



Canadian Job Seekers Using AI to Exaggerate Skills on Resumes

From claiming to have advanced computer programming skills to faking being bilingual, employers say exaggerated skills are showing up more than ever.

TORONTO, Feb. 11, 2026 — A new Express Employment Professionals-Harris Poll reveals a startling insight into today's hiring landscape: job seekers may be stretching the truth on their resumes far more than they admit — and employers say they can spot the exaggerations a mile away.

Most Canadian hiring managers say candidates' resumes don't match their real-world skills at least sometimes (82%), with almost 1 in 3 reporting it happens all the time or often (29%).

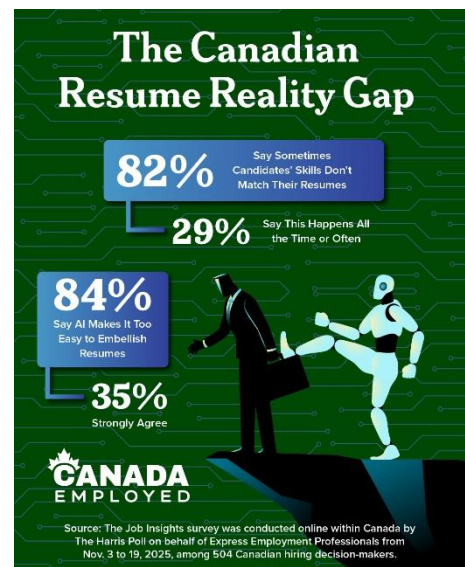
Yet only 22% of job seekers admit to listing skills they don't actually have; a gap raising major red flags for employers.

And now, with AI at every applicant's fingertips, companies are sounding the alarm. A large majority of hiring managers (84%) believe AI makes it too easy to embellish resumes, with 35% strongly agreeing it's becoming a serious hiring risk.

Wild Resume Claims? Hiring Managers Have Seen It All

Hiring managers shared some of their most jaw-dropping experiences when a candidate's "expertise" evaporated the moment they stepped into the job:

- A candidate who said they graduated from a prestigious university at the top of his class, but when questioned by a hiring manager who also attended that university, admitted he was never a student there.
- Another who claimed to be bilingual in English and French but was not. The company lost sales as a result.
- A candidate applying for a VP role who listed 10 years of experience, without being old enough to have worked that long.



- A job applicant who claimed to have years of experience with children, but on her first day started yelling at the toddlers and didn't notice when kids left the room unattended.

Job seekers themselves admitted to resume creativity, including listing advanced computer programming skills they did not have, changing their previous job titles to ones they think are more attractive to potential employers, saying they left an employer on good terms when the opposite was true, and adding to the amount of time they held a position at a company.

"In today's market, you don't need a perfect résumé; you need a truthful one," said Bob Funk Jr., CEO, President and Chairman of Express Employment International. "When job seekers exaggerate their abilities, they set themselves up for stress, failure and lost opportunities. But when they're transparent about what they know and eager to learn what they don't, employers take notice. Integrity is still a competitive advantage."

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Survey Methodology

The Job Insights survey was conducted online within Canada by The Harris Poll on behalf of Express Employment Professionals from Nov. 3 - 19, 2025, among 504 Canadian hiring decision-makers

The Job Seeker Report was conducted online within Canada by The Harris Poll on behalf of Express Employment Professionals from Nov. 7 to 21, 2025, among 502 adults ages 18 and older.

For full survey methodology, please contact Ana Curic at Ana@MapleLeafStrategies.com.

If you would like to arrange for an interview to discuss this topic, please contact Ana Curic at (613) 858-2622 or email Ana@MapleLeafStrategies.com.

About Robert (Bob) Funk Jr.

Robert (Bob) Funk Jr. is the Chief Executive Officer, President and Chairman of Express Employment International, a global staffing franchisor founded and headquartered in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. He leads a portfolio of workforce solution brands, including the flagship Express Employment Professionals franchise, along with several affiliated brands serving specialized markets. The Express franchise brand is an industry-leading, international staffing company with franchise locations across the U.S., Canada, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand.

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client companies, Express helps people thrive and businesses grow. Our international network of franchises offers localized staffing solutions to the communities they serve across the U.S., Canada, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand, employing more than 11 million people globally since its inception. For more information, visit ExpressPros.ca.