

Canadian Companies Bracing for Hiring Challenges in 2024, Including Higher Pay Demands and Skills Mismatch

Job Posting Scams Also Concern for Both Employers and Job Seekers

TORONTO, Jan. 24, 2024 —The vast majority of Canadian companies (89%) expect to face challenges when it comes to hiring in 2024, according to a new survey from The Harris Poll commissioned by Express Employment Professionals.

While half of Canadian companies plan to increase their employee count in the first half of this year, they also expect a litany of hiring obstacles. The most commonly cited obstacle being difficulty in finding qualified candidates (45%), followed by increased job market competition (25%), uncompetitive pay (24%), the available talent pool not matching their needs (23%), and uncompetitive benefits (21%).



Companies are also facing increasing salary demands from their existing staff. More than half

(55%) say their employees have asked for a raise in the past year because of the increase in the cost of living. In response, businesses are proactively making plans to raise wages, with nearly three-quarters (72%) reporting they will increase wages in 2024.

Indeed, more than 1 in 3 employed job seekers (41%) report asking for a raise in the past year (with Gen Z leading the pack at 49%). But job seekers are not convinced that raises are coming, as half (49%) expect wages to stay the same — with a smaller number (41%) expecting their company to increase wages this year.

Skills Mismatch

While forecasting and planning for hiring challenges can be beneficial, some ongoing and long-term issues are more difficult to address. For example, the persistent skills mismatch in the labour market, as more than one-third of companies (36%) say they have open positions that they cannot fill.

The main reason these open positions cannot be filled: a lack of qualified applicants — more specifically, a lack of applicants with the required hard skills (45%), relevant experience (36%), and soft skills (26%). Interestingly, employers also note a concern about the general lack of applicants overall (35%).

Job seekers agree one of the biggest challenges they face is finding job opportunities that match their qualifications (56%), including lacking the required hard skills (26%), soft skills (13%) or communication skills (13%) for open positions.

A unique barrier job seekers report is companies claiming to be hiring but are only collecting applicants and resumes to review (34%). Gen Z and Millennials are more likely to say this is occurring (72% and 70%) compared to Gen X and Boomers (54% and 53%).

Job Posting Scams

A lack of job applicants may also be a side effect of the recent rise in job posting scams. Indeed, the majority of hiring managers (57%) are aware of such scams, but many still are not (43%).

Regardless of awareness, hiring managers seem concerned about the potential impact it could have, with close to half (45%) saying they are concerned about their company name being illegitimately used for a job post scam and many (41%) also fearing candidates will avoid applying to legitimate postings because they mistake it for a scam.

The majority of job seekers (57%) are also aware of such job posting scams, but many remain unaware (43%). Half of job seekers are concerned about falling for one (51%), especially Gen Z and Millennials (56% each). In fact, more than 1 in 10 job seekers (11%) say they have already fallen for a job post scam, while another 1 in 10 are not sure if they have (9%).

“The optimism hiring managers feel heading into 2024 is encouraging, but the expected challenges can be daunting,” said Bill Stoller, Express Employment International CEO. “The key

to solving most of these issues is for job seekers to gain skills for in-demand positions. With so many training resources readily available, this is the year for job seekers to invest in their future, which will ultimately create a more well-rounded workforce.”

Survey Methodology

The Job Insights survey was conducted online within Canada by The Harris Poll on behalf of Express Employment Professionals between Oct. 31 and Nov. 10, 2023, among 504 Canadian hiring decision-makers.

For full survey methodology, please contact Ana@MapleLeafStrategies.com.

If you would like to arrange for an interview to discuss this topic, please contact Ana Curic at (613) 858-2622 or email Ana@MapleLeafStrategies.com.

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.

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 579,000 people globally in 2022 and 10 million since its inception. For more information, visit ExpressPros.com/CA.