

SURVEY REPORT - SUMMARY

Hiring and Employers' Attitudes

Conducted for



by

AXIOME | MARKETING

thanks to the support of



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Use of these findings

Any partial or total publication, broadcast or distribution of the results of this survey must be accompanied by direct mention of the name of the author of the survey, Axiome marketing, the sponsor, COCQ-SIDA, the number of respondents and the margin of error.

Additional Information

Please contact René Légaré at 514-844-2477 (ext. 30) or at rene.legare@cocqsida.com for additional information, or to obtain a copy of the complete survey report (French only).

Note

This survey was made possible through unconditional funding by Bristol Myers Squibb Canada.

Methodology

Strategic objectives of the survey

Survey decision-makers in companies:

- To obtain their opinion on their approach to hiring practices
- Learn details on how they manage group insurance
- Evaluate their general knowledge of HIV/AIDS
- Learn about their attitudes towards the illness and the people living with it

Survey procedures

This study conducted by Axiome Marketing used a web-based questionnaire sent to managers and executives of Québec companies. The questionnaire was designed by Axiome Marketing in collaboration with the *Coalition des organismes communautaires québécois de lutte contre le sida* (COCQ-SIDA) (the Québec coalition of AIDS community organizations).

In response to the survey, 111 questionnaires were filled out. Surveys based on a random sample of 111 respondents usually have a maximum margin of error of $\pm 9.3\%$, 19 times out of 20. One time out of 20, the margin of error is higher than the aforementioned.

It is important to mention that this survey was not based on a random sample according to the norms of the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) (Section A, paragraph 3) and therefore the laws of probability do not apply here. However, the diversity of respondents, as indicated in the section entitled "Profile of Respondents," leads us to believe that the survey does provide a means of painting a representative portrait of businesspeople. Moreover, even if a non-response bias were induced by the online nature and self-selection of respondents, the literature¹ indicates that respondents who are interested in and motivated by the issues are usually those who respond the most to surveys and the responses are more relevant.

The data were not weighted and no adjustment to them was made.

¹ ALTHAUS, Scott L., *Collective Preferences in Demographic Politics: Opinion Surveys and the Will of the People*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2003, 369 p.

Highlights

1. 58% of respondents stated that the fact of learning that a candidate has a chronic illness would influence their decision whether or not to hire that person.
2. 36% of respondents think that they would react in a manner that we qualify as negative (deception, anger) if they learned that an employee living with HIV/AIDS had not disclosed his/her status in a hiring questionnaire with a question on the subject.

The following is a sample of such answers by respondents:

- *“That information should be disclosed. [There would be a] loss of confidence in the employee.”*
- *“Very upset!!! I would be sure to find out what kinds of recourse we have.”*
- *“False statement at hiring –seriously weakened relationship of trust.”*
- *“Whatever the disease, hiding information gives a very bad impression of the candidate, and in any case, the insurance company would demand such information.”*
- *“In my opinion, it is a false declaration, which would be unpardonable in the framework of the work to be done in my department.”*

In addition, the following answers are representative of a widespread phenomenon, namely that society demands that persons living with HIV/AIDS disclose their positive status notwithstanding the fact that they regularly experience discrimination and stigmatization:

- *“I don’t know, but that would probably tell me something about his level of integrity. But, it’s his private life and if it doesn’t negatively affect his tasks, he could function very well despite it.”*
- *“If that person is serious and reasonable, she would disclose her status even if no one asked.”*
- *“Makes no difference to me, since I wouldn’t ask a specific question about it. What counts for me is trustworthiness and integrity, so I would expect the candidate to be honest.”*
- *“I would understand the situation and his fear, given the frequent prejudices against HIV/AIDS, but I would wonder—if he lied about that, did he also lie about other things.”*

These quotes indicates that persons living with HIV/AIDS who do not disclose their status risk being seen as dishonest. The integrity of a person living with HIV/AIDS is called into question when he or she is silent about information that, if disclosed, could jeopardize his/her chance to obtain a job, notwithstanding the fact that such information is irrelevant for the job. Employers feel they must know.

3. The cost of premiums was of concern to respondents working in a company in which the employees have group insurance. 73% stated they were on the lookout for an increase in premiums that might happen. One-third of respondents said they had experienced a situation in which the health status of an employee had considerably increased their group insurance premiums.

- 4.** 60% of respondents stated that they were occasionally or regularly informed by their insurer of the reasons for an increase in group insurance premiums. 45% stated that were aware of certain claims made by employees and 24% indicated they knew the identity of people in their workplace who were taking medications.
- 5.** 77% of respondents said that they would try to find out the reasons justifying an increase in group insurance premiums following the hiring of a new employee.
- 6.** 32% of respondents stated that they felt somewhat uncomfortable (28%) or uncomfortable with HIV/AIDS and people living with it. A similar percentage (32%) of respondents said they were not in a position to explain the difference between HIV and AIDS.
- 7.** If it were possible, 38% of respondents would avoid hiring a person living with HIV. Among the reasons most commonly cited were fear of absenteeism (37.7%), the fact they would prefer hiring someone not living with HIV (18.8%) and fear or unease when confronted to HIV (18.8%).
- 8.** The vast majority (93%) of respondents were of the opinion that in spite of the illness, a person living with HIV could very well enjoy a “normal” career and aspire to a management position. All those who responded to the contrary (7%) explained their answer by referring to the existence of prejudice against HIV and the people living with it.