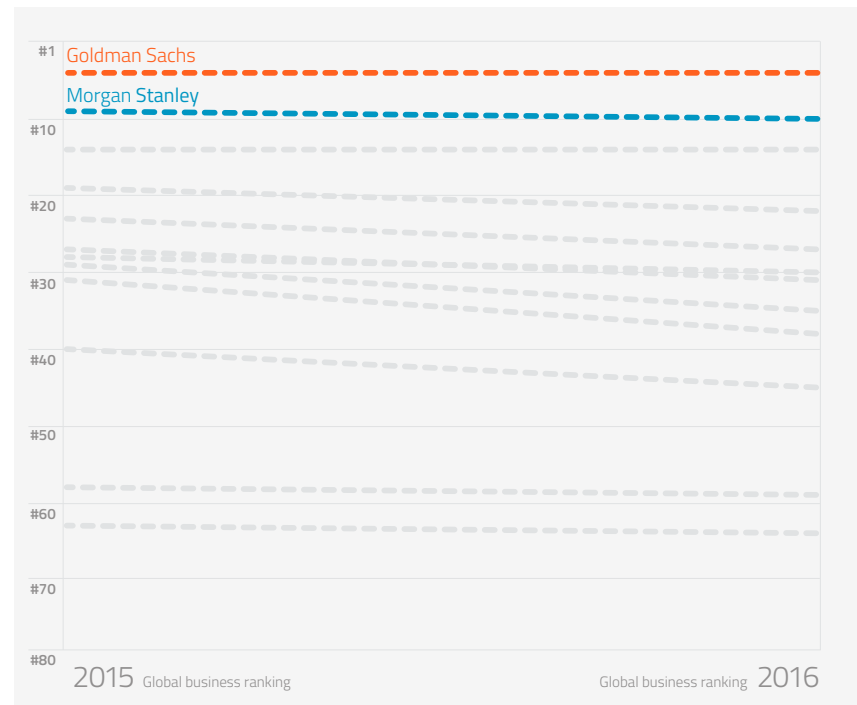
Industry shifts pull most – but not all –  
boats in the same direction

Among business students, financial services employers were hardest hit. Ten out of 12 WMAEs in financial services lost ground in the rankings. Only Goldman Sachs and Morgan Stanley held on to their spots.

What helps employers hang on while the industry falters? For Goldman Sachs, an investment in digital and social media is finally paying dividends. While banks aren't particularly well known for digital prowess, Goldman shows even highly regulated industries can leverage digital and social channels. The company uses Snapchat, for example, to advertise its college recruiting channel – gaining a first-mover advantage on the platform.<sup>2</sup>

### FIGURE 1: GOLDMAN SACHS AND MORGAN STANLEY HANG ON TO TOP SPOTS

Most attractive companies among business students



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<sup>2</sup> <https://business.linkedin.com/talent-solutions/blog/employer-brand/2016/how-ge-and-goldman-sachs-are-using-snapchat-to-get-students-attention>

Engineering and IT talent rewarded financial services companies for their efforts as they try to compete against tech companies for workers.

Goldman Sachs, in particular, has been working hard to woo technology talent. Among global engineering and IT talent, Goldman Sachs rose an impressive eight spots to number 21. The rise is due to a concerted effort by the company over the last two years to describe its innovation work.<sup>3</sup>

Perhaps most interesting, the company's rise on the WMAE ranking is driven in large part by gains in France, India, Japan, Canada and Australia – showing highly targeted local strategies can influence big changes in global brand perception.



<sup>3</sup> [http://dealbook.nytimes.com/2014/11/13/goldman-sachs-recasts-its-reputation-to-woo-tech-talent/?\\_r=1](http://dealbook.nytimes.com/2014/11/13/goldman-sachs-recasts-its-reputation-to-woo-tech-talent/?_r=1)

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Among engineering students, the tech industry lost a lot of its luster. Hardware-focused companies and electronics manufacturers were particularly hard hit.

Companies like Nokia, HP and Philips were among the hardest hit – each dropping double-digits in their rankings this year. Nokia's consumer brand suffered after Microsoft acquired its phone business in 2013, then proceeded to write off \$8.6 billion over two years to account for the failed investment. And uncertainty over HP's split (the tech behemoth split into two units, Hewlett Packard Enterprise and HP Inc. in late 2015) likely contributed to its loss. Most software-oriented companies held their ground, with the exception of Oracle, which fell six positions to number 27.



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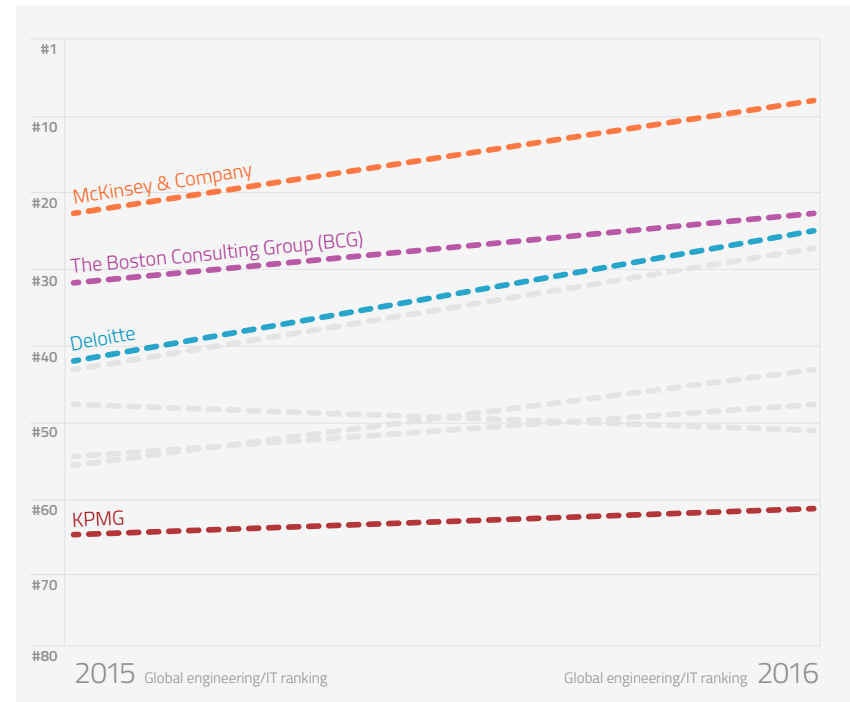
Players in the professional services industry were big winners among engineering and IT students as all are pushing hard to compete with tech companies for top talent.

Of the eight professional service firms ranked most attractive among engineering/IT talent, seven gained ground – many of them winning two-digit increases. Deloitte jumped 15 positions from 2015 to 2016, Accenture rose 14 and McKinsey – the highest ranking firm in this category – jumped an impressive 13 spots in the same period.

These jumps are partially explained by the higher weighting of US companies in 2016 due to higher GDP relative to other regions in the rankings, yet significant improvements also came from greater investments in digital media strategies.

**FIGURE 2: BIG WINS (AND LOSSES) IN PROFESSIONAL SERVICES**

Most attractive companies among engineering/IT students



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Among business students, professional services also fared well – though improvements were much more modest than those found among engineering/IT students.

Two-thirds of professional service firms either held on to their positions or gained modestly. Accenture and Grant Thornton gained the most ground, rising four and three ranks, respectively.



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'Local hero' employers often aren't included in the official WMAE list but have outside influence in certain geographies.

Huawei, a Chinese multinational networking and telecommunications company, debuted on the WMAE list this year at number 57 among engineering and IT talent. The company presents an interesting case as it's a powerhouse employer brand in China (ranking number one among engineering and IT students), yet still an up-and-comer on the global stage.

In the United States, coffee giant Starbucks and outdoor clothier Patagonia are attractive employers among students (landing 20 and 18 on the business list, respectively) yet don't have nearly the same cachet in other markets.

'Local heroes' like Huawei and Starbucks can have outside influence on local labor markets, meaning companies must stay vigilant of these local leaders even if they don't appear to be a threat in global rankings. [FIGURE 3](#)




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**FIGURE 3**  
**LOCAL HERO EMPLOYERS**

These local hero employers have not yet made their entrance as a World's Most Attractive Employer, however, they do have great influence in their local labor markets.



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FIGURE 4

**BIG WINNERS: THESE COMPANIES GAINED THE MOST GROUND**

While most companies' positions on the WMAE list remain relatively stable year-over-year, some employers notched big gains in 2016.

AMONG BUSINESS STUDENTS

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AMONG ENGINEERING/IT STUDENTS

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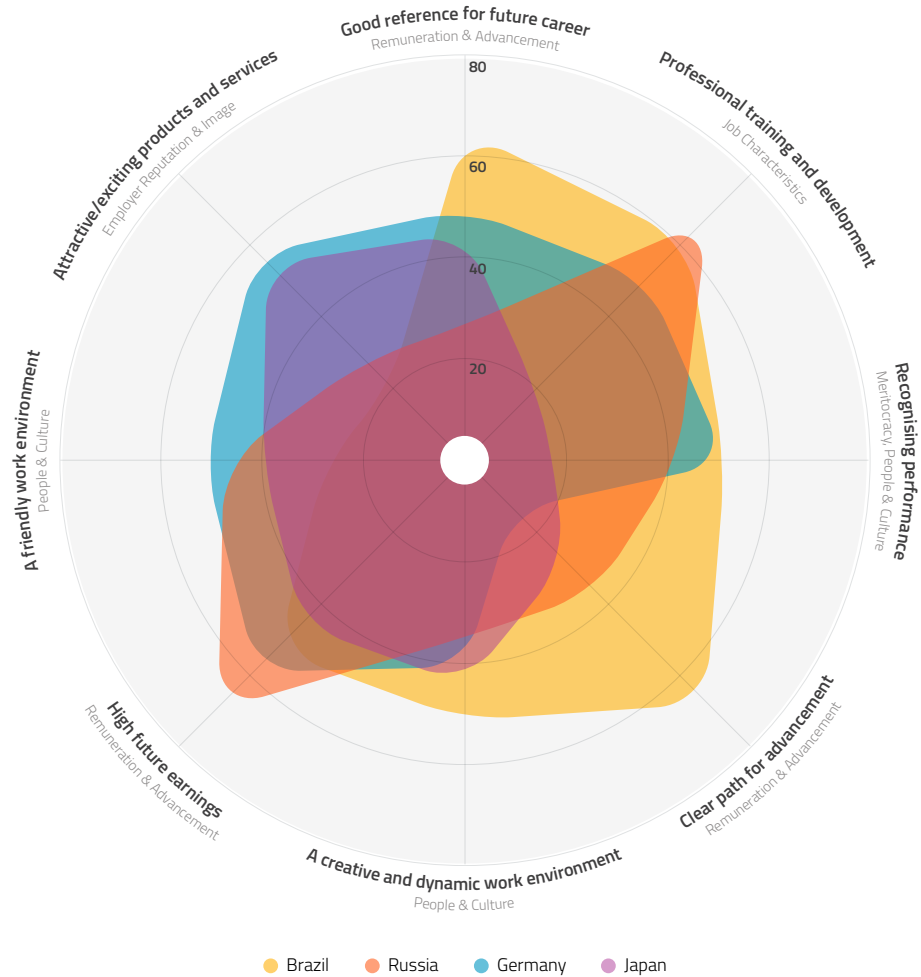
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**FIGURE 5**  
**CAREER GOALS AND**  
**WORK-STYLE PREFERENCES**  
**BUSINESS**

The career goals and work-style preferences of young talent vary greatly by region, meaning employers must adapt their message to these differences, as well as find areas of commonality.



Note: career goal data for the purpose of this ebook is according to the WMAE methodology.

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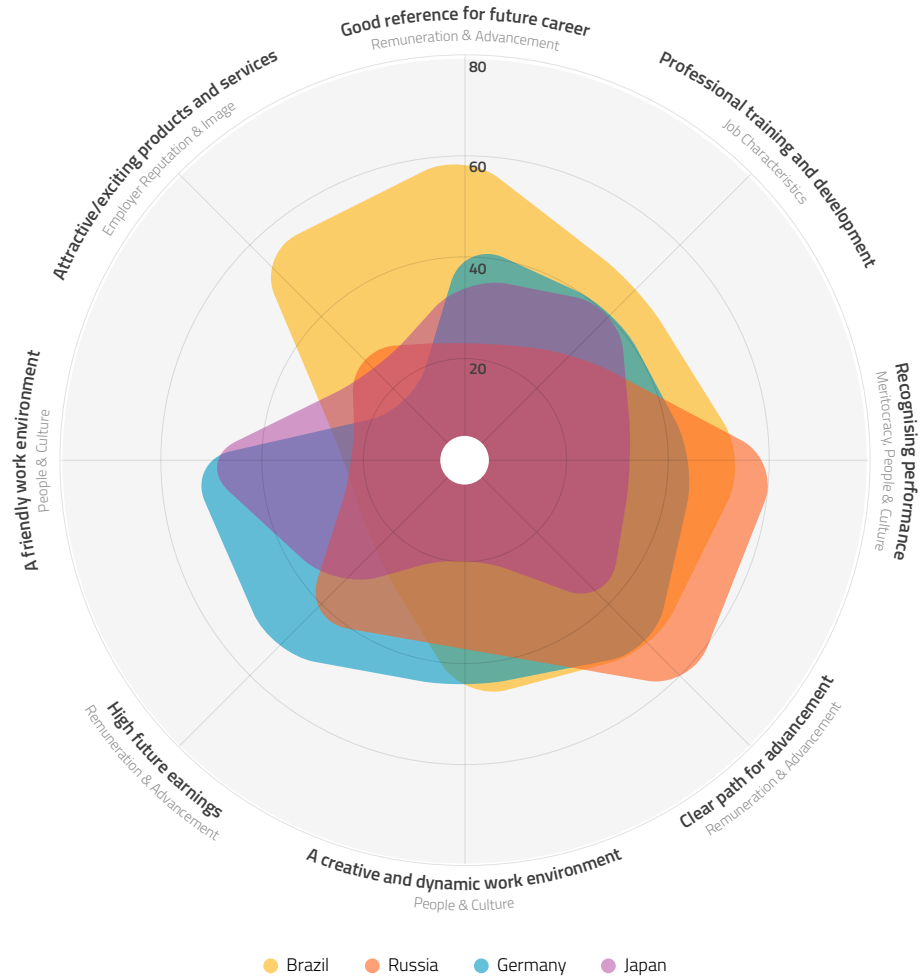
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**FIGURE 6**  
**CAREER GOALS AND**  
**WORK-STYLE PREFERENCES**  
**ENGINEERING/IT**

The career goals and work-style preferences of young talent vary greatly by region, meaning employers must adapt their message to these differences, as well as find areas of commonality.



Note: career goal data for the purpose of this ebook is according to the WMAE methodology.

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# The employer perspective

In addition to surveying young talent entering the job market, Universum also surveys employees inside organizations who work to attract future talent. What can employers – particularly those inside the World's Most Attractive Employers – tell us about their recruiting goals and attraction/retention challenges?

**OUR RESEARCH SHOWS A PROMISING AREA OF FOCUS: INSPIRING PURPOSE AMONG EMPLOYEES.**

Universum research consistently shows students *on average* seek out employers that offer job security and work-life balance – yet big global averages hide interesting variation at the country level. For example, engineering/IT students in Russia have a high interest in becoming functional experts (a desire that is significantly lower in the US and UK) and engineering/IT students in France feel strongly that they want to be dedicated to a cause or feel their work serves a greater good. And career goals and preferences vary not just by region, but by industry and even by subgroup (e.g. women versus men, business versus engineering).

Despite all this variety, the data points to an interesting area of



commonality: inspiring purpose. Our research suggests that a significant proportion of WMAEs believe that 'inspiring purpose' is a key component in their EVPs, key to attracting the right kind of talent for

their organizations. 'Changing the world' and 'making an impact' have become common calls to action for these companies and these claims resonate strongly with how students define 'purposeful work'.

In Figure 7, it's clear students have a shared sense of what they find defines purposeful work. Most find purpose in working for organizations that are committed to improving the world around them, and committed to improving lives, for example.

Employers must be sure, however, that purpose-driven messaging doesn't overshadow the practical attributes young workers often value strongly as they start out in their careers. For example, our research shows young talent has a high interest in security, professional development and remuneration – all practical issues related to career advancement.

**FIGURE 7**

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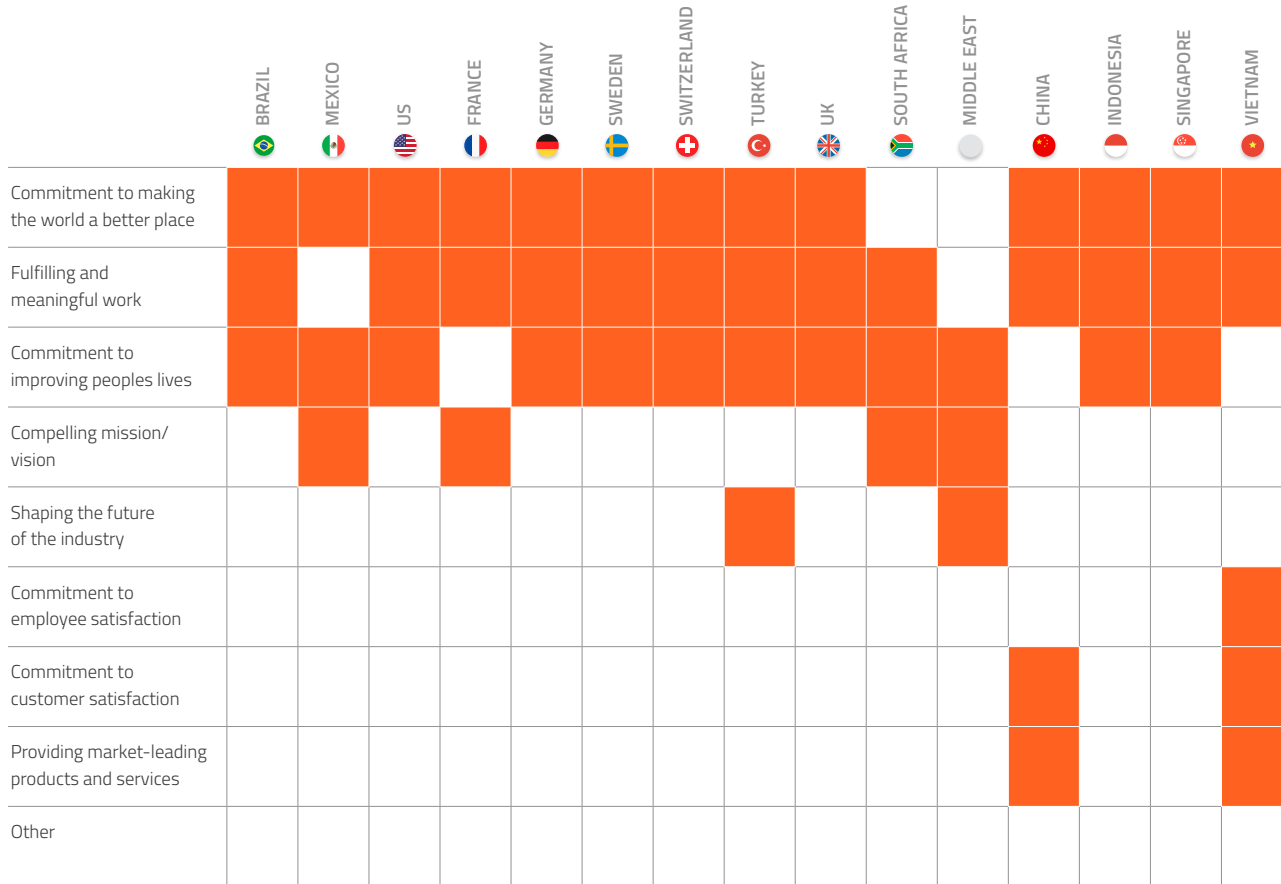
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FIGURE 7

WHAT DEFINES PURPOSEFUL WORK?  
BY COUNTRY



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# World's Most Attractive Employers

**TOP 50: 2016 WORLD'S MOST ATTRACTIVE EMPLOYERS ACCORDING TO BUSINESS STUDENTS**

To wrap up our findings, we present the Top 50 Most Attractive Employers according to business students.

To qualify for the WMAE listing, employers must rank in the top 90 percent in at least six major markets. Total points are weighted by country GDP to reflect companies' relative market strength.



EMPLOYER	2016
Google	1
Apple	2
EY (Ernst & Young)	3
Goldman Sachs	4
PwC (PricewaterhouseCoopers)	5
Deloitte	6
Microsoft	7
KPMG	8
L'Oréal Group	9
J.P. Morgan	10
McKinsey & Company	11
The Boston Consulting Group (BCG)	12
Procter & Gamble (P&G)	13
Morgan Stanley	14
BMW Group	15
Nike	16
Sony	17

EMPLOYER	2016
The Coca-Cola Co.	18
adidas group	19
Unilever	20
Johnson & Johnson	21
Bank of America (BofAML)	22
IKEA	23
IBM	24
Nestlé	25
Bain & Company	26
Deutsche Bank	27
LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton	28
Accenture	29
Citi	30
Barclays	31
PepsiCo	32
General Electric (GE)	33

EMPLOYER	2016
Grant Thornton	34
HSBC	35
Daimler/Mercedes-Benz	36
Heineken	37
Credit Suisse	38
Intel	39
Volkswagen Group	40
AB InBev	41
Ford Motor Company	42
Oracle	43
Toyota	44
UBS	45
General Motors (GM)	46
Samsung	47
Shell Oil Company	48
Dell	49
3M	50

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**TOP 50: 2016 WORLD'S MOST ATTRACTIVE EMPLOYERS ACCORDING TO ENGINEERING/IT STUDENTS**

To wrap up our findings, we present the Top 50 Most Attractive Employers according to engineering/IT students.

To qualify for the WMAE listing, employers must rank in the top 90 percent in at least six major markets. Total points are weighted by country GDP to reflect companies' relative market strength.



EMPLOYER	2016
Google	1
Microsoft	2
Apple	3
BMW Group	4
IBM	5
General Electric (GE)	6
Intel	7
Siemens	8
Samsung	9
Sony	10
Procter & Gamble (P&G)	11
Johnson & Johnson	12
Ford Motor Company	13
Shell Oil Company	14
General Motors (GM)	15
L'Oréal Group	16
McKinsey & Company	17

EMPLOYER	2016
The Coca-Cola Co.	18
Daimler/Mercedes-Benz	19
Volkswagen Group	20
Goldman Sachs	21
ExxonMobil	22
Nestlé	23
Toyota	24
Cisco Systems	25
IKEA	26
Oracle	27
J.P. Morgan	28
3M	29
The Boston Consulting Group (BCG)	30
Dell	31
Deloitte	32
Unilever	33

EMPLOYER	2016
Accenture	34
Bosch	35
BASF	36
Nissan	37
Pfizer	38
HP	39
Lenovo	40
BP	41
Schlumberger	42
Bayer	43
adidas group	44
PepsiCo	45
Schneider Electric	46
Volvo Cars	47
PwC (PricewaterhouseCoopers)	48
Novartis	49
Airbus Group	50

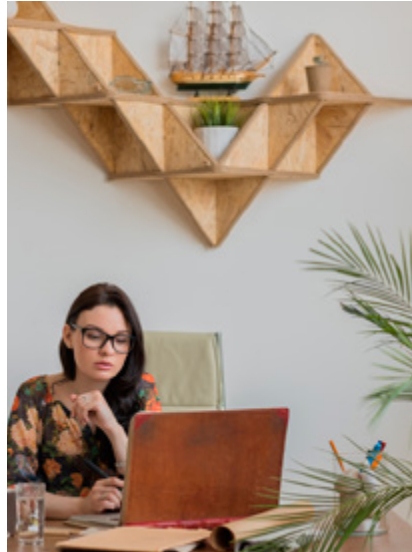
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### ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report is based on the responses of 267,084 business and engineering/IT students. The rankings and data presented are weighted based on GDP size of the world's 12 largest economies: Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Russia, UK and USA. For more information about the World's Most Attractive Employers, please contact us.

### ABOUT THE UNIVERSUM TALENT SURVEY

Based on an exclusive survey, distributed via university and alumni contacts, the Universum Panel and local partners; Universum ensures the quality and validity of the end result by continuously maintaining a close dialogue with leading academics in the field. Our vast experience in the field and cooperation with leading professors from top universities enable us to stay at the front line of the development of employer branding. Our findings are also used all over the world as material for new research.

### THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Created based on more than 25 years of experience, extensive research within HR, focus groups and communication with both our clients and talent. Global perspective – local insight.

**Field period:** October 2015 – April 2016

**Total number of respondents in the 2016 survey:** 267,084

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## WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Request custom rankings by country, industry, college major and gender – or a combination of these factors. Find out which companies are strong players both in local talent markets and across regions, why students find them attractive and what you can do to attract the right talent to ensure the success of your business.

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The background consists of several overlapping, semi-transparent geometric shapes in various shades of orange and red. The shapes are primarily triangles and quadrilaterals, creating a dynamic, layered effect. The colors range from a deep, dark red to a bright, almost white orange. The word "universum" is centered in the middle of the composition.

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