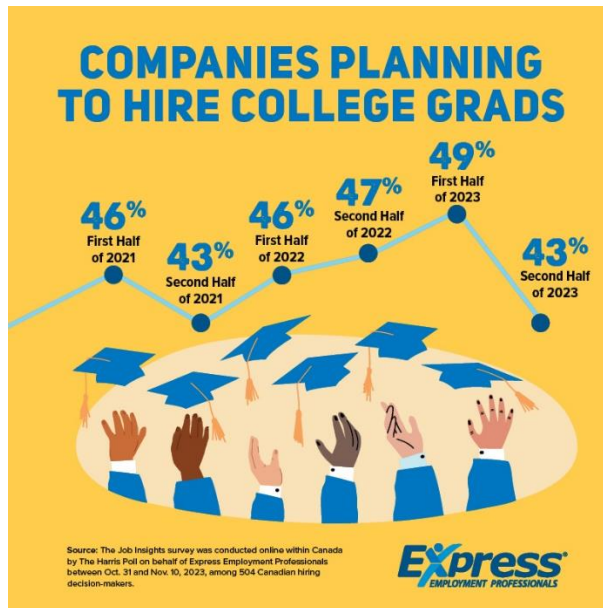


New University and College Grads Entering into Dampened Job Market

Recent Graduates Should Expect More Competitive Job Market

TORONTO, May 29, 2024 — While Canadian companies continue to show interest in hiring them in 2024, recent university and college graduates are facing a weaker job market compared to the previous few years, according to a recent Express Employment Professionals-Harris Poll.

Only slightly more than 2 in 5 companies (43%) plan to hire recent graduates this year, but that is down from 49% in the first half of 2023 and 47% in the second half of 2022. The job market for vocational/career tech graduates has also dipped, with less than a quarter (23%) of employers planning to hire from this group, compared to 30% in 2022.



Hiring managers also report lowered hiring plans for students, with 33% saying they plan to hire university or college students in 2024 — down from 38% in 2023 — and 18% planning to hire high school students — down compared to 19% in 2023.

In addition to recent graduates and students, hiring managers say they plan to employ immigrant workers (33%), migrant workers (17%) and adults with disabilities (15%) this year.

Full-Time Employee Demand Surges

New graduates will be interested to learn businesses are looking to hire in many key departments in 2024, most commonly in customer service (22%), sales (22%), general labour (18%), IT/technology support (15%), administrative/office clerical (15%) and accounting and finance (14%).

In positive news for recent grads, three-quarters of companies (75%) plan to hire full-time employees this year (up from 70% who planned to hire last year), either hourly (46%) or salaried (44%), while one-quarter plan to hire seasonal/temporary/contract workers (24%).

Hiring Landscape for New Graduates

“Companies are actively hiring, and there's a palpable demand to hire great people,” according to Brent Pollington, an Express franchise owner in Vancouver, British Columbia. “One thing employers love about recent grads is that they are typically highly motivated and have a great aptitude and ability to learn.”

But Pollington said the job market isn't as easy as it was last year.

“The hiring landscape is strained for everyone right now which makes it tough for job seekers, and the competition is fierce,” said Pollington. “Recent university and college graduates are competing against unemployed job seekers who have previous experience, newly landed and well-educated immigrants and their fellow graduating cohorts. Companies often look for people with local experience and whose educational backgrounds closely relate to the types of positions they are applying for.”

Gaining Experience is Key

To future graduates, Pollington encourages them to have realistic expectations and be open to new opportunities to gain experience.

“Graduates need to know that experience generally trumps education,” said Pollington. “Having unrealistic expectations of market rates and salaries based on your potential perceived value may result in being unemployable and missing out on valuable opportunities to gain experience and increase your employability and worth.”

Without relatable, career-specific experience, a company will be required to invest in training and getting you up to speed to ultimately make you successful.”

Pollington's best advice to graduates: “Get your foot in the door, prove your worth and

command salary increases based on your impact, not based on perceived potential value.”

“I offer my heartfelt congratulations to the Class of 2024 and a warm welcome to the workforce,” said Bill Stoller, CEO of Express Employment International. “While many things have changed since my college graduation years ago, a diligent work ethic and dedication to lifelong learning remains a cornerstone of career success. If you’re prepared to do the hard work of investing in yourself, the road ahead is paved with endless opportunities.”

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.

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