

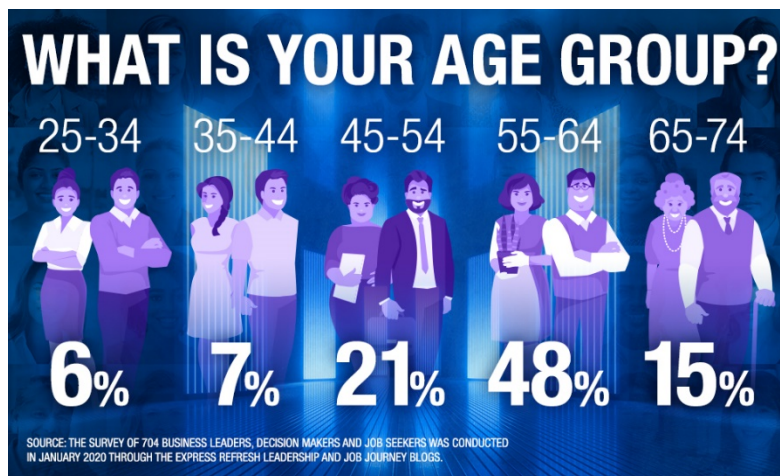
8 Out Of 10 Say Ageism Exists in Hiring

Young and Old Face Ageism in the Workplace

“Too Experienced” or “Not Experienced Enough”

TORONTO, Feb. 12, 2020 – Ageism, prejudice or discrimination on the grounds of a person's age, remains very much an issue in hiring according to a new Express Employment Professionals survey of businesses leaders and job seekers. It is an issue that continues to persist despite Canada's near record low unemployment rate and high demand for skilled workers.

In the survey, 84% indicated they believed their age was a consideration in the hiring process; only 16% said “no.” Nearly half of those that thought ageism was an issue were in the 55-to-64 years old category.





Michael Elliott, an Express franchise owner in London, Ontario, was asked whether he sees examples of age discrimination during the hiring process. Even with today's tight labour market, he argued that it exists at "both ends of the spectrum."

"Older workers may not be considered for emerging sectors since their pay expectations are typically higher, and their job skills and experience may not align with the new generation skillsets in these sectors. Younger Millennials and Gen Zs are unfairly cast as difficult to place in traditional work environments, where experience still trumps enthusiasm and creativity," Elliott said.

Survey respondents also reported real-life examples of perceived ageism, including:

- "I was told by the hiring supervisor, 'I believe you are just too old to give us much time here. You'll probably want to stay home and sit by the pool with the grandkids within a year.'"
- "I've been interviewed by several job offering companies, and when they realized how experienced I was and the number of years that I have been working, the inevitable statement was, 'You are too experienced for the position.'"
- "In my 20s, I was the top candidate for a position, but it was never offered. I later asked the employer why, and they stated that while I had all the education and experience, I did not have enough whiskers."
- "I'm still young and inexperienced, and employers do not like that. They don't want to have to waste time training the new guy how to do something."

Elliott suggested that "attempting to define a group by common characteristics doesn't give credit to those who have upgraded their skills to become more tech-savvy or who have learned through experience to flex their work skills to adapt to any generation."

Elliott noted that bringing different age groups together is a good thing, making "the culture at work more interesting and diverse."

Unfortunately, not everyone sees hiring the same way; nearly 20% of all workplace human-rights claims filed in Ontario allege age discrimination. This statistic is similar in other provinces, and these claims are on the rise.¹

Age discrimination can have a negative impact on a company's brand and could mean costly mistakes due to inexperienced workers, according to Patty Smith, vice president of Human Resources and Compliance at Express International Headquarters. Businesses should avoid crafting job descriptions with phrases such as "young and energetic" and use "motivated and driven" instead.

When interviewing candidates, businesses should have an age-diverse panel and evaluate a prospect on the knowledge, skills and behaviors required for the job. And if the time comes to lay off employees, decisions should be made objectively, Smith added.

"A successful economy is made up of workers from every generation because people of all ages bring different skills and life experiences to the table," said Express CEO Bill Stoller. "Regardless of age or any other factor, at the end of the day, it's important to hire the best person for the job."

The survey of 704 business leaders, decision makers and job seekers was conducted in January 2020 through the Express Refresh Leadership and Job Journey blogs.

If you would like to arrange for an interview to discuss this topic, please contact Adria Minsky at (416) 620-7111 or email adria@mapleleafstrategies.com.

About Bill Stoller

William H. "Bill" Stoller is chairman and chief executive officer of Express Employment Professionals. Headquartered in Oklahoma City, the international staffing company has more than 800 franchises in the U.S., Canada and South Africa. Since its inception, Express has put more than 7.7 million people to work worldwide.

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. Headquartered in

¹ "Wrongfully fired employees can work together to help end age discrimination," <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/business/careers/leadership/article-wrongfully-fired-employees-can-work-together-to-help-end-age/> NOVEMBER 23, 2018

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