



Job Seekers More Likely to Apply to Companies That Prioritize Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, Survey Shows

May 18, 2022

National survey reveals Americans expect employers to remove discriminatory hiring practices

TROY, Mich., May 18, 2022 /PRNewswire/ -- Nearly three in four Americans say they are more likely to seek employment with companies that are committed to breaking down discriminatory hiring practices, according to an annual survey conducted by staffing and workforce solutions provider Kelly.

Kelly today revealed the [findings from its annual Equity@Work survey](#) that show Americans want companies to provide greater access to work for underemployed talent groups including job seekers with criminal backgrounds, those on the autism spectrum, veterans, older workers, and women. More than 4 in 5 (83%) agree employers should do more to remove barriers that keep job seekers in these talent groups from being hired or promoted.

"Companies are in desperate need of skilled talent. At the same time, millions of qualified job seekers face significant barriers to employment," says Kelly Vice President and Equity@Work Program Manager Pam Sands. "It's time employers provide fairer access to work for these talent groups. Our survey results indicate it will have a positive impact on their ability to identify skilled workers across the board."

Nearly 33% of working-age Americans have a criminal offense on their record that often disqualifies them from finding employment. The unemployment rate among adults on the autism spectrum is around 85%. Veterans without four-year degrees often struggle to find civilian employment. Older job seekers can find it challenging to transition careers and there are nearly two million fewer women in the labor force due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Kelly, which places 350,000 job seekers every year, launched its Equity@Work initiative in 2020 to remove systemic employment barriers for these Americans. Its survey of 1,020 adults in the U.S. shows companies can benefit from hiring policies that embrace these talent groups:

- 76% of Americans say they are more likely to support businesses committed to breaking down barriers to work.
- 72% say they are more likely to seek employment with companies committed to eliminating these barriers.
- 80% say employers should value the relevant skills military veterans have acquired and factor them into hiring decisions.
- 71% say they are more likely to support businesses that make employment opportunities available to individuals on the autism spectrum.
- 70% say employers should eliminate or reduce blanket-bans that automatically reject job seekers who have minor, non-violent offenses on their criminal record.
- 62% agree that women forced out of the workforce due to the pandemic face reduced earning potential and advancement opportunities when they return to work.
- More than half of Americans (52%) say Baby Boomers face issues of ageism at work.

"The message is loud and clear: Americans expect companies to do better," Sands says. "Recruiting from these underrepresented talent groups is not just the right thing to do, it's good business."

For full survey results and information on Kelly's Equity@Work initiative, visit [EquityAtWork.com](#).

Equity@Work Survey Methodology

The survey was conducted online by Atomik Research. 1,020 adults in the U.S. completed the survey between Feb. 15 and 21, 2022. The overall margin of error fell within +/- 3 percentage points with a confidence interval of 95%. Researchers implemented sample quotas based on gender identity, geographical regions, age groups and ethnicity to reflect similar statistically representative ratios based on U.S. Census reports.

About Kelly®

Kelly (Nasdaq: KELYA) (Nasdaq: KELYB) connects talented people to companies in need of their skills in areas including Science, Engineering, Education, Office, Contact Center, Light Industrial, and more. We're always thinking about what's next in the evolving world of work, and we help people ditch the script on old ways of thinking and embrace the value of all workstyles in the workplace. We directly employ nearly 350,000 people around the world and connect thousands more with work through our global network of talent suppliers and partners in our outsourcing and consulting practice. Visit [kellyservices.com](#) and let us help with what's next for you. Follow Kelly on [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), and [YouTube](#).

Media Contact

Christian Taske
248-561-8823
christian.taske@kellyservices.com

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