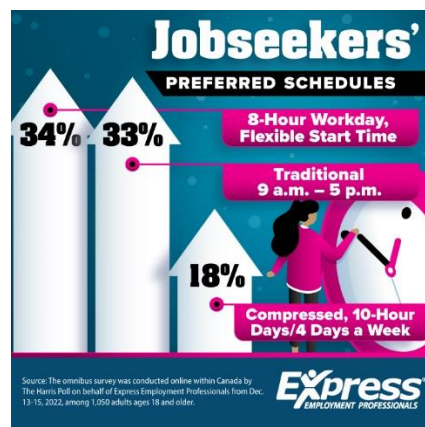


Flexible Work Schedules Popular, but Traditional 9 to 5 Work Week Alive and Well

Reports of End of 40-Hour Work Week Overblown

TORONTO, June 14, 2023—Flexible work schedules have become popular and are here to stay post-pandemic but claims that the traditional 9 to 5 work week will vanish are premature, according to a recent survey from The Harris Poll commissioned by Express Employment Professionals.

When given options of different work schedules, one-third of jobseekers say they prefer working an 8-hour workday with a flexible start time, but a similar proportion say they prefer a traditional 9 to 5 work week. Only 1 in 5 (18%) prefer a compressed work schedule (such as a 10-hour 4-day work week).



While employers recognize many employees and jobseekers want flexible work schedules, and many are providing that flexibility, most employers (69%) have concerns—including decreased productivity (28%), delayed communications (26%), difficulty meeting deadlines (24%), increased distractions (23%), the inability of employees to collaborate (23%) and meeting scheduling challenges (23%).

Productivity, however, does not seem to be impacted by flexible work arrangements, with 9 in 10 hiring managers (90%) reporting employees at their company are productive, and more than

one-third (37%) say employees are very productive. If given the ability to design their own schedules, a majority of hiring managers say employees would have about the same level of productivity (59%) or even be more productive (27%). Job seekers agree and say their productivity would be about the same (46%) or even higher (47%).

The survey findings are similar to what is being observed by Bradley Jenkins, an Express franchise owner in Cambridge, Ontario.

“One size does not fit all—while many employees want flexible work schedules, there is a large number of people who do not want to blend work and home,” said Jenkins. “The claims that the traditional work week is dead are incorrect. There is still a significant proportion of the workforce that prefers the traditional work week.”

He says there are many factors that impact what sort of work schedule is desired by employees and jobseekers, including the industry and family responsibilities.

“The one-size-fits-all, every employee gets the same package is a thing of the past,” said Jenkins. “I recently had 41 companies within 25 km of each other looking to fill the same position. If companies want to retain and attract talent in a tight labour market, they need to set themselves apart from the competition.”

His recommendation to employers is to not assume what employees and job seekers want, but rather ask them.

“I recommend that every employer ask jobseekers when they apply and their employees annually to rank what is more important to them—salary, working remotely, benefits, flexible schedules, paid time off, casual Fridays, etc.,” said Jenkins. “Then employers should do what they can to offer what is most important to each employee, rather than offer the same things to everyone because each employee will have their own priorities.”

Jenkins says employers have been pleasantly surprised that productivity has not been impacted by flexible work schedules and arrangements. But he does warn there are some potentially negative impacts.

“Flexibility can result in a lack of camaraderie, a lack of energy and difficulty in creating a good company culture,” said Jenkins. “As a result, it’s harder for companies to set themselves apart from their competition and people will be quicker to leave for another job.”

Nevertheless, he says flexibility continues to be desired by many employees and is here to stay.

“Despite the return of some segments to the workforce, businesses are still desperate for workers, and figuring out what incentives work best for employees at individual companies is key,” Express Employment International CEO Bill Stoller said. “If production can remain high while offering flexible scheduling options, it may be worth it to try.”

Survey Methodology

The Job Insights survey was conducted online within Canada by The Harris Poll on behalf of Express Employment Professionals between Dec. 1 and Dec. 15, 2022, among 506 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.

Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in our surveys. The sampling precision of Harris online polls is measured by using a Bayesian credible interval. For this study, the sample data is accurate to within + 4.6 percentage points using a 95% confidence level. This credible interval will be wider among subsets of the surveyed population of interest.

The omnibus survey was conducted online within Canada by The Harris Poll on behalf of Express Employment Professionals from Dec. 13-15, 2022, among 1,050 adults ages 18 and older. Data are weighted where necessary by age, gender, race/ethnicity, region, education, marital status, household size, household income and propensity to be online, to bring them in line with their actual proportions in the population. Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in our surveys. The sampling precision of Harris online polls is measured by using a Bayesian credible interval. For this study, the sample data is accurate to within + 3.8 percentage points using a 95% confidence level.

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.

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 579,000 people globally in 2022 and more than 10 million since its inception. For more information, visit ExpressPros.com/CA.