

Overcoming the Hiring Crisis: **What Hourly Workers Want Most from Employers Right Now**

Survey Results Provide Direct Insights





Executive Summary

Labor shortages have hit nearly every industry. In fact, there were as many as 10.4 million job openings as of 9/30/2021¹—up from seven million on 9/30/2019². With so many job vacancies, it's no wonder workplaces are struggling to find enough workers to meet demand.

To help workplaces better understand and address hiring challenges, Bluecrew set out to understand the very talent many of our clients desperately need: hourly workers. As a result, we surveyed over 1,200 hourly workers, asking for specifics on work preferences in the post-pandemic era. This report walks through the insights gleaned from this survey. It provides direct feedback from workers on topics such as the hiring process, employee retention and beyond.

Key Focus Areas

In this report, you'll find the results of the survey focused on three key areas:

What Makes Jobs Desirable

Types of jobs workers want, the candidate experience and pay expectations.

Worker Retention

How can employers keep the good ones?

What Comes Next

A look at the future of work through the eyes of employees.

Our survey results indicated these three areas to be of high importance particularly to hourly workers. For workplaces looking to overcome the challenges of hiring, these are key areas to improve upon for successful hiring.

Our Findings at a Glance

Workers want one, full-time job versus multiple part-time gigs.



Top barriers to finding work were insufficient pay, shift schedule and proximity to home.



Not being treated with respect is the most common reason for attrition.



Workplaces looking to survive the hiring crisis and bring on hourly workers to meet demands will need to keep these insights in mind as they recruit, hire and retain hourly talent.

Recruiting Employees: What Makes Jobs Desirable?

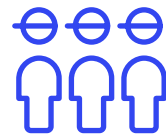
Before hiring is possible, workers must want to apply for a job. That said, what types of work are they looking for?

74%

of workers want full-time opportunities, as opposed to part time or gig work.

67%

of workers want one full-time job versus part-time or multiple jobs.



General labor, warehouse, and production are the most common types.

Further, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reports that the sectors with the highest quit levels in July 2021 were:

950,000+

Trade, Transportation, and Utilities, which includes Retail and Warehousing

800,000+

Leisure and Hospitality, including Food Service³

What This Means for Employers

Workers reporting that they want the same types of jobs they're quitting indicates that retention is a problem. In many cases, workers want to stay in the same general industry, but they want more from their employers.

The hardest hit industries are those with the most opportunities to improve based on voluntary resignation—those workers are seeking greener pastures. Rather than focusing on hiring, workplaces need to focus on keeping their workers (and keeping them happy).

Retention Starts With The Candidate Experience

The first step to retaining workers is by ensuring you provide a great candidate experience from application to employment offer. In today's job seekers' market, workplaces must ensure the application process is smooth and as seamless as possible. They say that first impressions can be everything, and the initial application process can make all the difference in whether a candidate applies or not.

Understanding the barriers that deter workers from applying for job openings is key so they can be addressed and removed as appropriate.

Common frustrations during the job search, application, and hiring process include overly long or complicated applications, slow and low-tech hiring processes, and outdated recruiting practices that don't meet workers where they are.⁴

In a dynamic, highly competitive job market, upgrade systems and simplify processes to amplify your efforts.



Re-Work Job Descriptions. Use common, simple language and easy-to-understand “what you will be doing” phrases to describe each job. Workers often describe their jobs very differently than management would. How can you make your job descriptions better reflect workers' reality?



Be Thoughtful When Posting Jobs. Taking extra time to think about how a worker might perceive your job postings could result in a better candidate pool. Make job postings as real, open, and enticing as possible, and the right people will naturally be more drawn to your vacancies.



Keeps Candidates Engaged. Be transparent about the hiring process, how many stages there are and what to expect at each stage. Keeping candidates up-to-date on the hiring process keeps them engaged and shows them you value their time.

What Workplaces Can Do to Address Worker Job Preferences

Hiring and retaining qualified, *quality* hourly workers may mean changing the way you build out job descriptions, post open jobs, and think about career paths and compensation.

- **Rethink Your Shifts.** Evaluate how shifts are structured to make it viable for the 74% of people who want full-time work and the 67% who want only one full-time job.
- **Focus on Growth.** Based on the research, workplaces with a “growth” approach to their FTEs tend to have better retention rates, and 36% of workers indicate they will leave a job that doesn’t provide them with opportunities for advancement. Can workers see a clear path to turning full-time work into a future with your organization?
- **Pay Your People.** Pay is the most sought-after information when workers are evaluating a job. Find out below just how important pay really is.

36%

of workers indicate they will leave a job that doesn't provide them with opportunities for advancement



The Importance of Pay and Benefits to Workers

There's no denying that pay is critical. In fact, workers report:

Making the most money possible is the top desire for work, with fulfillment being a secondary priority.



When deciding between jobs, the top three factors are:

62%

Pay

49%

Quality of life

45%

Enjoyment

The major barriers to finding work are:

41%

"I can't find something that works with my schedule"

40%

"I can't find something that pays well enough"

29%

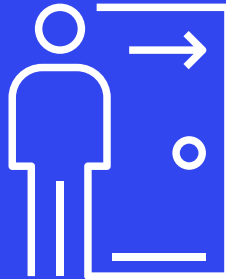
"I can't find something near me"

This is further supported in Prudential's *Pulse of the American Worker Survey*, which confirms:



70%

of hourly workers named health, dental, and vision insurance as their most important employer benefit



Workers planning to leave their job post-pandemic cite compensation as the primary reason for leaving.



The vast majority of workers most value job stability, good work and life balance, salary/pay, and comprehensive benefits⁵.

What Workplaces Can Do to Address Worker Compensation Preferences

In today's challenging job market, it might seem impossible to focus on anything other than filling openings as quickly as possible. However, the cliché of “evolve or die” reminds us that it's now or never.

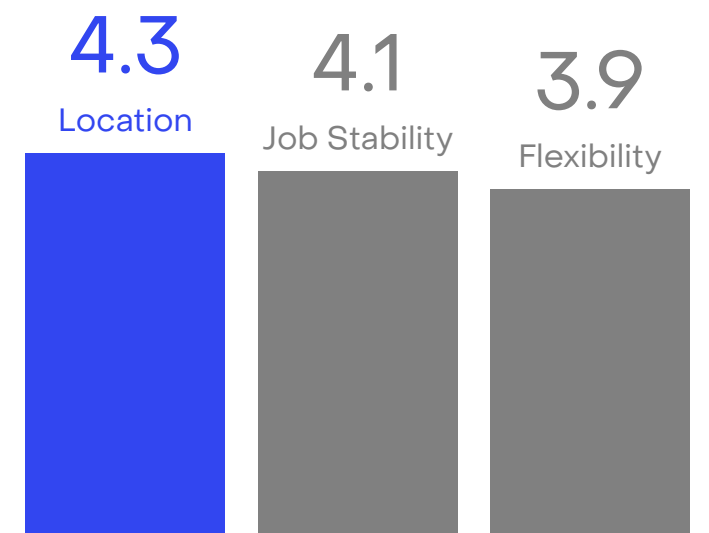
Workplaces must do what they can to help workers make the most money possible and feel fulfilled.

- **Analyze Pay.** Is the pay offered to workers competitive for the area? How does pay compare relative to the role/shift? Is it fair? For example, raise wages for less-ideal shifts, like graveyards. Doing so will ultimately reduce turnover and lower replacement costs.
- **Find Alternate Routes.** If you can't raise wages, find other ways to keep workers satisfied. Explore upskilling, tuition/education assistance, employee appreciation efforts, or get creative with incentive programs.

Other Priorities Besides Pay

While pay is the most crucial factor for most workers, other priorities surfaced as well. Job location, communication, and—interestingly—flexibility as well as consistency are also key.

Workers told Bluecrew that their priorities on a scale of 1-5 are:



What Workplaces Can Do to Address These Additional Worker Preferences

Without changing location or choosing between flexibility and consistency, there are several actions you can take to appeal to workers.



Share the Load. For workplaces in a location that's tough to get to, consider ways to accommodate workers with a difficult commute. Cover public transport tabs, work out a deal with a ride-sharing service for discounted rates, or provide a reasonable stipend.



Communicate Clearly. The idea of consistency is important to workers, but it's unclear to what degree workplaces are thinking about it. Communicate clearly and often about consistency in your business. Workers are more likely to leave if they think the job won't be around in a few months or if they're uncertain of their schedules or future with the company.



Be Accommodating. Not all workers view socializing the same, though it's fairly important across the board. Consider implementing a questionnaire or "get to know you" process, then reward and place workers accordingly. For example, put those who are more introverted into behind-the-scenes roles that are better suited to their personality, and recognize them privately versus in a large meeting.



Factors For Mitigating Attrition

While bringing on more workers solves the immediate hiring challenge, it is equally important for workplaces to focus on retaining workers for the long haul. The process of hiring and onboarding workers is already an investment, and it is in the best interest of the business to ensure newly hired workers stick around for the long term.

60%
of workers say
that not being
treated with
respect will drive
them to leave a job

To mitigate attrition and increase retention, workplaces need to acknowledge and address the following insights from hourly workers:

- They don't see themselves in the same roles in five years. Workers clearly indicated that they want career progression and advancement opportunities.
- While pay keeps employees, nearly 60% of workers say that not being treated with respect will drive them to leave a job.
- Even though they feel they must work, hourly workers say that working makes them feel accomplished, essential, and valued.

What Workplaces Can Do About Retention

A critical piece of employee retention is making sure workers feel valued and a part of the team. A few ways workplaces can do so include:

- Help workers see their personal impact and how they fit into the larger picture.
- Consider small and large ways to show appreciation.
- Be clear and open about growth opportunities and other ways they can gain that feeling of "accomplishment" (through upskilling, cross-training, becoming a team lead, lateral transfers, special projects, leadership career tracks, etc.).

Key Takeaways



The vast majority of hourly workers don't want to upend the entire employment process or quit working altogether. They simply want work that better aligns with their needs and preferences, and they are taking this opportunity to choose forward-focused jobs and companies that do so.



Many of the insights captured in the Bluecrew Hourly Worker survey aren't news. This feedback, while clear and helpful, is not entirely revolutionary. Workers want more of the same things they have valued (albeit perhaps more covertly) for years—better pay, schedules and locations that fit their needs, and to feel respected.



Now, it's up to workplaces to accommodate. For most companies the alternative is unthinkable, so it's time to evolve.



What's Next: Bluecrew's Innovative Approach Helps Workplaces Bridge the Gap

Bluecrew is the first hourly workforce-as-a-service provider: combining W-2 labor, a workforce management platform, and data + analytics for workplaces who have hourly workers and fluctuating demand.

It's our job to know what hourly workers want. Our W-2 workers not only get ultimate flexibility to choose when and where they work, they also get those all-important things mentioned above: fair pay, the stability of being a W-2 worker, and benefits. Bluecrew's partner workplaces get paired with exceptional temporary (short- or long-term) hourly staff to fill their most urgent gaps without the administrative burden.

When it comes to finding quality hourly workers, employers can remove themselves from the daily grind of managing worker churn by partnering with Bluecrew. Relying on our science- and tech-backed recruiting, hiring, and placement practices frees up your teams to do what they do best.

Bluecrew also takes on the costly and time-consuming burdens of reporting, data analytics, and best-fit pairing to give your teams the time and support needed, essentially on-demand. We vet our workers thoroughly before they ever come on board, so you don't have to.

Instead of *hoping to hire*, get qualified workers in the door with Bluecrew.

Our innovative approach is a win-win for workplaces and hourly workers. We're not yet another staffing provider. Bluecrew is your end-to-end talent management partner.

More About Bluecrew

We believe the traditional approach to hourly staffing is broken. It's outdated, opaque, and inefficient—for employers and workers.

Bluecrew is on a mission to fix that. We want to make hourly staffing simple, transparent, and accessible. Employers should have instant access to qualified, pre-screened W-2 workers, and technology solutions that make staff management a breeze. Workers should be able to choose where and when they want to work and get the employment protections they deserve.

In the world we're building, employers can staff up or down with high quality workers whenever business demands. And workers are treated equitably, with the choice, benefits, and protections that bring out their best.

Learn more
about Bluecrew's
Elastic Hourly Workforce,
become a Bluecrew Workplace,
and more at www.bluecrewjobs.com



Endnotes

- 1 BLS, **September 2021 Job Openings and Labor Turnover Summary**
- 2 BLS, **September 2019 Job Openings and Labor Turnover Summary**
- 3 BLS, ***Table 4. Quits levels and rates by industry and region, seasonally adjusted***
- 4 SHRM, ***Adopting New Tech for Sourcing and Engaging Employees***
- 5 Prudential, ***Pulse of the American Worker: Special Report Post-Pandemic Work & Life (May 2021)***

Survey Methodology

- Research and survey development conducted by Bluecrew
- Data collected between 8/24/21 - 9/3/21
- 1,200+ direct responses gathered
- Bluecrew (62%) and screened general population audiences (38%) were surveyed
- Questions ranged from basics (age, ethnicity, and gender identification) to detailed job preference questions (For example, "What top 3 three factors make you leave a job?")