

Survey: Sales representatives, teachers, mechanics most sought-after workers

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

Sales representatives, teachers and mechanics are among the nation's most sought-after workers, according to survey findings released by Manpower Inc. The employment services company also found that 41 percent of U.S. employers are having difficulty filling positions because of a lack of available talent.

The 10 hardest-to-fill jobs, as reported by U.S. employers, are:

1. Sales representative (1)*
2. Teacher
3. Mechanic
4. Technician (4)*
5. Management/executive (10)*
6. Truck driver (7)*
7. Driver/delivery (7)*
8. Accountant (5)*
9. Laborer
10. Machine operator

*Rank in 2006 Top Hardest Jobs to Fill

"With the variety of positions employers are struggling to fill, it seems like job seekers should have little trouble finding work," said Jonas Prising, President of Manpower North America. "Yet on a daily basis we hear from clients who can't find the right people for open positions and candidates who are struggling to get hired. The reality is that the talent crunch is more complex than a shortage of people. To bridge the talent gap, we must dig deeper and consider issues such as skill levels, geographic dispersion and demographics."

Manpower surveyed more than 2,400 U.S. employers in February as a follow-up to its 2006 survey to determine which positions employers are having difficulty filling this year.

In the 2007 study, 41 percent of U.S. employers cited difficulty filling jobs. This is a slight dip from the 2006 results, when 44 percent of employers reported challenges filling open positions. An important consideration is that this decline coincides with a gradual decrease in overall hiring sentiment, and does not necessarily point toward an easing of the talent shortage. This is supported in the Manpower Employment Outlook Survey, where data shows that employers have been consistently easing up on their hiring plans since October 2006.

Sales representatives topped the list of hardest-to-fill jobs for the second straight year as companies rely on experienced sales staff to propel future growth. Teachers and mechanics replaced engineers and nurses/healthcare workers in the second- and third-place positions this year.

"Even though some jobs fell off the top 10 list, demand for these positions still exists," said Prising. "We know that employers are attempting to manage their talent requirements through a variety of strategies, including outsourcing, offshoring and technology, due to the fact that the pressure to meet production and financial goals remains despite talent shortages."

As employers balance efficiency strategies with the growing difficulty of hiring the right people, many are changing their approach to hiring and retention, according to Melanie Holmes, Manpower Vice President of Corporate Affairs -- North America.

"Employers are seeing more and more rejected job offers, creating a healthy competition as companies vie for top talent. As a result of this, employers are revising policies and enhancing benefits in areas as common as flexible scheduling to non-traditional offerings like take-home meals and onsite yoga classes. We anticipate more and increasingly creative cultural changes as companies take the steps necessary to distinguish themselves in the eyes of employees," said Holmes.

The U.S. findings are part of a Manpower global study in which nearly 37,000 employers across 27 countries and territories were surveyed in January. The survey found that 41 percent of employers worldwide reported difficulty filling jobs, compared with 40 percent in the 2006 study. Sales representatives, skilled manual trades and technicians were the hardest to fill job openings this year.

Visit <http://www.hardestjobstofill.com/> for more information about Manpower's 2007 Talent Crunch Survey.

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