

Almost 50% of Hiring Decision-Makers See Employee Increase in Coming Months

Larger Companies More Likely to Boost Headcount

Latest Results from The Harris Poll

OKLAHOMA CITY, Jan. 27, 2021 – Nearly half of U.S. hiring decision-makers anticipate increasing their employee count in early 2021, leading to an air of optimism that the economy is slowly recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic crash last year.

This is according to a recent survey from The Harris Poll commissioned by Express Employment Professionals in which 46% of hiring decision-makers say they expect to increase hiring in the next few months, while 43% see no changes. Only 7% see layoffs on the horizon.

HIRING PLANS FOR EARLY 2021



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.

Although the hiring forecast has improved, it differs by company size with larger companies more likely than smaller ones to increase their employee count in 2021.

- Companies with 2–9 employees: 21%
- Companies with 10–49 employees: 40%
- Companies with 50–99 employees: 59%
- Companies with 100–499 employees: 57%
- Companies with more than 500 employees: 57%

Across the United States, Express experts see signs of life for the labor market that were first evident at the end of 2020.

“Clients were already hiring so many people at the end of 2020, and those levels are remaining consistent,” said David Robb, director of operations for the Grand Rapids, Michigan, Express office. “Since the beginning of the fourth quarter, we’ve had the highest number of open jobs that we have ever had, and that is staying consistent as we move into 2021.”

In Crystal Lake, Illinois, Express branch manager Lori Gajdzik says her office is seeing a hiring boom to start the new year, particularly for light industrial positions.

“Clients are back to placing large orders for employees and now we have to figure out how to entice applicants because many are still hesitant to join or rejoin the workforce,” she said.

Business owners are watching a variety of factors that will unfold in the upcoming months to determine if hiring will continue to increase or level off again.

“A lot will depend on our state, and what happens with the schools,” Gajdzik said. “If our state was more willing to open back up, I think people would be more willing to go back to work. This impacts companies as they try to return to normal and ramp their production back up.”

In Santa Clarita, California, Express franchise owner Yvonne Rockwell says additional distribution of Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) funds, as well as the COVID-19 vaccine rollout and general safety, will have a large impact on businesses.

“I think many companies are looking to add to their staff, as they have learned how to navigate through these difficult times and are prepared for the future,” she added.

Robb also agrees if the vaccine rollout is successful, more retail and restaurant operations can ramp back up and that will increase the demand for workers.

While Rockwell and Robb say the COVID-19 difficulties have impacted businesses more by sector than by size, Gajdzik believes smaller companies have taken more of a hit.

“Larger companies can withstand the lockdowns and wild fluctuations in business longer than smaller companies,” she said.

Overall, Rockwell says one of the biggest business lessons learned from the past year is the importance of planning to keep the company safe as owners navigate the new business landscape.

“The good news of increased hiring is much welcomed after a tough year, and if circumstances continue to improve, I anticipate more businesses will be ready to bring on additional employees in the coming months,” Express CEO Bill Stoller said. “Getting people back to work, safely, should be the number one priority in rebuilding the economy in 2021.”

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 one 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-Hollander, 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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