



Our nation is struggling with a labor shortage – second chance hiring can help

Across the nations, companies are struggling to find enough workers to keep their companies running. Recent data shows nearly 10 million job openings in the U.S. This labor shortage is damaging our nation's economic health. If left unaddressed, it threatens to halt GDP growth, cause a recession and handicap business expansion.

However, a major and largely untapped applicant pool could change that. Every year, more than 650,000 individuals are released from the U.S. criminal justice system; there are more than 80 million Americans with a criminal record. Many of these individuals held jobs before incarceration or completed training programs during incarceration, making them qualified applicants for employers looking to expand their labor force.

But studies show that old stigmas still persist; a criminal record can cut the chances of an interview by 50%. More than 70% of returning citizens report that their record creates challenges when applying for jobs, and 75% remain unemployed a year after release. This is reflected in a 27% unemployment rate among the formerly incarcerated – nearly eight times as high as the unemployment rate for the average American. Allowing misconceptions to continue dominating the hiring process denies returning citizens opportunities and handicaps our economy.

Expanding our labor force to include returning citizens who have served their time and are ready to start a new life will strengthen our businesses, our economy and our nation. With the number of retirees outpacing the number of new workers, America needs a solution to its mounting labor crisis. Businesses can help fix the labor shortage and improve their staffing by giving returning citizens a second chance at stability and success.

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Second chance hiring puts results first

The numbers support the real, tangible benefits of second chance hiring. A SHRM survey found that 85% of HR leaders and 81% of business leaders said second chance hires perform the same – or better – than other employees. In fact, research shows that second chance hiring can reduce overall employee turnover. Companies that implement second chance hiring practices have found that they boost morale, loyalty and engagement across the entire workforce.

A full labor force translates to greater productivity and profitability across the company. Second chance hiring broadens the talent pool and offers companies the opportunity to maximize their efficiency and increase their profits. It doesn't just benefit returning citizens and society at large – it benefits companies, their employees, their stakeholders and our entire national economy.





Embracing diversity in the workplace microcosm

How we construct our workplaces and hire reflects what we truly believe about diversity and inclusion. Genuine commitment to creating a just and inclusive society includes committing to promoting diversity in hiring practices. Returning citizens and other justice-involved individuals deserve to be viewed based on their merits and qualifications, rather than discredited because of their demographic.

Diversity, equality and inclusion is more than an idea – it’s a necessity for companies and a gamechanger for qualified applicants who are eager to work and turn their lives around. Returning citizens deserve a second chance and an opportunity to start new lives as valuable contributors to their communities – and our economy.

Filling jobs, giving hope

Second chance hiring is integral to fixing our justice system and breaking the cycle of incarceration. Poverty increases a returning citizen’s risk of recidivating, making it even more essential that companies offer them viable alternatives and opportunities. Studies show that recidivism rates drop significantly for returning citizens who are able to find work.

Nobody deserves to be shut out from the possibility of a hopeful future because of preconceived notions or old stereotypes. It’s time to put outdated, nonfactual misconceptions behind us and take the opportunity to help heal our society and economy. Second chance hiring helps companies have a positive impact – both internally and externally – by filling jobs and fueling brighter futures.

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Building for brighter futures

Bringing change to the justice system and breaking the cycle of incarceration starts long before release. That's why our parent organization, ViaPath Technologies, is dedicated to providing incarcerated individuals with the tools and resources they need to prepare themselves for life after incarceration. ViaPath's extensive suite of educational and vocational programs offer the incarcerated a chance to make the most of their time, building practical skills that can translate to job opportunities after release. To date, incarcerated individuals have completed almost 14 million eLearning hours on ViaPath tablets since the program launched in October 2021.

Research shows that on average, incarcerated individuals who participated in education programs while incarcerated were 43 percent less likely to recidivate than those who did not. They also had a 13 percent higher chance of obtaining employment post-release than those who did not.

Even better, these programs don't end upon release. Incarcerated individuals still have access to training, support groups and programs after release, providing them with the understanding and support they need to thrive in their new lives. Cultivating hope isn't about checking a box – it's about providing holistic support that changes lives, communities and our society.



Agencies can bridge the gap

Commercial staffing agencies can bridge the gap between employers and qualified applicants. 2C Workforce Solutions is a full-service staffing agency that specializes in second chance hiring, offering the experience and expertise for a smooth onboarding and training process.

Employers spend thousands of dollars per employee to identify and onboard new hires. Working with 2C Workforce Solutions saves companies thousands of dollars in onboarding costs and ensures that available positions are quickly filled with qualified, enthusiastic employees who offer a diverse set of skills, talents and experiences. Whether a company is looking to fill temporary, temp-to-hire, or full- and part-time positions, we can find a perfect fit in our extensive network of eager and qualified candidates.



We use best-in-class technology to expedite the onboarding process, covering everything from weekly pay to comprehensive benefits. Our on-site teams streamline the hiring process by managing talent acquisition, employee engagement and retention so that companies can stop struggling with mitigating the labor shortage and instead focus on growing their business.

At 2C Workforce Solutions, we understand that hiring is a holistic process. We come alongside every new employee with the care and support they need to truly thrive at their new job. Long-term success starts with an in-depth understanding of returning citizens' needs and strengths. Giving everybody the chance to succeed and build a new life for themselves isn't just about the opportunity – it takes genuine care and real support. That's why 2C Workforce Solutions exists: to provide second chance hires with the hope, opportunities and support they need to provide for themselves and contribute to their communities.