

## **62% of Companies Predict Operations Will Return to Pre-Pandemic Levels Going into Next Quarter**

***Nearly 50% Say Remote Work Key to Businesses Continuity***

***Latest Results from The Harris Poll***

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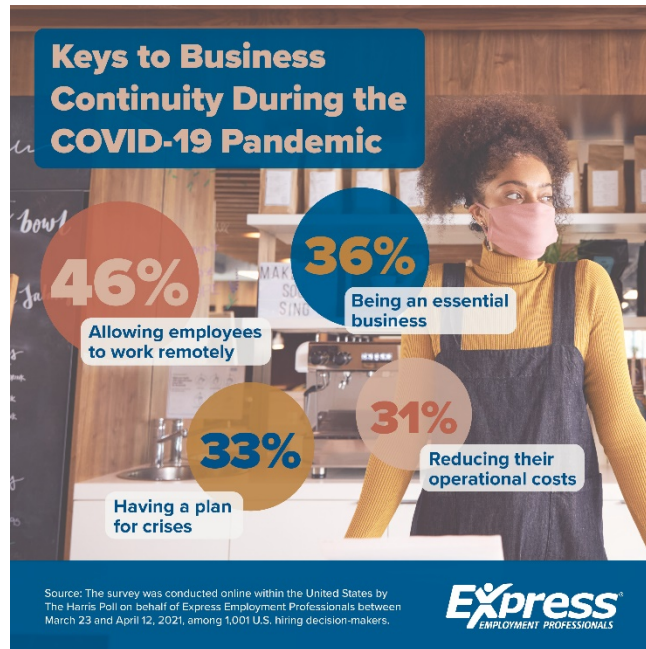
**OKLAHOMA CITY, Dec. 22, 2021**—Looking back over the last two years of the COVID-19 pandemic, company experiences varied widely across the United States with 32% saying they struggled quite a bit. However, 62% of businesses predict operations will return to pre-pandemic levels going into the next quarter with another 27% believing this will happen further into 2022.

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

Hiring managers say the keys to business continuity during this difficult time include allowing employees to work remotely (46%) and/or being an essential business (36%). Around 1 in 3 say having a plan for crises (33%) and/or reducing their operational costs (e.g. reduced capacity, streamlined processes) (31%) is helping them operate.

Among many other changes, the trials and tribulations companies have faced over the past nearly two years will result in permanent changes to human resource management.

Specifically, around 3 in 10 foresee lasting changes in leadership being more flexible in accommodating employees' schedules and needs (33%), a greater focus on training for current employees to be reskilled or upskilled (31%), a need to continually train employees on new technology updates (31%) and/or there will be fewer employee interactions in physical workplace(s) (31%).



In New Jersey, companies have mostly resumed normal operations, according to local Express franchise owner Mike Nolfo.

“While a great deal of normal has returned in the workplace, we continue to see a shift toward more remote work situations and opportunities for office and professional candidates,” he said. “We don’t see that changing in 2022.”

He ranks the transition to remote work as the top factor that helped his client companies survive the COVID-19 pandemic, followed by having a plan for crises and being an essential business.

“It seems like companies and employees are pushing remote work as far as it can go,” he said. “When the pandemic is over and we look back, remote work will be the largest and most sustainable change. The ripple effect of remote workers will be huge, especially in the commercial real estate market as companies get out of leases and try to unload property over the next 5-10 years. What’s going to happen to the empty office buildings?”

In Texas, Express franchise owner Nancy Reed has seen her clients make a full recovery from the chaos of 2020. While allowing employees to work remotely ranks toward the bottom of her list for pandemic survival, she believes that having a crisis plan aided businesses the most.

Employers may have a difficult time predicting how long COVID-19 will continue to impact their companies in some form or fashion, but Reed says several human resource management aspects could reshape the workforce.

“We have to change our company culture to include more flexibility and allow for more

coaching,” she said. “The rigid rules and performance management initiatives will have to be revisited, such as attendance and coachable infractions. Technology will continue to make a huge impact on companies allowing remote work for the foreseeable future.”

While businesses never hope for another disruption like the COVID-19 pandemic, they should be prepared with contingency plans, according to Express CEO Bill Stoller.

“Heading into 2022, I think we are all hoping for more stability on every level,” Stoller added. “The next few years should tell us a lot about how the pandemic changed business operations forever whether it’s for better or for worse.”

### **Survey Methodology**

The survey was conducted online within the United States by The Harris Poll on behalf of Express Employment Professionals between March 23 and April 12, 2021, among 1,001 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.

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If you would like to arrange for an interview with Bill Stoller to discuss this topic, please contact Sheena 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.

### **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 526,000 people globally in 2020. For more information, visit [ExpressPros.com](https://ExpressPros.com).