

78% of Hiring Decision-Makers Say Their Company is Taking Action on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Changes Increase Dramatically with Company Size

Latest Results from The Harris Poll

OKLAHOMA CITY, Feb. 24, 2021 – With diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) becoming a top priority in recent months, the majority of U.S. hiring decision-makers indicate their company is responding through action and policy to prioritize and underscore these efforts.

A new survey from The Harris Poll, commissioned by Express Employment Professionals, reveals more than 3 in 4 hiring decision-makers (78%) say their company has taken action on DEI, most commonly in these areas:

- Provided training for employees: 40%
- Offered safe ways for employees to report discrimination and harassment complaints: 31%
- Revised policies and procedures: 29%
- Changed recruitment and hiring practices: 28%



Nearly half (46%) say their company currently has a DEI policy with 11% reporting they don't have one but plan to implement one by the end of 2021 and 14% plan to implement after 2021. Around 1 in 3 (31%) say one of the most important priorities for their company right now is expanding the diversity of their employees.

Given these changes and policies regarding diversity, equity and inclusion, the majority (78%) feel just the right amount is being done at their company on this topic, but 10% feel too little is being done.

Notably, action on this topic increases significantly with company size. The largest companies with more than 500 employees are at least twice as likely as the smallest companies with 2–9 employees to have taken each of these actions regarding diversity, equity and inclusion:

- Provided trainings for employees: 50% vs. 25%
- Offered safe ways for employees to report discrimination and harassment complaints: 41% vs. 16%
- Revised their policies and procedures: 39% vs. 14%
- Changed their recruitment and hiring practices: 39% vs. 12%

The largest companies are also more than three times as likely as those with 2–9 employees to already have a diversity, equity, and inclusion policy (63% vs. 20%).

“I think businesses recognize the value of DEI and are moving toward it,” said Shannon Wenninger, Express franchise owner in Fishers, Indiana. “It is not something that will happen overnight, but when businesses become more intentional about it, change happens.”

In Jacksonville, Florida, Express franchise owner Mike Brady agrees that businesses still have work to do to address diversity, equity and inclusion in the workplace.

“Unfortunately, discrimination still exists, whether it is overt or unintended, and it affects the work environment,” he said. “It is also extremely tough when you place an employee and there is no one at the job with a similar cultural background, which tells me businesses still have work to do.”

When DEI isn’t addressed, Brady adds that it can lead to loss of production due to unhappy employees, constant turnover and the possibility of legal action. However, when steps are actively taken to remedy this, Wenninger lists several company benefits.

“It can help build a more robust business,” she said. “When customers and potential employees see a business that reflects who they are, it just feels better working with them. In addition, bringing different life perspectives and experiences to the table opens up more markets, solves problems creatively and creates a happier work environment.”

As for which companies are making the most changes, Brady says he sees DEI policies and procedures, as well as training, mainly at larger facilities. One example is the ban of political T-shirts and hats.

“It’s encouraging to see businesses working to create safer and more inclusive environments for all,” Express CEO Bill Stoller said. “This is an educational experience for everyone, and we have to work together to address diversity, equity and inclusion for a better workforce now and in the future.”

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 U.S. 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 9 million people to work worldwide.

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