



Canadian Job Seekers Pessimistic About 2025

Half Say There Will be Fewer Job Opportunities in Their Field in the Year Ahead

TORONTO, Jan. 8, 2025 — Almost half of Canadian job seekers (46%) believe there will be fewer job opportunities in their field in 2025 compared to a year ago, according to a recent Express Employment Professionals-Harris Poll survey. This is a significant increase from 2024's survey when only 31% of job seekers expected fewer job opportunities than the previous year.

Additionally, while one-third of job seekers (36%) believe opportunities in their field in 2025 will remain consistent with 2024, less than 1 in 5 (18%) believe there will be more job opportunities this year in their field.



The pessimism Canadian job seekers feel is also seen in the response of almost two-thirds (62%) who say it will be difficult to find a job in the next six months. In contrast, 38% believe obtaining employment in that time will be easy.

Other key findings include:

- **Job Search Duration:** Around half of job seekers (56%) believe they can find a job within six months, a significant decrease from 63% a year ago. The remaining 44% believe it will take them more than six months to find a job, which is also a significant change compared to 37% from the previous year's survey.
- **Motivations for Job Change:** Employed job seekers are primarily looking for better compensation (43%), improved work-life balance (41%) and better growth opportunities (36%).
- **Job Preferences:** Most Canadian job seekers (75%) are willing to accept full-time positions, while 2 in 5 are willing to accept part-time positions (40%), 28% are willing to

accept contract/freelance positions and 21% are willing to accept temporary or seasonal positions.

- **Challenges:** The most significant challenges listed by job seekers include finding opportunities that match their qualifications (57%), securing jobs with the pay they need to cover basic expenses (49%) and standing out in a competitive market (46%). Interestingly, women are more likely to reply that it will be challenging to secure a job that pays enough to cover expenses (55% vs. 44% of men) and stand out (51% vs. 42% of men).
- **Barriers:** The top barriers to employment are lacking skills (hard skills, soft skills or communication skills) (39%), companies claiming to be hiring but merely collecting applicants/resumes to review (34%) and being underqualified (28%). Gen Z are most likely to report being underqualified as a significant barrier (43% compared to 25% for millennials, 30% for Gen X and 10% for boomers).

Despite these challenges, there is some optimism about wage growth, with 37% of job seekers expecting overall wages to increase in 2025, while 51% expect wages to remain steady. Job seekers are prepared to act if companies fail to meet their expectations regarding benefits and compensation. Three-quarters (73%) report that they would likely leave companies with inadequate pay or benefits as soon as possible, and a large majority (84%) would hesitate to refer others to such companies.

Boosting Career Marketability

January is the perfect time for job seekers to re-evaluate career goals and sharpen their skills to make them more marketable in the new year, according to Alisha Chappell, Express Employment International Talent Acquisition and Retention Director.

"Explore job postings for positions that interest you to identify any gaps in your technical skills," she advises. "Then, consider enrolling in online courses or pursuing certifications to bridge those gaps and increase expertise in your field."

"Take some time to reflect on how you can enhance your interpersonal abilities (soft skills). While specialized knowledge is crucial, many employers are willing to provide training for candidates who demonstrate strong soft skills, such as eagerness to learn, punctuality, a positive attitude, excellent communication and teamwork."

Job seekers should highlight these skills on resumes and cover letters to help hiring managers immediately recognize valuable attributes, increasing chances of standing out in a competitive job market.

"Navigating the job market in 2025 requires resilience and adaptability," said Bill Stoller, Express Employment International CEO. "As job seekers face a dynamic landscape, those who remain proactive and open to continuous learning will find opportunities even in uncertain

times. The key to success lies in leveraging one's unique strengths and staying prepared to pivot as the market evolves."

Survey Methodology

The Job Seeker Report was conducted online within Canada by The Harris Poll on behalf of Express Employment Professionals from Nov. 21 to Dec. 6, 2024, among 505 adults ages 18 and older.

For full survey methodology, 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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