

More Honesty in the Workplace Increases Productivity: New Survey

Job Seekers More Attracted to Employers Who Promote Honest Workplace Communication

TORONTO, Sept. 11, 2024 — Canadian companies should prioritize honest workplace communication if they want to improve productivity and attract and retain top talent, according to a newly released Express Employment Professionals-Harris Poll survey.

Almost all job seekers (93%) agree a work environment that allows employees and managers to be honest with one another is essential to a company's success, with the vast majority (89%) adding honest workplace communication is critical for a productive workforce. Three-quarters of job seekers (75%) also say employees should feel comfortable discussing their personal issues with their manager if it is impacting their day-to-day work.

Companies can reap significant benefits from fostering more honest communication.

For instance, a large majority of job seekers (82%) say they would be more loyal to a company if they felt they could be honest with their manager. Indeed, job seekers report having seen firsthand when employees can speak honestly, morale (48%), productivity (44%) and loyalty to the company (43%) all increase.



On the other hand, when employees are not able to speak honestly at work job seekers report that employee morale falls (58%), productivity decreases (51%), employee burnout worsens (48%), workplace resentment jumps (47%) and employee turnover increases (44%).

Canadian hiring managers agree honest workplace communication plays a vital role in a company's success. Two-thirds (66%) say it increases employee morale, while other benefits include making employees more loyal to the company (60%), improving productivity (56%), reducing conflicts and disagreements (51%) and decreasing employee turnover (47%).

More than half of hiring managers (58%) report the employees feeling comfortable being honest in the workplace is absolutely essential to their ability to be a good manager.

There's Always Room for Improvement

Most companies (84%) feel they have created a workplace where employees can be honest, and more than three-quarters (76%) also believe their company has the right systems and tools in place to allow for constructive criticism to be received well.

As a result, nearly all employers (96%) feel their employees can speak honestly with anyone at the company regarding their concerns or issues — most commonly with their supervisor (66%) and their colleagues (57%).

Most job seekers (70%) agree their company encourages honest communication. The majority report it is easy to receive constructive feedback from a supervisor (76%), set professional boundaries so their work is not impacted by personal issues (73%) and be honest with a supervisor about issues they have with the company (63%).

However, less than half of job seekers (40%) report it is easy to discuss personal issues that are impacting their work with their manager.

Equipping Leaders with Relevant Training

Honest workplace communication requires managers to be properly trained on how to handle sometimes uncomfortable issues. Job seekers appreciate companies that offer resources to managers and employees to support honest communication.

However, more than half of hiring decision-makers (58%) report their company does not currently provide managers with resources or training on how to handle personal issues brought up by employees.

A strong majority of job seekers (90%) believe it is at least somewhat important (23% say it is absolutely essential) companies provide managers with resources and training on how to manage when an employee discusses personal issues. Most (88%) also believe it is at least

somewhat important (21% say absolutely essential) that companies provide employees with resources and training on how to manage personal issues, so it doesn't impact their work.

"The foundation of any good relationship is trust, which is no different in the workplace," said Bill Stoller, Express Employment International CEO. "Similar to other leadership training, managers can significantly benefit from structured programs that emphasize healthy communication and the ability to handle challenging conversations."

Survey Methodology

The Job Insights survey was conducted online within Canada by The Harris Poll on behalf of Express Employment Professionals between May 16 – June 3, 2024, among 504 Canadian hiring decision-makers between May 16 – June 3, 2024.

The Job Seeker Report was conducted online within Canada by The Harris Poll on behalf of Express Employment Professionals between May 28 – June 10, 2024, among 505 adults ages 18 and older.

For full survey methodologies, please contact Ana Curic at 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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