

ASSESSMENT OF COMPETENCY LEVELS FOR ENTRY-LEVEL POSITIONS: A STUDY OF BUSINESS UNDERGRADUATE ALUMNI

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents the results of a business competency survey of alumni from a division of business and economics at a college in the southeastern United States. The survey contained 45 technical and nontechnical competencies that may be required for entry-level positions in business. The study compared the alumni perceptions of competency levels required by employers with the alumni perceptions of their own competency levels attained at the point of graduation from college. These comparisons identified statistically significant competency gaps (at $p < .05$) in the competency clusters of personal skills, communication, critical thinking, and computer skills. These research results may help educators to align business and general education programs with the current needs of the workplace.

Keywords: *essential skills for business; business skills; knowledge, skills, and abilities for business; technical skills for business; soft skills for business; business competencies*