



## Canadian Companies Rapidly Adopting AI, But Most Employees Aren't Getting Trained To Use It

*As AI spreads rapidly across workplaces, employees and hiring managers agree the biggest gap isn't technology; it's training.*

**TORONTO, April 22, 2026** — AI is reshaping how work gets done, but most employees say they've been handed the tools without the training to use them effectively, according to a recent Express Employment Professionals-Harris Poll survey.

More than three-quarters of Canadian job seekers (79%) say companies need to formally train employees on how to use AI, rather than expecting them to learn on their own. And hiring managers agree, as 77% say formal AI training should be a company priority.

That urgency reflects just how quickly AI has shifted from optional to expected in the workplace.

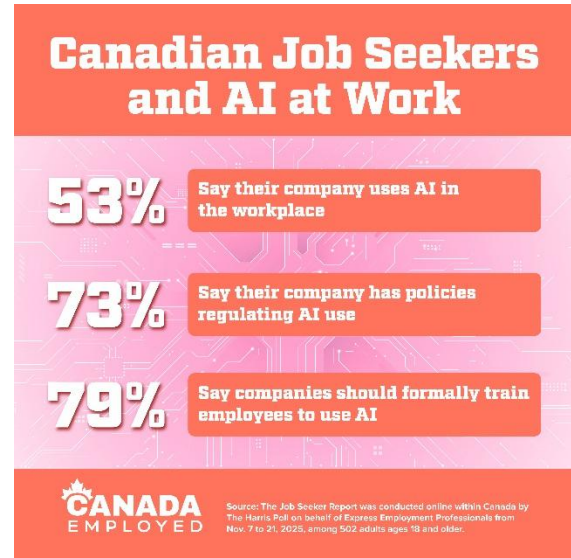
Close to two-thirds of Canadian companies (63%) now use AI, with 1 in 5 companies (19%) reporting regular use. Just two years ago, only 52% of companies reported using AI, a figure that rose to 54% in the spring of 2025 and has continued rising since.

Employees feel the acceleration firsthand. More than half of employed Canadian job seekers (53%) say their company uses AI at work, including 41% who say they use it themselves at least sometimes.

The result is that while AI is everywhere, training has fallen behind.

### The Adoption Curve Is Outrunning Readiness

Among companies using AI, reliance on it is increasing fast. A large majority of the companies that use AI (73%) say their company's dependence on AI tools has significantly increased over the past year, signaling that AI is no longer experimental or optional.



Adoption is especially widespread among:

- White-collar companies, where 68% report using AI
- Large employers, with 77% of companies with more than 100 employees using AI

At the same time, employees are increasingly open to learning with AI. Two-thirds of job seekers (66%) say it's appropriate to learn professional skills using AI.

### **Rules Without Roadmaps**

A majority of hiring managers (58%) say their company has policies regulating AI use, while an even higher proportion of employed job seekers (73%) say the same.

But when it comes to actual tools, direction is inconsistent:

- Only 29% of companies provide a list of approved or preferred AI tools.
- 37% allow employees to use any AI tools they're familiar with.
- 18% report a mix of approved and open-use tools.

That lack of clarity leaves many employees navigating powerful technology largely on their own.

### **The Upside Companies Risk Missing**

Despite the training gap, workers remain optimistic about AI's potential, especially when it comes to building their skills.

Three-quarters of job seekers believe AI can be part of the solution, not the problem. More than half (57%) say their company's AI tools can help bridge skills gaps, and an even higher share (67%) say they are likely to seek additional training in response to AI advancements.

Hiring managers largely back that optimism. More than half (59%) say their company already has the tools needed to train new hires in AI-driven workflows, suggesting the obstacle is less about capability and more about follow-through.

When asked how companies should prepare future talent as AI expands, hiring managers most often point to hands-on, employer-led approaches:

- On-the-job training focused on working alongside AI (38%)
- Dedicated training for skills AI can't replace (38%)
- Apprenticeship and internship programs that include AI training (24%)

"AI adoption is moving faster than most organizational change ever has," said Bob Funk Jr., CEO, President and Chairman of Express Employment International. "What this data shows is that companies have focused on getting the technology in place, but not enough on helping people use it effectively. Training is what determines whether AI becomes a source of real productivity or just another tool employees are left to navigate on their own."

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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 to 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](mailto:Ana@MapleLeafStrategies.com).

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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](mailto: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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