



SPECIAL REPORT:

THE DEMAND FOR SKILLED TALENT IN THE COVID-19 LANDSCAPE

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The Pandemic Has Redefined How We Work

COVID-19 has dramatically changed the job market and the workplace in Canada. Although the unemployment rate in Canada declined in June, it more than doubled from February to May, after remaining consistently low in the months preceding the outbreak. Remote work suddenly became the norm with physical distancing restrictions in place, and remote hiring and onboarding may also be here to stay. This report outlines the challenges employers face in the COVID-19 era and offers insight into how staffing and management strategies are changing.



Workers Are Adapting and Feel Supported

79% of employees have been **working from home** since the pandemic emerged.¹

60% of professionals realize their **job is doable** from home.²

95% of workers say their manager has been **a source of support** during this challenging time.³

3 Ways to Boost Employee Morale

- 1. Show workers they are valued.** Employees want meaningful work and acknowledgment for their contributions. Let them know they are important to the company's success and appreciated by leadership.
- 2. Focus on employee wellness.** Offer wellness webinars or resources, such as an Employee Assistance Program, to help workers manage stress.
- 3. Pay your top performers well.** Even in times of relatively high unemployment, provide compensation that meets or exceeds what other companies are offering so you don't lose valued employees.

¹ Employees in Canada Share Views on Current and Post-Pandemic Workplace, Robert Half, May 1, 2020

² Ibid

³ Survey: 94% of Employees in Canada Are Satisfied With Their Company's Response to COVID-19 Pandemic, Robert Half, April 21, 2020

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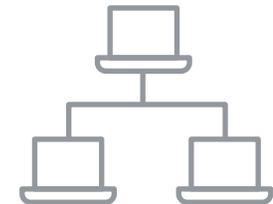
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EMPLOYERS: PAY ATTENTION TO WORKERS' POST-PANDEMIC EXPECTATIONS⁴

- 74%** of professionals in Canada would like to **work remotely more often** than before the outbreak.
- 48%** would like **staggered work schedules**.
- 73%** think their companies should have **better cleaning procedures**.
- 68%** hope to have **fewer in-person meetings and trainings**.
- 40%** want their employers to **change the office layout** in an effort to maintain social distancing.

Bright Spots Bring Optimism

- 97% of unemployed individuals who were temporarily laid off due to work slowdowns or business closures **expect to return to work**.⁵
- The Q2 unemployment rates for professional roles in management (3.6%), business, finance and administrative (8.2%), natural and applied sciences (4.9%), and social science, education and government service (7.3%) are **well below the national unemployment rate** of 12.3%.⁶
- Many companies have learned that **remote work is a viable option** and employees enjoy having the flexibility: 75% said their **job allows for windowed work**, or the ability to block their day into chunks of business and personal time, and 64% said it leads to **greater productivity**.⁷
- Human resources leaders reported that the majority of organizations are using **new virtual technology to interview candidates** due to the COVID-19 pandemic.⁸
- Small business sentiment across Canada is showing **slight, albeit cautious, improvement** since May.⁹
- Workers have become **more comfortable using technology** because of remote work and 55% said the lack of a commute had **improved their work-life balance**.¹⁰



⁴ Employees in Canada Share Views on Current and Post-Pandemic Workplace, Robert Half, May 1, 2020

⁵ Labour Force Survey — April 2020, Statistics Canada, May 8, 2020

⁶ Labour Force Survey — June 2020, Statistics Canada, July 10, 2020

⁷ Survey: A Window Into Windowed Work in Canada, Robert Half, June 30, 2020

⁸ Gartner HR Survey Shows 86% of Organizations Are Conducting Virtual Interviews to Hire Candidates During Coronavirus Pandemic, Gartner, April 30, 2020

⁹ Business Barometer, June 2020 SME Outlook, CFIB, June 25, 2020

¹⁰ Employees in Canada Share Views on Current and Post-Pandemic Workplace, Robert Half, May 1, 2020

5 Tips for Hiring in a New Era

In the age of social distancing and remote work, hiring isn't getting any easier. Here are five considerations for finding new talent in the COVID-19 environment.

- 1. The in-box overflow.** Businesses will be flooded with applicants who have been laid off during the pandemic. Sorting through hundreds or potentially thousands of resumes to find the needle in the haystack can be overwhelming. Be specific about your must-have requirements in the job description to discourage underqualified applicants.



- 2. The time crunch.** You may not have extra hours to invest in the hiring process even in a good economy. Now, you have less time because you have fewer people on staff and more challenges in keeping the business running. Aim to block your calendar during less busy times of the week to limit interruptions and focus on hiring tasks.



- 3. A geographically diverse candidate pool.** The fact that many jobs can be done remotely now means you can extend your candidate search beyond geographic boundaries. Factor in a salary range that takes into account the requirements of the job and the market the candidate lives in.



- 4. Have access to untapped talent.** While there are many more job seekers out of work than there were several months ago, employed professionals remain a key segment of the candidate supply. Working with a recruiter widens the net to include these passive job seekers.



- 5. Promoting from within.** Your best candidates may already be on your payroll. Consider opportunities to advance these workers and hire new employees with fresh perspectives to backfill their vacancies.



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