

## **Job Seekers Press Pause on Parenthood: Survey Highlights Work/Life Balance as Top Priority**

***1 in 3 Delaying Family Plans***

***Latest Results from The Harris Poll***

---

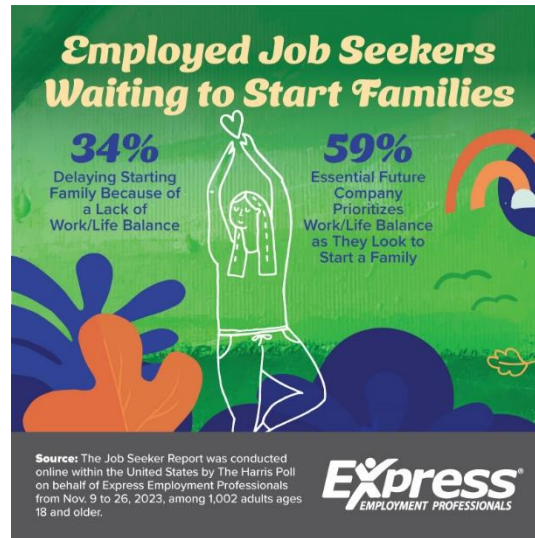
**OKLAHOMA CITY, April 24, 2024** — A lack of work/life balance is impacting job seekers in a very personal way as one-third of employed U.S. job seekers (34%) report having to put starting a family on hold due to a lack of work/life balance. And nearly 3 in 5 (59%) say it's essential that their future company prioritizes work/life balance as they look to start a family.

This is according to a recent Express Employment Professionals-Harris Poll survey.

"From what I've seen, a generational focus shift is happening for many after seeing their parents devoted to work at the expense of their private lives and family time," said John Roller, an Express franchise owner in New Hampshire. "As a result, there is less of a desire to start families altogether, with many choosing to delay until 'everything is in place'."

Across the country in California, fellow Express franchisee Neil McMillian adds that with so many couples having to work to earn enough for a reasonably comfortable life, it's not surprising that work/life balance is a priority for job seekers.

"However, maybe a work/life 'harmony' or 'integration' would be a better description of what companies and employees should be looking to achieve in the future," he said. "Work/life 'balance' implies or suggests the two are competing priorities rather than being complementary priorities."



## Creative Benefit Offerings

In a tight labor market, companies are having to meet candidates half (or all the) way on benefits, and Roller said several of his clients have “bent over backward to retain employees who have dealt with personal issues,” including:

- Lending an employee a truck so he could get to work when he was evicted from his apartment.
- Picking up and driving an employee to work each day when his car was being repaired.
- Creating a special shift so an employee could take his child to school every day.

Kim Sullivan, an Express franchise owner in Wisconsin, attributes the rise of job seekers delaying families to the rising cost of childcare and says businesses can do more to help shoulder the burden.

“Childcare is expensive and can be difficult to find, so yes, it doesn’t surprise me that people would have to really think through when the best time is to start a family,” she said. “One way a company could improve work/life balance is provide on-site daycares, more part-time employment and more job sharing. Perhaps also offer paid time off in smaller increments than whole or half days.”

## Impact on Recruiting and Retention

Failing to offer flexible arrangements or other means of achieving work/life balance can harm a company’s ability to recruit and retain candidates, ultimately affecting the bottom line.

“We hear from a lot of candidates who are looking to work remotely or have the option to work some days remotely,” Sullivan said. “They will turn down opportunities that require on-site attendance 100% of the time.”

With more than 40 years of experience in human resources, Roller said he has implemented many programs in the past that focus on improving work/life balance for employees.

“These types of programs are now becoming less of a request and more of an expectation,” he said.

As with any other segment of the workforce, embracing working parents is crucial for businesses, according to Express Employment International CEO Bill Stoller.

“It’s evident from this survey that job seekers are feeling forced to choose between their careers and home lives,” he said. “A little bit of creative flexibility can help attract and retain top talent for skills that are desperately needed.”

### **Survey Methodology**

The Job Seeker Report was conducted online within the United States by The Harris Poll on behalf of Express Employment Professionals from Nov. 9 to 26, 2023, among 1,002 adults ages 18 and older.

For full survey methodologies, please contact [Sheena.Hollander@ExpressPros.com](mailto:Sheena.Hollander@ExpressPros.com), Director of Corporate Communications & PR.

\*\*\*

If you would like to arrange for an interview to discuss this topic, please contact [Sheena.Hollander@ExpressPros.com](mailto:Sheena.Hollander@ExpressPros.com), Director of Corporate Communications & PR.

### **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 492,000 people globally in 2023 and more than 11 million since its inception. For more information, visit [ExpressPros.com](https://ExpressPros.com).