FOUR I.T. TRENDS - Spring 2025
Job Search Edition

The list below summarizes IT trends mentioned by the National IT Innovation Center's BILT (Business and Industry Leadership Team) at the April 2025 cross-disciplinary trends meeting. The purpose of this summary is to keep faculty – and their students – informed on the ever-evolving IT landscape.

1 **Networking is essential.** If a student graduates without a network, "they are way behind" and are at an "extreme disadvantage." One cannot rely solely on job postings; the traditional application process is no longer enough. Instead, students need to connect with as many people as possible who share their interests—both in person and online via LinkedIn. Employers also noted recruiters actively search for talent on LinkedIn and attend events like hackathons and data-thons. Networking remains the most proven way to get "seen."
Learn more: https://www.dice.com/career-advice/use-networking-to-boost-your-tech-career-in-2025

2 **Larger companies use applicant tracking systems (ATS).** Big companies get hundreds of applications a day and must rely on automated screening tools to filter resumes based on keywords. Students must carefully tailor their resumes to increase their chances of passing this initial screening and receiving a callback. It's important to highlight not just past job titles but also skills acquired, including those from unpaid work or volunteer experiences. One employer even recommended using AI to help customize resumes for specific roles.
Learn more: https://www.collegerecruiter.com/blog/2025/04/01/why-you-didnt-hear-back-how-applicant-tracking-systems-score-rank-and-quietly-reject-job-seekers

3 **Demonstrate non-technical "soft" skills in the job interview.** Companies often assume candidates possess the necessary technical skills—what sets applicants apart are strong interpersonal and communication abilities. Employers agreed that candidates who can understand a business problem and articulate a solution are in high demand. Many companies include a live lab or technical task as part of the interview . Classroom team projects can help students prepare for these discussions, as they can reference specific examples that illustrate collaboration and leadership. Ultimately, students should project an "executive presence"—acting, looking, and speaking like a professional.
Learn more: https://www.forbes.com/sites/jackkelly/2024/01/09/soft-skills-to-highlight-in-an-interview-entry-to-senior-level/

4 **Students need to learn how to tell their story.** They should know what they want, why they want it, and be ready to answer questions such as "Why do you want to work for us?" and "Why should I hire you?" This requires researching the company and understanding how their skills align with its values and culture. One employer advised students not to get "in the weeds" about specific technical skills; instead, they should frame their capabilities in broader terms. For instance, rather than listing tools like SAS and Python, a student might say: "I understand language, so I'm able to translate between business needs and technical requirements."
Learn more: https://www.linkedin.com/business/learning/blog/job-seeking-tips/why-storytelling-could-be-key-to-acing-interview

For a deeper dive into these topics and others, visit NITIC's BILT page, which can be accessed for free here: www.nitic.org/industry/national-bilt/bilt-overview.