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Software engineers have nation's best job, study says

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NEW YORK (Reuters) - The year 2011 is the best of times for software engineers and the worst of times for roustabouts, according to a survey of the nation's best and worst jobs released on Wednesday.

Software engineers have the top jobs, thanks to the exploding demand for high-tech gadgets and the appetite for applications for iPods, tablets and other devices, said the survey by online jobs site CareerCast.com.

Software engineers enjoy a strong outlook for employment, low stress, few physical demands and good wages, it said.

Roustabouts, on the other hand, who are oil rig or gas pipeline workers, have the worst job, it said.

A roustabout's job is dangerous, as shown by the explosion aboard the Transocean Ltd. oil drilling rig in the Gulf of Mexico that killed 11 workers in April.

Roustabouts routinely work 12-hour shifts in tough conditions, it said.

The top five jobs, which include mathematician, actuary, statistician and computer systems, typically pay more than twice as much as the lowest jobs -- \$83,777 compared to \$30,735 per year.

The least desirable jobs along with roustabout for 2011 are iron worker, lumberjack, roofer and taxi driver, it said.

CareerCast evaluated 200 professions based on pay, environment, hiring outlook, stress and physical demands, using data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Census Bureau and trade association studies.

To determine the amount of stress in a job, for example, the study looked at such factors as whether an employee's life was at risk or the number of deadlines and travel.

(Reporting by [Kristina Cooke](#), Editing by Barbara Goldberg and [Greg McCune](#))



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