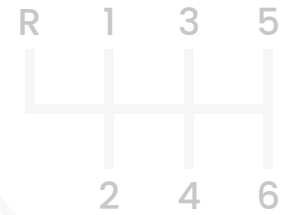




The State of Trucking 2024

A DRIVER'S GUIDE

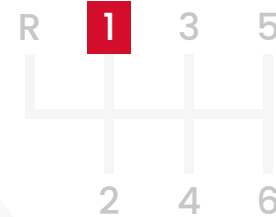


Introduction

2024 marks the 5th annual State of Trucking survey. And if we've learned anything in the past five years, it's to always expect the unexpected in trucking and the world beyond it.

From pandemics, supply chain crises, post-pandemic inflation or a trucking recession, we've seen it all reflected in these reports and the industry as a whole. In 2024's report, we've seen changes on multiple fronts as drivers and employers settle into a new year.

The 2024 State of Trucking driver results are in and the shift in trucking has begun.



The First Shift: A New Trucking Economy

When trucks move, that means America moves with it. And last year was no exception. In our last State of Trucking report, our results showed the first murmuring of decline and unfortunately, it proved correct.

2023 saw significant declines and downward trends due to economic conditions and a variety of world events. Everything from record-high inflation to the Red Sea crisis impacting supply chains and the looming presidential election took its toll on the economy and transportation.



60%

of employers say
their business is
expected to grow



41%

of employers
say they plan to
increase hiring



Despite all of that, there are still glimmers of an important shift in the economy as we head into a new calendar year. While 2023 was rampant with cost-cutting measures and companies pulling back on hiring, 2024 is already showing signs of a different reality with transportation companies eyeing growth.

Our survey showed only 5% of employers are looking into cost-cutting measures this year. This is a sharp decline from the 15% who reported the same in 2023. Transportation employers also reported more promising signs for the upcoming year. 60% say their business is expected to grow in 2024 and 41% say they plan to increase hiring because of that anticipated growth. But what does this indicate about the job market in trucking?

The Second Shift: A Driver-Led Job Market

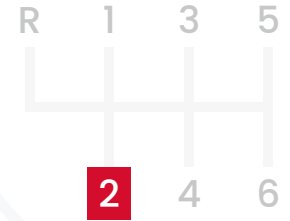
Since the pandemic, the job market has significantly shifted and trucking seems to be following these trends. Before, it was often an employer calling the shots and now it is often the reverse. Unemployment for transportation and material moving occupations is still relatively elevated from the national average. In **January 2024**, it remains at 5.9%, while the national average sits around 3.9%.

40%

of truck drivers say they are looking to change jobs in 2024

Our survey further reflected this with employers saying they are having a slightly easier time filling truck driver roles compared to last year. But for drivers, this is shaking out to be a slightly different story. On the one hand, our results indicate employers are either still cautious in hiring, or they are becoming more selective as the market has shifted in their favor. Trucks seem to be sitting longer this year, with 29% reporting trucks sitting longer than a week, compared to last year with only 20% reporting the same.

On the other hand, nearly 40% of truck drivers say they are looking to change jobs in 2024 and almost half reported wanting to take on more trucking jobs than last year. In addition, drivers are fully aware the truck driver shortage is real. 46% of you stated that there are not enough truck drivers entering the profession to keep up with rising demand—making it an interesting push-and-pull market.



The Third Shift: A Change in Truck Driver Expectations

After five years of studying truck drivers and transportation employers, we have consistently seen that pay is always top of the list of “wants” for drivers. This year, 58% of you said it’s the top benefit they are looking for and 66% said it’s the main reason they are searching for a new job. But we’re also starting to see a shift towards something new. The need for stability and balance has become more important to truck drivers in the last five years.



58%
of drivers say pay is the top benefit they are looking for

Our research showed 49% of drivers say work-life balance and having flexible scheduling options is the most important benefit to them in an employer. Additionally, 63% say stability is the top reason they are searching for a new job this year. Every year, we like to get a barometer on the life and priorities of drivers on and off the road.

On average, most drivers take about **2-3 driving jobs per month**

49%
of drivers say work-life balance and having flexible scheduling options is the most important benefit to them

Our survey this year showed that many drivers are in this profession for the long haul. More than 40% of drivers surveyed have been driving for at least 5-10 years. Our results showed that on average, most drivers take about 2-3 driving jobs per month. In addition to that, more than half said they prefer local routes, showing that drivers like stability, consistency and a balanced home life.

50%
prefer local routes, showing that drivers like stability, consistency and a balanced home life

Working for Centerline, means you can always prioritize your work-life balance. We work hard to make sure our drivers get home at night with local routes for steady hours and competitive pay.

The Fourth Shift: The Growing Concern Over Safety

Safety always has, and likely always will be, at the forefront of our study every year. However, this year seemed more profound than usual. A concerning 43% of drivers stated they feel there are not enough safety resources available for them as a driver. Adding to this are worrying national safety trends. **Reports from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System** showed fatalities increased more than 10% from 2020. Over 42,900 lives were lost—the highest total number recorded since 2005.

Employers are equally concerned about safety as well. Our report shows that 4 in 10 of them say driver safety is the number one thing keeping them up at night. In response to this, 72% of employers state they plan to increase safety measures this year.

When asked what they plan to do many said:

- ▶ Safety meetings and daily safety checks
- ▶ More communication and policies around safety
- ▶ Additional training including online courses
- ▶ Hiring safety specialists and certified trainers
- ▶ Adding new technology to monitor safety in real-time
- ▶ Safety bonuses

The unfortunate part of all of this is that despite all the work employers may do to keep drivers safe, it's often times things outside of your control that drivers are worried about. 79% of drivers reported that distracted driving from others on the road is a big problem—a trend that keeps increasing year after year. 83% also said driver fatigue can cause its own set of problems as a majority of drivers (and adults overall) struggle to get the recommended 8+ hours of sleep each night.

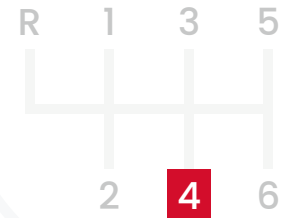
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Overall, 60% of drivers say they do not feel safe on the road today from everything from other drivers on the road to driving in unsafe areas. It's a looming concern that could prevent more drivers from entering the profession or from drivers leaving due to unsafe conditions.








The Final Shift: Life on the Road

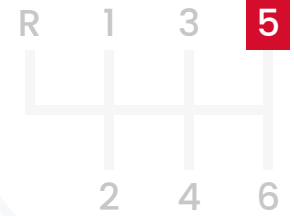
We also asked drivers what they enjoyed about driving and what they do on the road. When asked what they love about driving, our survey responders said they love the road for opportunities to travel to somewhere new, its independence, the pay and the stability of driving because they are so in demand.

The most popular bucket list driving destinations were Alaska, Hawaii, Montana, Florida and Colorado. Even with short-haul drives, the hours on the road can be long. We asked drivers what they enjoyed listening to while driving.



The top things playing in your trucks:

-  Classic rock
-  Hip hop/rap
-  Country
-  Classical
-  Podcasts or audiobooks

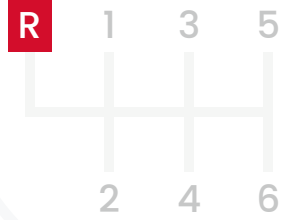


53%
try to eat
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road

57%
exercise
regularly

33%
meditate
regularly to
stay healthy

According to our survey, 53% of those surveyed try to eat better on the road, 57% exercise, and 33% meditate regularly to stay healthy. However, there are consequences for not leading a healthy life. More than half reported that they have gained weight or suffered alignments on the road while working as a truck driver. The most common health challenge on the road was the ability to find healthy food or non-fast food while driving. If you are having trouble maintaining a healthy lifestyle, **[check out our collection of articles to help get you started.](#)**



Avoiding the Shift into Reverse

Five years has felt like fifty in terms of change and evolution in the world of trucking and beyond. All in all, there is a growing importance for employers to face the future of the industry instead of always hitting reverse and looking back.

While it may seem like things were easier five years ago, the answer ahead is surprisingly easy. The future of trucking will require innovation, creativity, and a focus for employers on what makes trucking move—you.

Through it all, truck drivers are still the backbone of what makes this country run. Your priorities have not drastically changed from year to year and hopefully employers start taking note. Discomfort happens in shifts, but each one moves the industry forward to a better and brighter future.



Through Any Weather, Drivers Have Seen It All

Drivers shared their most memorable stories from the last year. Here are a few of their stories.



This year I delivered Christmas gifts to children in need.



The most memorable driving story for me was transporting a load of delicate artwork across the country.



I rescued a stranded family on the side of the road during a blizzard and ensured they reached safety.



Driving through the desert at night, I witnessed a spectacular meteor shower lighting up the sky. The ethereal beauty of the celestial display juxtaposed against the dark desert landscape was a sight to behold.



The most memorable driving experience for me was transporting a shipment of medical supplies to a remote village in need.

**More stories,
next page**



Through Any Weather, Drivers Have Seen It All (continued)

Drivers shared their most memorable stories from the last year.



I tend to stop and rescue animals from being hit by others. I have even moved a turtle from the road. What can I say, I'm an animal lover.



"During a natural disaster, I was tasked with delivering much-needed supplies to affected areas. The sense of responsibility and urgency was palpable as I raced against time to bring relief to those in need. It was a humbling experience to play a small part in helping communities rebuild."



I'll never forget the time I was tasked with transporting exotic animals for a circus. From lions to elephants, ensuring their safety and comfort during the journey was both thrilling and nerve-wracking.



I carried the fuselage from Apollo 5 from Huntington Beach California to Cape Canaveral.

**More stories,
previous page**



Centerline Drivers wants to help you find the perfect placement.

Centerline is your access point to limitless driving opportunities. Our job is to connect you with safe, rewarding work at top companies while maintaining your flexibility and work-life balance. We want to find you local routes with steady, reliable hours and competitive pay. Driving with Centerline means you still get to live your life.

Centerline has a team of dedicated, responsive recruiters who will work with you. With support every step of the way, Centerline makes it easy for you to find your perfect next position fast. Interested in applying? [View jobs now.](#)

METHOD

This research was the result of a survey of more than 86 companies hiring truck drivers and over 170 truck drivers nationwide. ivers nationwide.