

Survey: Employers Complain of Growing 'Talent Shortage'

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With the unemployment rate hovering just above record lows, employers are complaining that they can't find the talent they need to fill existing jobs. But if you spent four years and tens of thousands of dollars getting a college degree, you might not be the workers employers are looking for.

The latest talent shortage survey from the ManpowerGroup found the most difficult slots for employers to fill are skilled workers, with the shortage at the worst it's been in 12 years. In particular, employers said skilled workers -- such as electricians, welders, and mechanics -- are hard to find. They also said many positions as salespeople and drivers are going unfilled.

College degree not necessary

Many of the jobs that 46 percent of employers say they can't fill require training, but not a four-year college degree.

"We continue to see increasing demand for skilled workers across all sectors of the U.S. economy from transport and trade to manufacturing and sales," said Becky Frankiewicz, President of ManpowerGroup North America. "Employers cannot find the people they need with the right blend of technical skills and human strengths and the problem won't fix itself."

To fill the gap, the survey found employers are luring retired workers back to their old jobs and recruiting returning parents and part-timers.

More than half of the companies in the survey said they are investing in online learning platforms and development tools to build their talent pipeline. To make their open positions more attractive, 19 percent of employers are offering flexible work arrangements and other modifications to the jobs.

Pay is also improving for many of these positions. [According to U.S. News and World Report](#), the median salary for an electrician in the U.S. was \$52,720 in 2016. Electricians are licensed by the states in which they operate after completing a training course. Most require a high school diploma but not an expensive college education.

"It's time for a new approach to attract, recruit and retain talent," Frankiewicz said. "Employers need to buy skills where necessary, borrow from external sources and help people with adjacent skills bridge from one role to another."

In other words, employers may have to build their own talent pool because the education system isn't providing it.

Also of interest: [Public Policy Institute of California report on Career Technical Education in California](#)

Source: [Consumer Affairs](#)