

New Canadian Survey: It's Getting Even Harder to Fill Jobs

Three-Quarters Say "Difficult" to Fill Positions

Lack of Skilled, Experienced Applicants is a Concern

Funk: We Need to Focus on "Worker Creation," Not Just "Job Creation"

TORONTO, Jan. 8, 2018 - Curt Allison, who runs an Express Employment Professionals office in Coquitlam, British Columbia, says it's getting harder to fill jobs in his area. Unemployment is hitting new lows, meaning fewer workers are available.

"We are experiencing the tightest job market in many years in our area," he said. "We have also noticed that we're getting more applicants who already have a job, but are looking to make a change versus people not currently working."



Why Jobs Aren't Filled

1. Lack of applicants with experience
2. Lack of available applicants
3. Lack of applicants with hard skills
4. No available positions
5. Lack of applicants with soft skills

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Source: Job Insights Survey
A survey of 402 businesses, which are current and former clients of Express Employment Professionals, covering job insights for first quarter 2018.

Allison is not alone. Ted Maksimowski, an Express office owner in Ontario, says finding people is "harder than this time last year, but about the same as it has been for the last six months."

In his market—Hamilton, Burlington and Brantford, Ontario—Maksimowski notes, "At current low levels of unemployment in our market, we are essentially at full employment. Recruiting challenges have never been greater. We have to spend more money and be much more creative to find the talent our clients need."

Despite the challenges, Allison says he is optimistic that employers will rise to the challenge.

“The onus is on employers to ensure they have good benefits and career path opportunities, but also competitive wages,” he said. “Money is still the number one factor for people in our area.”

In a recent survey of businesses from Express, more than three-quarters of respondents said it was “difficult” to recruit and fill positions, more than in any of the previous four quarterly surveys.

Respondents were asked, “Currently, how easy is it for you to recruit and fill positions?”

Forty-five (45) per cent said, “somewhat difficult,” and 31 per cent said, “very difficult.” Just 21 per cent said, “somewhat easy,” while 2 per cent said “very easy” and another 2 per cent said “I don’t know.”

When asked why jobs are not filled, 37 per cent said “lack of applicants with experience,” and 31 per cent said, “lack of available applicants.” Other top concerns include applicants without the relevant hard and soft skills.

“Headlines have been filled with generally positive economic news over the past weeks and months, but here is a reminder that we’re not actually reaching our full potential—so long as we don’t have people for available jobs and jobs for available people,” said Bob Funk, CEO of Express. “If I have a wish for 2018, it’s that we can expand the conversation beyond simply ‘job creation’ to ‘worker creation.’ We need to turn unemployed people, and workers on the sidelines, into qualified workers.”

The survey of 462 businesses, which are current and former clients of Express Employment Professionals, was conducted in December 2017 to gauge respondents’ expectations for the first quarter of 2018.

If you would like to arrange for an interview to discuss this topic, please contact Kellie Major at (613) 222-7488 or email kellie@mapleleafstrategies.com.

About Robert A. Funk

Robert A. “Bob” Funk is chairman and chief executive officer of Express Employment Professionals. Headquartered in Oklahoma City, the international staffing company has more than 790 franchises in the U.S., Canada and South Africa. Under his leadership, Express has put more than 6 million people to work worldwide. Funk served as Chairman of the Conference of Chairmen of the Federal Reserve and was also the Chairman of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City.

About Express Employment Professionals

Express Employment Professionals puts people to work. It generated \$3.05 billion in sales and employed a record 510,000 people in 2016. Its long-term goal is to put a million people to work annually. For more information, visit ExpressPros.com.