

Americans are Burnt Out at Work and Employers Must Step In

Flexibility, Recognition and Time Off Top Prevention Tools

Latest Results from The Harris Poll

Note: If you would like to arrange for an interview with a local Express franchise owner on this topic, please go to ExpressPros.com to find the nearest location.

OKLAHOMA CITY, May 24, 2023—Gaps caused by high turnover at U.S. companies are straining the workforce as 79% of employed Americans say they have felt burnt out in their careers, including 35% who say they are currently experiencing this mental and physical exhaustion.

And these workers aren't alone. Nearly 9 in 10 jobseekers say the same with 45% reporting they are currently burnt out.

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

Nearly all full- or part-time employed Americans who have ever felt burnt out at work say there is something their company could do to help prevent them from feeling this way (96%).

Allowing flexible work schedules (53%), providing incentives/bonuses (52%), recognizing employees for a job well done (46%) and encouraging time off (46%) are among the top actions employees feel companies could take to help counteract employee burnout. Jobseekers, specifically, also mention prioritizing the health and safety of employees (46%).

Employee Requested BURNOUT PREVENTION



Ensuring positions available at companies offer more than a salary and standard benefits package may also help in these efforts, as a strong majority of hiring managers agree that today's candidates are looking for jobs that can provide more fulfillment in their lives (88%) or are more meaningful (86%).

Notably, companies appear tuned in to the needs of their employees. Ninety percent of hiring managers report their company is taking actions to prevent employee burnout, such as recognizing employees for a job well done (46%), allowing flexible work schedules (39%), prioritizing the health and safety of employees (38%), encouraging small breaks throughout the workday (35%) and encouraging time off (34%).

Increasing Trend

"Burnout has exploded in the last year," according to Greg Sulentic, an Express franchise owner in Nebraska. "I believe this is the result of employees returning to work post-pandemic with new duties, greater responsibilities and a new or different team around them. There has been massive turnover, causing stress on the existing workers as they are left to carry the load for their job, along with the need to train and develop new employees."

Sulentic also believes employees are promoted to higher responsibility levels without the training or knowledge to take on their new duties.

"The pay is higher, but so are the expectations and hours," he said. "Off-the-charts stress ultimately results in burnout."

In Virginia, Express franchise owner Chris Cary says employee burnout has increased exponentially in the last few years for several reasons.

“With quiet quitting, the great resignation and people just leaving companies in general for better work/life balance for the past couple of years, it has left more work for fewer people which has caused an increase in burnout,” he said. “It is a vicious cycle.

“Burnout increases employee absences, results in lower productivity and causes higher turnover, all of which will affect a company's bottom line.”

Burnout Prevention

To help ease employee burnout, Sulentic says employers have several options such as keeping hours in check, increased training and mentoring on the job, hiring additional workers and enforcing time off.

“Flexibility is key,” Cary adds. “Allow workers four-day weeks or an option to work from home a day or two a month. These types of perks seem to invigorate the workforce. As best as possible, have them take their vacation and do your best to have it uninterrupted. Talk to employees frequently before it is too late.”

Employees can also have a role in preventing burnout by discussing it with their supervisors and human resources professionals.

“A lot of times, the company is unaware of the issue until it’s too late,” Cary said.

Turnover is costly and time-consuming, which means companies should make every effort to retain top talent, according to Bill Stoller, Express Employment International CEO.

“The fatigue of the labor shortage affects almost every area of business, but there are steps business owners can take to keep their most important assets—their employees—healthy,” he said. “Small gestures can go a long way to prevent worker burnout and the negative consequences that come with it.”

Survey Methodology

The Job Insights survey was conducted online within the United States by The Harris Poll on behalf of Express Employment Professionals between Dec. 1 and Dec. 15, 2022, 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 were weighted where necessary by company size to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in our surveys. The sampling precision of Harris online polls is measured by using a Bayesian credible interval. For this study, the sample data is accurate to within + 3.2 percentage points using a 95% confidence level. This credible interval will be wider among subsets of the surveyed population of interest.

The omnibus survey was conducted online within the United States by The Harris Poll on behalf of Express Employment Professionals from Dec. 13-15, 2022, among 2,041 adults ages 18 and older. Data are weighted where necessary by age, gender, race/ethnicity, region, education, marital status, household size, household income and propensity to be online, to bring them in line with their actual proportions in the population. Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in our surveys. The sampling precision of Harris online polls is measured by using a Bayesian credible interval. For this study, the sample data is accurate to within + 2.8 percentage points using a 95% confidence level.

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 International. Founded in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, the international staffing franchisor supports the Express Employment Professionals franchise and related brands. The Express franchise brand is an industry-leading, international staffing company with franchise locations in the U.S., Canada, South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand.

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