
COVID-19 Takes Toll on Hiring, Survey Shows

63% of Companies Struggle to Recruit and Fill Jobs

Latest Results from The Harris Poll

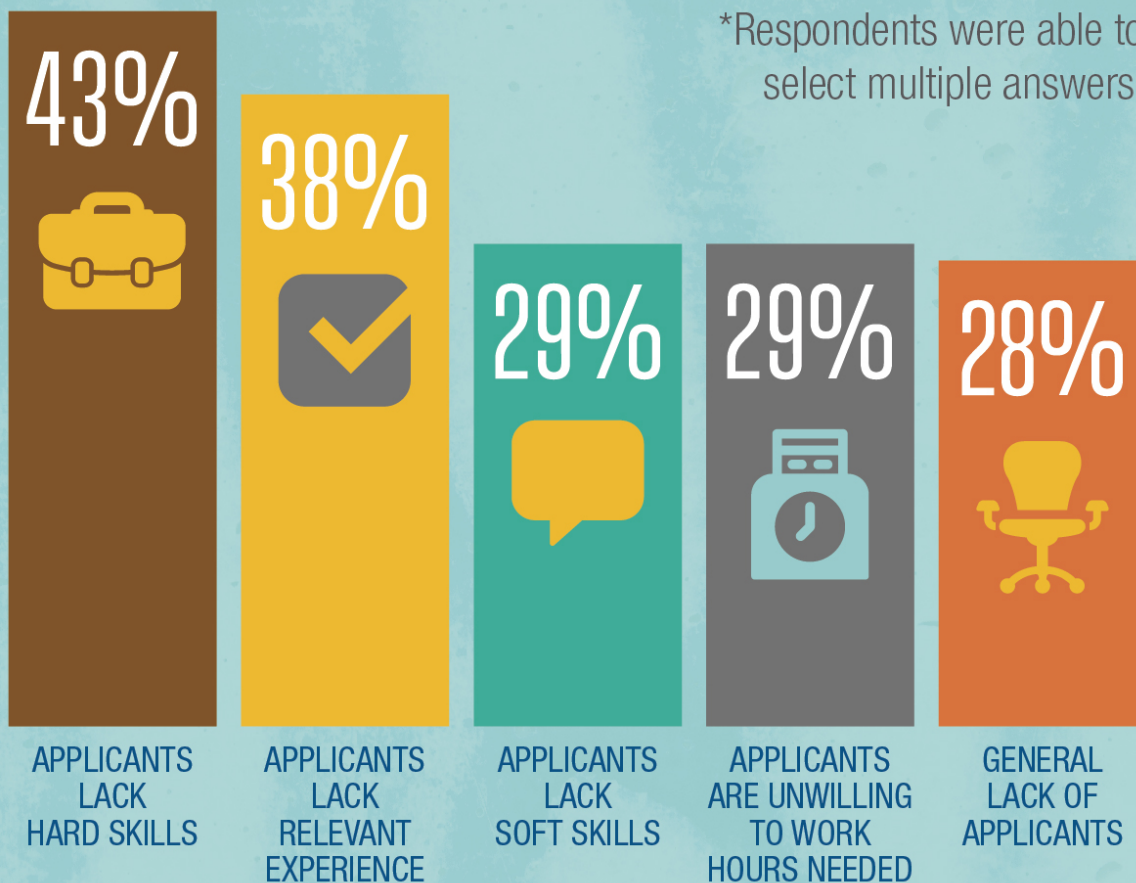
TORONTO, ON, Nov. 11, 2020 – Canadian hiring decision-makers say it is far more difficult (63%) than easy (37%) to recruit and fill positions at their company, adding the hiring process takes an average of 27 days to complete. This is according to a recent survey from The Harris Poll commissioned by Express Employment Professionals.

Thirty-one per cent of Canadian hiring decision-makers say their company has open positions for which they cannot find qualified candidates. Some of the reasons they remain unfilled include:

1. Applicants lack hard skills — 43%
2. Applicants lack relevant experience — 38%
3. Applicants lack soft skills — 29%
4. Unwilling to work hours needed — 29%
5. General lack of applicants — 28%

Company-specific reasons were also identified, such as pay (20%), benefits (13%), geographic location (17%) or negative company reputation (12%).

TOP REASONS OPEN JOBS ARE NOT FILLED



Source: The survey was conducted online within Canada by The Harris Poll on behalf of Express Employment Professionals between April 21 and May 6, 2020, among 501 Canadian hiring decision-makers.

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Brent Pollington, Express Franchise owner in Vancouver, British Columbia, agrees that the top reason jobs aren't filled is because applicants lack the hard skills.

"We continue to see a large volume of applicants applying to positions where they fail to meet the minimum requirements," Pollington said. "Businesses look to mitigate risks of turnover and that of making a bad hire by looking for a candidate who specifically meets the requirements."

However, this can result in the position remaining vacant for an extended period and "work being added to other team members, as well as overtime costs, or burnout of team members."

Bruce Hein, Express franchise owner in Sarnia, Ontario, suggests that "lacking both relevant experience and the necessary hard skills are intertwined."

"The biggest challenge in filling positions is finding people who possess a certain amount of experience, an understanding of specific software or a background in a particular industry. Most software can be learned and someone with the right aptitude can learn a new industry," Hein said.

Hein believes that it is better to fill the position with someone who has the right ambition and drive than it is to leave a role sitting vacant for months, but unfortunately "too many companies are not willing or able to invest the time to train."

Pollington agrees.

"I feel that people are looking and willing to work but to hire these inexperienced workers the employer must adapt to be able to train, coach, mentor and retain the employee," he said.

Sid Gupta, Express franchise owner in Burnaby, British Columbia, also finds it difficult to hire the right candidate. He lists lack of hard skills and soft skills, as well as lack of applicants as the top three reasons.

Colleen Gaudette, Express franchise owner in Windsor, Ontario, also points to lack of applicants and lack of hard skills as key reasons jobs are not filled.

However, her top reason is that applicants are unwilling to work the hours needed "because of COVID-19 and government subsidies such as the Canadian Emergency."

"Recruiting for in-demand jobs is a struggle across the country right now, and it's going to take both businesses and job seekers pivoting to solve the worker shortage," Express CEO Bill Stoller said. "Job seekers may need to take time to learn a different skillset than their previous profession and businesses might have to offer competitive wages and a more streamlined hiring process to ensure the truly qualified don't slip away."

Survey Methodology

The survey was conducted online within Canada by The Harris Poll on behalf of Express Employment Professionals between April 21 and May 6, 2020 among 501 Canadian hiring decision-makers (defined as adults ages 18+ in Canada who are employed full-time or self-employed or have been laid off, furloughed, or given a zero hour schedule in the past 60 days but worked full-time or were self-employed full-time prior, work at companies with more than 1 employee, and have full/significant involvement in hiring decisions at their company). Data were weighted where necessary by company size to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population.

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 825 franchises in the U.S., Canada and South Africa, and beginning in 2020 will expand to Australia and New Zealand. Since its inception, Express has put more than 8 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 Oklahoma City, OK, our international network of franchises offers localized staffing solutions to the communities they serve, employing 552,000 people across North America in 2019. For more information, visit www.ExpressPros.com.