76% of US Companies Plan to Reskill Employees, Up From 64% a Year Ago

Company-led training, on-the-job learning and outside courses lead employers' plans.

OKLAHOMA CITY, Nov. 23, 2026 — More employers are investing in the skills of their existing workforce, according to a recent Express Employment Professionals-Harris Poll survey. Seventy-six percent of U.S. hiring managers say their company plans to reskill employees in the next few months, up from 64% in spring 2025.



Among companies planning to reskill, 75% will use company-led training programs and 62% will provide on-the-job training from other employees. Another 58% will use third-party training or courses.

Their plans include:

- Company-led training during work hours: 58%, up from 52% in spring 2025
- Third-party training or courses during work hours: 42%, up from 36% in spring 2025
- Covering education costs, including degrees or certifications: 36%
- Mentorship opportunities: 35%
- Company-led training outside work hours: 34%
- Third-party training or courses outside work hours: 32%
- AI-assisted training: 27%

Approaches Vary by Age

Younger hiring managers are more likely to report reskilling plans, led by Gen Z (87%) and millennials (83%), followed by Gen X (70%) and baby boomers and seniors (48%).

Millennial hiring managers are also more likely than Gen X to say their company will use third-party training or courses (63% vs. 52%), offer mentorships (40% vs. 28%) and hold company-led training outside of work hours (39% vs. 27%).

Willingness to Learn Is a Hiring Priority

Reskilling is also happening alongside hiring. Among companies planning to add staff in the second half of 2026, 37% are doing so to get expertise in new areas. At the same time, 86% of hiring managers say they would prefer to reskill current employees for new roles rather than hire brand-new ones, up from 79% in fall 2025.

Employers also look for the drive to keep learning in the people they hire. Ninety-two percent of hiring managers rate willingness to learn as absolutely essential or very important when considering applicants, including 57% who say it is absolutely essential. Only work ethic (60%) and dependability (59%) are rated absolutely essential by more hiring managers.

“Reskilling is an important part of building a workforce that can adapt to changing business needs,” said Bob Funk Jr., CEO, president and chairman of Express Employment International. "Existing employees bring valuable knowledge of a company’s operations, culture and customers, giving businesses a strong foundation for developing new capabilities. When combined with strategic hiring, investing in current employees can help businesses address evolving skill demands while maintaining operational continuity.”

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Survey Methodology
The Job Insights survey was conducted online within the United States by The Harris Poll on behalf of Express Employment Professionals from May 13 to June 1, 2026, among 1,006 U.S. hiring decision-makers.

For full survey methodologies, please contact Sheena.Hollander@ExpressPros.com, Director of Corporate Communications & PR.

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If you would like to arrange for an interview to discuss this topic, please contact Sheena.Hollander@ExpressPros.com, Director of Corporate Communications & PR.

About Robert (Bob) Funk Jr.
Robert (Bob) Funk Jr. is the Chief Executive Officer, President and Chairman of Express Employment International, a global staffing franchisor founded and headquartered in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. He leads a portfolio of workforce solution brands, including the

flagship Express Employment Professionals franchise, along with several affiliated brands serving specialized markets. The Express franchise brand is an industry-leading, international staffing company with franchise locations across the U.S., Canada, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand.

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