
Canadian Companies Struggling to Fill Full-Time Positions

Sales, General Labour and Customer Service Positions Most In-Demand by Employers

TORONTO, Sept. 14, 2022 — Canadian companies continue to have difficulty finding qualified employees, especially for full-time positions, according to a new survey from The Harris Poll commissioned by Express Employment Professionals. Most companies (84%) say they plan to hire employees in key job categories before the end of the year, but 40% say they have been unable to fill positions that are currently open.

Hiring managers mostly plan to hire full-time employees (75%), either hourly (48%) or salaried (39%). Interest in hiring full-time employees has been steadily increasing, up from 69% in the first half of 2021.

Yet given the current labour shortage, nearly three-quarters of those surveyed (71%) say their company is willing to hire contingent workers (i.e., temporary or contract) to meet business needs. In fact, a quarter of hiring managers (26%) report their company plans to hire seasonal, temporary or contract workers this year.

The top job categories in which companies plan to hire this year include customer service (26%), general labour (24%), sales (23%), administrative/office clerical (17%) and IT/technology support (15%).



When it comes to job levels, 55% of companies plan to hire for entry-level positions, 45% for mid-level positions, 22% for senior-level positions and 10% for C-suite positions.

The survey results reflect what Brent Pollington, an Express franchise owner in Vancouver, British Columbia, is seeing in his local job market.

“The majority of job vacancies are for full-time permanent employees,” said Pollington. “There are labour shortages across the board - entry level positions in the industrial and blue collar sector are in huge demand, but so are mid- to C-level positions.”

While labour shortages have forced some companies to use contingent or temporary workers, Pollington says employers should realize these workers can become the future workforce.

“If a company is able to develop training and onboarding, resulting in a quick turnaround from ‘unskilled and incapable’ to ‘capable and able’ then there is a massive benefit to bringing in contingent labour,” said Pollington. “Entry-level and blue collar positions have utilized this for years at warehouses and constructions sites.”

With labour shortages and high consumer demand expected to continue, companies need to provide more flexibility and a better company culture according to Michael Elliott, owner of Express franchises in Kitchener and London, Ontario.

“There is a sizable group of available workers, yet they are transient as they make multiple switches in a short period,” said Elliott. “Some workers are taking more short breaks from work, and others are not willing to commit to conventional work schedules because they want flexibility and better work-life balance. If the work environments and benefits were more attractive and flexible, then this transient group would be more willing to commit to permanent work opportunities.”

Pollington agrees and says employers need to come to terms with the fact that the labour force

has changed and the companies that innovate and provide flexible workplaces will win the competition for talent.

“The greatest shift employers are likely going to need to make is increasing the ability to train and onboard and decrease the expectation on long term retention,” said Pollington. “If the market won’t provide people with the skills you need, then you better start figuring out a way to provide the training. Employers also have the old mindset that retention is key and they don’t want to hire ‘jumpers’. This is understandable, however, the focus needs to shift to ‘why would someone want to stay’ and ‘how do you create an organization that retains great people’ versus trying to hire people who don’t want to leave.”

“Today’s workers are searching for flexibility and with the severe skilled workers shortage, these assignments allow individuals opportunities to gain experience in various environments,” Express Employment International CEO Bill Stoller said. “These shorter working stints can often lead to permanent employment, creating the perfect solution for today’s tight labour market.”

Survey Methodology

The survey was conducted online within Canada by The Harris Poll on behalf of Express Employment Professionals between May 3-23, 2022, among 504 Canadian hiring decision-makers (defined as adults ages 18+ in Canada who are employed full-time or self-employed, work at companies with more than one 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 Ana Curic at (613) 858-2622 or email Ana@MapleLeafStrategies.com.

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.

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