

72% of Companies Prefer to Reskill Employees Over Hiring New Ones

In-House Training Most Popular Option

Latest Results from The Harris Poll

OKLAHOMA CITY, Sept. 8, 2021 – A majority of companies (72%) would rather take the time to reskill current employees for production needs than hire new ones from outside the organization.

This is according to a new survey from The Harris Poll commissioned by Express Employment Professionals.

Three-in-five hiring decision-makers (60%) say their companies plan to reskill employees by the end of 2021 with larger companies the most likely to offer reskilling opportunities: 2-9 employees: 26%, 10-49: 45%, 50-99: 63%, 100-499: 76%, 500+: 79%.

Among businesses planning to reskill employees, they most commonly plan to do this by offering company-led training sessions or programs (67%), partnering with a third-party that offers training or courses (51%) and providing on-the-job training by other employees (50%).



Greg Sulentic, Express franchise owner in Lincoln, Nebraska, says every staff decision is based on employee productivity and development, which is why he prefers to reskill his employees.

“Reskilling leads to improved longevity because it adds a pathway of growth for the employee,” he said. “Current employees are a better bet to stay with the company because they are already used to the environment and office culture. No matter how careful we are in adding new employees, it’s still a gamble as to whether they are going to be the right fit.”

All industries in Sulentic’s local market are reskilling employees, including one large client who has started paring unskilled workers with a skilled “buddy” so they can train to be forklift operators or welders. This happens early in the employment process, allowing the “re-skill” process to also be a recruiting tool for unskilled employees.

“By utilizing other employees for on-the-job training, the company can get immediate productivity from the newly hired employee,” he said. “They also have the experienced, skilled employee provide full-shift support to the new employees that are being trained. This is an approach that creates faster, less expensive ways to move unskilled employees to a skilled position.”

With all the changes the COVID-19 pandemic brought for businesses, Jon Noceda, Express franchise owner in Chula Vista, California, believes he would also prefer to reskill employees instead of hiring new talent—to an extent.

“As the market changes, the available positions change, too,” he said. “One example is the evolution of remote work where computer and communication skills are more important than ever.”

While Sulentic has seen the success of on-the-job training to gain skills, Noceda believes an outside expert is the best choice.

“Partnering with a third-party entity that offers training or courses saves companies time because those groups are experts in providing continuing education and development,” he said.

In a rapidly evolving workforce, businesses can see the benefits of reskilling, but this is not limited to only the top brass.

“Employees should take the initiative to reskill or upskill on their own, as well, to maximize their career potential,” Express CEO Bill Stoller said. “The jobs of tomorrow may require a different skillset, and it’s easier to get ahead of it than be left behind.”

Survey Methodology

The survey was conducted online within the United States by The Harris Poll on behalf of Express Employment Professionals between March 23 and April 12, 2021, among 1,001 U.S. hiring decision-makers (defined as adults ages 18+ in the U.S. who are employed full-time or self-employed, work at companies with more than one employee, and have full/significant involvement in hiring decisions at their company). Data was weighted where necessary by company size to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population.

If you would like to arrange for an interview with Bill Stoller to discuss this topic, please contact Sheena Hollander, Director of Corporate Communications and PR, at (405) 717-5966.

About Bill Stoller

William H. "Bill" Stoller is chairman and chief executive officer of Express Employment Professionals. Headquartered in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, the international staffing company has more than 830 franchises in the U.S., Canada, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand. Since inception, Express has put more than 9 million people to work worldwide.

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