Robert Half Canada

Is the Honeymoon Over at Work?

Study Shows Workers are Happiest and Least Stressed in First Year of Job; One-Quarter of Professionals Feel On-the-Job Happiness is Their Own Responsibility

Toronto, ON. **--** For many professionals, that first year in a new job can be a "honeymoon period," full of new and exciting challenges. But a recent study from Robert Half and Happiness Works shows that professionals with between one and two years on the job are less happy, less interested in their work and more stressed than those still in their first year. After three years or more on the job, happiness levels edge back up and interest levels increase. In fact, those with the greatest tenure (21 years or more) showed the highest level of interest in their jobs.

View happiness levels by tenure.

"Once they get past year one, the honeymoon appears to be over for many professionals," said Paul McDonald, senior executive director of Robert Half. "After 12 months on the job, employees are expected to work more autonomously and take on added responsibility. At the same time, aspects of the job that at first seemed novel and interesting may lose their luster."

McDonald added, "Managers should be aware of this second-year slowdown and take proactive measures to keep employees engaged. This includes providing stretch assignments and ensuring that workloads are manageable. By keeping an eye on it, companies can help minimize the risk of losing productive staff members who have already been through a learning curve."

Although managers can take steps to create a happier work environment, they aren't the only ones who can fan the flames of employee happiness. When asked who's responsible for keeping spirits high on the job, 25 per cent of Canadian workers surveyed said it was their responsibility alone. Another 5 per cent said it was all in their company's hands. The majority – 70 per cent – cited a combination of the two.

Robert Half offered five tips that professionals can use to maintain their spark as they build tenure with an organization:

- **Find your passion.** Think about your company's higher purpose: How is it making the world a better place? For example, if you work at a CPA firm, you aren't only performing accounting functions – you are helping client businesses grow and thrive.
- **Deepen your connections.** Having friends at work makes every day more fun. Go out of your way to socialize and build camaraderie with those around you.
- **Mix it up.** Don't wait for your manager to offer you new projects. Be proactive – talk to your boss about new assignments to broaden your skillset and contribution to the firm. This not only increases your engagement level but also your earning potential.
- **Show gratitude.** Take the time to thank coworkers for their help and compliment others for a job well done. It will brighten their day while also giving your spirits a boost.
- **Sweeten the pot.** Keep up with compensation trends and ask for a raise, if warranted, as you take on more responsibility.

About the Research

The survey of more than 12,000 workers in the United States and Canada was conducted by an independent research firm. Respondents included a broad representation of the U.S. and Canadian working population with an emphasis on those employed in professional settings to provide the ability to make robust comparisons among fields. Additional information, including an infographic and videos, can be found here.

About Robert Half
Founded in 1948, Robert Half is the world's first and largest staffing firm with more than 325 staffing locations worldwide. We believe working happy is the only way to work, and we have made it our mission to help people find fulfilling jobs and help companies build happy, productive teams. Find out more at roberthalf.ca/it's-time-we-all-work-happy.

About Happiness Works
Happiness Works enables organizations to identify, measure and manage employee happiness. Firms that consider employee happiness as a fundamental performance objective consistently unlock greater innovation and long-term financial success. Founded by Nic Marks, the creator of The Happy Planet Index, the world's first measure of sustainable well-being, Happiness Works is based in London with a growing global portfolio of forward-thinking clients. For more details, visit happinessworks.com.

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