

One in Four Employers Say More Foreign Workers Should Be Allowed to Work in the U.S., CareerBuilder Survey Finds

One in Six Companies Loses \$25,000 or More for Every Extended Job Vacancy

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CHICAGO, Aug. 6, 2015 /PRNewswire/ -- Should the U.S. government raise the cap on H-1B visas and allow more foreign workers to be temporarily employed in the U.S.? Twenty-seven percent of employers say yes with more than half of these employers expressing concern over a widening talent gap and citing the residual benefit of furthering progress in STEM-related fields (science, technology, engineering and math).

The national survey, which was conducted online by Harris Poll on behalf of CareerBuilder from May 14 to June 3, 2015, included a representative sample of 2,321 hiring managers and human resource professionals across industries and company sizes.

Extended Vacancies Causing Extensive Problems

Thirty-six percent of employers said they currently have positions that stay open for 12 weeks or longer. On average, these companies reported losing around \$14,000 for every job that stays vacant for this length of time; around 1 in 6 loses \$25,000 or more.

Among the challenges employers have faced due to extended job vacancies are loss of revenue (34 percent), lower quality of work due to employees being overworked (36 percent), declines in customer service (35 percent) and work simply not getting done (48 percent).

Crossing Borders to Fill the Gap

Employers struggling to fill high-skill jobs say they are investing more in training and/or importing new talent. Nearly half (46 percent) of employers have hired a low-skill worker and trained them for a higher-skill job within the last two years.

Twenty-six percent of employers said they are hiring workers with H-1B visas this year, which enables them to temporarily employ foreign-born workers for specialized occupations. Thirteen percent of all employers said they tried to hire workers with H-1B visas this year, but were denied, in part, due to the volume of companies applying for them. Others said they didn't apply in time or didn't meet requirements.

Among occupations for which employers are recruiting workers with H-1B visas this year are:

- Software engineers - 19 percent
- Systems analysts and programmers - 11 percent
- Database administrators - 9 percent
- Network administrators - 9 percent
- Sales and distribution managers - 9 percent
- Financial analysts - 9 percent
- Electrical and electronic engineers - 8 percent
- Mechanical engineers - 8 percent

The 27 percent of employers who believe the cap for H-1B visas should be changed to allow more visas cited the following reasons:

- We need to address the skills shortage in our country - 54 percent
- We can increase progress in science, technology, engineering and math - 51 percent
- We need to encourage foreign-born entrepreneurs to start companies here, so we can create more jobs - 44 percent
- Being able to fill high-skill jobs will lead to more jobs being created in the U.S. - 42 percent

The 73 percent of employers who oppose issuing more H-1B visas cited the following reasons:

- We should be focused on re-skilling American-born workers instead of importing workers from other countries - 55 percent
- It will take jobs away from American-born workers - 54 percent
- Companies will then outsource talent abroad after training them in the U.S., resulting in our country offshoring more jobs - 32 percent
- It can lower wages if foreign-born workers are willing to accept positions for less money - 30 percent

"There's continued debate around whether we should be importing workers to fill high-skill jobs or investing in educating the labor pool that already exists on our shores," said Matt Ferguson, CEO of CareerBuilder and co-author of *The Talent Equation*. "The answer is both. We need to close the information gap in the U.S. and educate workers on which skill sets are in high demand, so they can pursue those career paths. We need to provide affordable academic resources and training for them to do so. At the same time, we need to make sure we're bringing in experts from other countries to work side by side with our experts in the U.S., so we can continue to innovate and grow the U.S. economy."

Survey Methodology

This survey was conducted online within the U.S. by Harris Poll on behalf of CareerBuilder among 2,321 hiring and human resource managers ages 18 and over (employed full-time, not self-employed, non-government) between May 14 and June 3, 2015 (percentages for some questions are based on a subset, based on their responses to certain questions). With a pure probability sample of 2,321 one could say with a 95 percent probability that the overall results have a sampling error of +/- 2.03 percentage points. Sampling error for data from sub-samples is higher and varies.

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