

## In a Sea of Applications, How Candidates Can Make a Splash

*Demonstrating Passion for the Role Key for Job Seekers*

*Latest Results from The Harris Poll*

**OKLAHOMA CITY, March 13, 2024** — As companies receive applications, information and candidates may blend — but U.S. hiring managers say certain factors can help prospective employees stand out.

This is according to a recent Express Employment Professionals-Harris Poll survey.

Demonstrating passion for the role (52%), quantifying their achievements (43%) and showing that they've researched the company (43%) are among hiring managers' top methods for a candidate to stand out to their company.

### Ways Candidates Can Stand Out



**Source:** The Job Insights survey was conducted online within the United States by The Harris Poll on behalf of Express Employment Professionals between Oct. 31 and Nov. 10, 2023, among 1,007 U.S. hiring decision-makers. The Job Seeker Report was conducted online within the United States by The Harris Poll on behalf of Express Employment Professionals from Nov. 9 to 26, 2023, among 1,002 adults ages 18 and older.

Having a personal referral from someone who works at the company (38%), showing their creativity (36%) and keeping the resume short/concise (36%) may also be beneficial.

### **Beyond Tangible Qualifications**

About half of job seekers believe, to a company, dependability (52%) and work ethic (49%) are absolutely essential skills/traits for a candidate to possess when applying for a job.

At least 2 in 5 also believe communications skills (45%), ability to work well in a team (43%), willingness to learn (43%) and time management skills (40%) are also absolutely essential.

Perhaps a sign of a shift in the generational workforce, Millennials, Gen X and boomers/seniors are more likely to consider dependability absolutely essential compared to Gen Z (50%, 58%, 64% vs. 29%). However, Gen Z is far more likely to consider problem-solving skills absolutely essential compared to Millennials and Gen X (56% vs. 38%, 36%).

### **Distinguished From the Competition**

As U.S. job seekers consider which skills/traits may be important to have, they also think about the ways to stand out when applying to a job.

Nearly half of U.S. job seekers say that demonstrating passion for the role (48%) or quantifying achievements (48%) will make them stand out.

At least one-third also believe that keeping their resume short/concise (38%) or showing their creativity (33%) will separate them from the competition.

No more than 3 in 10 believe reaching out to the company (30%), having a visually appealing resume (30%), including links to relevant work (26%), including contact information upfront (23%), connecting on social media (15%) or including a photo (13%) would be beneficial.

Women are more likely than men to believe that demonstrating passion for the role (56% vs. 43%), showing they've researched the company (49% vs. 40%), having a personal referral from someone who works at the company (49% vs. 37%) or including a cover letter with the application (38% vs. 25%) would help them stand out.

“In the competitive landscape of job interviews, it is vital for candidates to grasp the importance of standing out,” said Bill Stoller, Express Employment International CEO. “It is not merely about meeting basic qualifications, but surpassing expectations with distinct strengths and qualities that make a lasting impact.”

### **Survey Methodology**

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For full survey methodologies, please contact [Sheena.Hollander@ExpressPros.com](mailto:Sheena.Hollander@ExpressPros.com), Director of Corporate Communications & PR.

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If you would like to arrange for an interview to discuss this topic, please contact [Sheena.Hollander@ExpressPros.com](mailto:Sheena.Hollander@ExpressPros.com), Director of Corporate Communications & PR.

#### **About Bill Stoller**

William H. "Bill" Stoller is chairman and chief executive officer of Express Employment International. Founded in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, the international staffing franchisor supports the Express Employment Professionals franchise and related brands. The Express franchise brand is an industry-leading, international staffing company with franchise locations in the U.S., Canada, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand.

#### **About Express Employment Professionals**

At Express Employment Professionals, we're in the business of people. From job seekers to client companies, Express helps people thrive and businesses grow. Our international network of franchises offers localized staffing solutions to the communities they serve across the U.S., Canada, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand, employing 492,000 people globally in 2023 and more than 11 million since its inception. For more information, visit [ExpressPros.com](http://ExpressPros.com).