



99% of Employers Say Recognition is Critical, but Nearly Half Admit They're Falling Short This Season

This Thanksgiving, Employers Say Thanks — But Are They Saying It Often Enough?

OKLAHOMA CITY, Nov. 24, 2025 — Gratitude is at the heart of Thanksgiving, and in the workplace, recognition is its closest cousin.

Nearly all U.S. hiring managers (99%) believe recognizing employees for their work is important, and more than half (53%) say it's "absolutely essential," according to a new Express Employment Professionals-Harris Poll survey. Yet 45% admit they don't have the resources to manage recognition effectively.

Recognition isn't just seasonal, it's strategic year-round.

Nearly 9 in 10 employers (89%) agree it's a competitive advantage, and 93% say it significantly boosts loyalty. Leadership understands the stakes:

- 85% believe recognition helps reduce turnover
- 82% are willing to invest in recognition for long-term success

When recognition happens, the benefits ripple through the organization. Employers say employees feel valued (64%), morale rises (60%), productivity improves (57%), engagement grows (52%) and loyalty strengthens (51%).

How Companies Give Thanks

Most employers say recognition is frequent and ongoing (71%), often through private praise (70%), public praise in meetings (65%) and shoutouts in company communications (59%). But for many employees, these gestures are rare.

Among job seekers:

- Only 54% say recognition is regular while 46% say it's reserved for big wins
- Monthly recognition is uncommon — private praise (27%), shoutouts (24%), public



praise (20%)

- Most employed job seekers (72%) say they currently feel or previously felt appropriately recognized for their contributions at work

Job seekers echo the importance of gratitude:

- 74% agree leadership understands recognition reduces turnover
- 68% say leadership is willing to invest in recognition

Experts recommend varied, personalized approaches, from on-the-spot praise to special projects and non-monetary rewards. A [Forbes article](#) notes recognition can lead to a 366% increase in fulfillment and 208% increase in community, creating a culture of gratitude that extends beyond the holiday season.

“Recognition is a simple act with a powerful impact,” said Bob Funk Jr., CEO, President and Chairman of Express Employment International. “It’s the everyday expression of gratitude that builds trust and strengthens teams. When companies make recognition a priority, they create an environment where employees feel valued, morale improves and productivity rises. In a season focused on giving thanks, it’s a reminder that appreciation should be part of every day, not just once a year.”

Survey Methodology

The Job Insights survey was conducted online within the United States by The Harris Poll on behalf of Express Employment Professionals from June 2 to 28, 2025, among 1,000 U.S. hiring decision-makers.

The Job Seeker Report was conducted online within the United States by The Harris Poll on behalf of Express Employment Professionals from June 12 to 27, 2025, among 1,000 adults ages 18 and older.

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

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.

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 427,000 people globally in 2024 and more than 11 million since its inception. For more information, visit ExpressPros.com.