

Canadian Job Market Heating Up, Worker Shortages

Only 10% of Businesses Say Local Market “Trending Down”

Snapshot of the Economy on Canada’s “Main Street”

TORONTO, Sept. 13, 2017 – Heating up. Significant job growth. Optimism about the economy. Across Canada, Express Employment Professionals office owners are reporting positive signs from their local communities. And when asked to describe the current employment environment, they offer many reasons for hope, as well as concern about the lack of available workers.

It’s a worker’s market, according to Bob Funk, CEO of Express.

“We are hearing from our owners that the economy is on the rise,” he said. “The skilled workers will be on the move—looking for better hours, locations, coworkers or supervisors if they have what employers are looking for.”

Meanwhile, new survey results out today from Express show that only 10 per cent of businesses report their local markets are “trending down.”

In a survey of 533 businesses, respondents were asked, “As an employer, what is your perception of the current employment environment in your market?”

Among respondents, 46 per cent said “staying the same,” 44 per cent said “trending up,” and only 10 per cent said “trending down.”

In the previous quarterly survey, 51 per cent said “staying the same,” 42 per cent said “trending up,” and 7 percent said “trending down.”

Shane DeCoste, an Express owner in Halifax, Nova Scotia, reports that employers in his market have positions sitting open because workers are in high demand.

“I’m seeing a lot of uptick, even in the general labour, construction, manufacturing, warehousing and administrative sectors,” DeCoste said. “It seems like everyone needs workers right now. Overall, I’m pretty optimistic. It seems like more companies are looking for people than not.”

In Edmonton, Alberta, it's a similar story, according to Express owner Jessica Culo.

"I believe the current environment is trending up, as there is a lot of optimism about the economy," she said. "Our heavy industry clients are busy. I am hearing these companies already talk about having orders placed into the next year. In Edmonton, I believe we will see wages go up to recruit the right talent."

Theresa McLaughlin, an Express owner in Burlington, Ontario, also sees a strong local economy causing businesses to grapple with a worker shortage.

"Many companies in our area have the potential for continued growth, but as the unemployment rate continues to drop, the lack of available workers will be a significant challenge," she said. "We are expecting much slower employment growth over the next several months because all available workers are already employed."

"In most communities across Canada, the local economy seems to be improving or holding steady," said Funk. "But good economic news doesn't come without its challenges. Finding new workers is today's challenge—and one that employers and policymakers will need to tackle as long as our economy continues to grow."

The survey of 533 businesses, which are current and former clients of Express Employment Professionals, was conducted in June 2017 to gauge respondents' expectations for the third quarter of 2017. Previous surveys were conducted to cover hiring trends of the quarters indicated.

If you would like to arrange for an interview to discuss this topic, please contact Kellie Major at (613) 222-7488 or email kellie@mapleleafstrategies.com.

About Robert A. Funk

Robert A. "Bob" Funk is chairman and chief executive officer of Express Employment Professionals. Headquartered in Oklahoma City, the international staffing company has more than 770 franchises in the U.S., Canada and South Africa. Under his leadership, Express has put more than 6 million people to work worldwide. Funk served as Chairman of the Conference of Chairmen of the Federal Reserve and was also the Chairman of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City.

About Express Employment Professionals

Express Employment Professionals puts people to work. It generated \$3.05 billion in sales and employed a record 510,000 people in 2016. Its long-term goal is to put a million people to work annually. For more information, visit ExpressPros.com.