

CS 4001 Activity: Choosing a Job

Teams will be recruiters for the following four software companies. Give each company only their writeup. Each team must prepare a 1-2 minute presentation where they will argue why students should come work for them. Presenters may make up information that is consistent with their company's writeup below.

Other teams act as job seekers, and prepare questions for the presenters. Give the job seekers the descriptions for all companies. Just before the presentations, show all students all descriptions and leave them projected during the presentations. Before the presentations, ask all students to volunteer the criteria they are using when choosing a job. After the presentations and questions, ask all students make job choice and provide reasons for their choices.

Company Descriptions

Moon Systems is a large, established hardware and software company. Employees have a reasonable level of job security, although there have been layoffs in the past few years. Salaries are highly competitive. The company offers stock options, but the stock price is not raising rapidly, and employees know they are not going to get rich from selling their options. The typical programmer works 45 hours a week.

Raythovax is a medium-sized mature software company that plays a dominant role in the defense market. The company has never had to lay off employees. Salaries are a little low by industry standards, but programmers get paid overtime when they work more than 40 hours a week. The company discourages managers from resorting to overtime work on projects. Many employees are involved in community activities, such as coaching their kids' sports teams.

BlueAnt is a small start-up company trying to be the first to bring a new kind of shopping experience to the web. Salaries are not high, but all of the employees receive a lot of stock options. If the product is successful, everyone expects to become a multimillionaire when the company goes public in a couple of years. In return for the stock options, the founders expect a total commitment from all the employees until the product is released. Every programmer in the company is working 10 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Tri-Arts is a medium sized game production company. They recruit heavily from colleges, and the average age of their workforce is 24. They regularly fly recruits to Las Vegas for a weekend "interviews" that turn into parties at night. Signing bonuses range in the 10-25K range, and their salaries are extremely high for the software industry. They ship projects under tight deadlines which must be met. After projects ship, it is common for a team to take a week vacation together in exotic locations paid for by the company before beginning work on the next project. Programmers usually work 12-14 hours a day 7 days a week. They have a high turnover, but if you survive you can become an even higher paid manager in only a few years.