

Hiring Plans Show Business May Be Rebounding After Tumultuous 2020

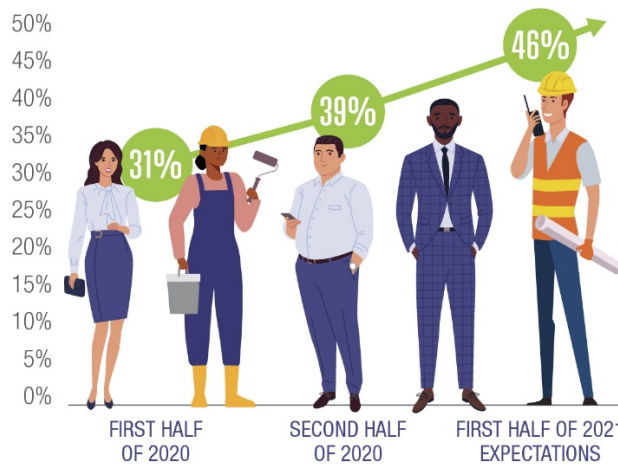
Last Half of 2020 Saw Hiring Boom in Manufacturing, Slowdown in Office Services

Latest Results from The Harris Poll

OKLAHOMA CITY, Jan. 13, 2021 – Just one year ago, only 31% of hiring decision-makers said they planned to increase their company’s number of employees, but signs of life emerged over the next 12 months as that percentage increased to 39% in the second half of 2020. Now it sits at 46% for the first half of 2021.

This is according to a recent survey from The Harris Poll commissioned by Express Employment Professionals.

PERCENT OF U.S. HIRING DECISION-MAKERS INCREASING EMPLOYEE COUNT



Source: The survey was conducted online within the United States by The Harris Poll on behalf of Express Employment Professionals between Nov. 16 and Dec. 7, 2020, among 1,002 US hiring decision-makers.

In Utica, New York, Express franchise owner John Calabrese said COVID-19 business restrictions eased up in the second half of 2020, leading to increased hiring and replacement of workers who did not return to their previous positions.

“Sectors like warehouse/distribution and manufacturers that pivoted to PPE production and online order fulfillment boomed in the second half of the year,” he said. “This led to a sharp turnaround of increased hiring at record levels.”

Jan Riggins, general manager for two Express franchises in Fort Worth, Texas, said her offices also saw a dramatic increase in talent demand for logistics clients in the latter half of the year.

“Workforce challenges resulting from COVID-19 meant not only did we have more positions to fill, but pay rates dramatically increased to attract available talent,” she said.

Riggins, Calabrese and Dwight Hahn, the Windsor, Connecticut, Express franchise owner, all agree the primary driver of the hiring ramp-up at the end of 2020 was due to an increased volume of work followed by replacing employees due to turnover and to fill newly created positions.

Still, some businesses did not see a hiring rebound in recent months due to a variety of factors.

“Some clients shifted resources to backfill for their own COVID staffing issues, and as funding dried up, either their employees returned or the company needed fewer of them,” Hahn said. “Other business sectors like catering and hospitality simply haven’t come back, so those clients are either gone or on a shoestring budget with minimum staff levels.”

Calabrese added that some businesses in his market simply couldn’t recover from the economic blows associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and uncertainty of the economic future. Other companies shifted to strictly remote work and ceased hiring for the time being.

Riggins said the office services industry had the largest decrease and slowest rebound because of the inability to train and onboard remotely, as well as uncertainty in the economy. But through talking with other sales and recruiting teams across the Dallas-Ft. Worth metroplex, she added that conversations are more optimistic about hiring in January and the first quarter of 2021.

“As we closed out 2020, there seemed to be a general sigh of relief regarding the opportunity to get back to work in January,” Riggins said. “With so much of the uncertainty surrounding the election and a COVID-19 vaccine now addressed, organizations are better able to plan and project.”

While there are still hurdles to overcome, Riggins is encouraged that there is a light at the end of the tunnel and businesses are now more prepared to pivot and change, as necessary.

“The trend line of hiring at the end of 2020 is very encouraging for economic recovery as we kick off 2021,” Express CEO Bill Stoller said. “It’s the good news and hope we all need to begin the new year with optimism as the economy continues to move in the right direction, drastically different from where we were early last year.”

Survey Methodology

The survey was conducted online within the United States by The Harris Poll on behalf of Express Employment Professionals between Nov. 16 and Dec. 7, 2020, among 1,002 US hiring decision-makers (defined as adults ages 18+ in the U.S. who are employed full-time or self-employed, work at companies with more than 1 employee, and have full/significant involvement in hiring decisions at their company). Data was 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 with Bill Stoller to discuss this topic, please contact Sheena Karami, Director of Corporate Communications and PR, at (405) 717-5966.

About Bill Stoller

William H. "Bill" Stoller is chairman and chief executive officer of Express Employment Professionals. Headquartered in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, the international staffing company has more than 830 franchises in the U.S., Canada, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand. Since inception, Express has put more than 8 million people to work worldwide.

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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 552,000 people globally in 2019. For more information, visit www.ExpressPros.com.