Robert Half Canada

Survey: One-Third of Canadian Lawyers Plan to Add Legal Jobs in Second Half of 2017

71 Per Cent Cite Hiring Challenges

Toronto, ON -- Increased hiring is predicted for the legal field in the months ahead, with litigation offering the greatest job opportunities. Nearly one-third (32 per cent) of Canadian lawyers interviewed by Robert Half Legal anticipate that their law firms or companies will expand legal teams in the second half of 2017. This compares to 30 per cent six months ago and 33 per cent one year ago. Fifty-two per cent of lawyers said they plan to only fill vacant posts in the next six months, while 10 per cent said they would neither fill vacant positions nor create new ones. Only three per cent of survey respondents plan to reduce teams.

Legal Hiring Environment in Canada*	**July-Dec. 2017**	**Jan.-June 2017**	**July-Dec. 2016**
Expanding/adding new positions	**32%**	**30%**	**33%**
Maintaining/filling vacated positions	**52%**	48%	53%
Freezing/not filling vacated positions or creating new ones	**10%**	12%	7%
Reducing/eliminating positions	**3%**	3%	3%
Don't know/no answer	4%	7%	4%
	101%	100%	100%

**Responses do not total 100 per cent due to rounding.*

Read the infographic text.

Other Key Findings

- Seven in 10 (71 per cent) lawyers said finding skilled legal professionals is somewhat or very challenging, while 44 per cent of survey respondents expressed concern about losing legal personnel to other job opportunities in the next six months.
- Thirty-seven per cent of lawyers said that, aside from compensation or bonus, challenging work or variety of assignments provides the greatest incentive for legal professionals to remain with an employer. Flexible work arrangements ranked second, receiving 28 per cent of the survey response, followed by professional development opportunities, at 16 per cent.

"To meet rising demand for business-related legal services, law firms are hiring lawyers and paralegals with specialized expertise, such as commercial litigation and insurance defence experience," said Jamy Sullivan, executive director of Robert Half Legal. "General counsel are also expanding in-house teams to reduce their reliance on outside counsel and increase efficiencies. In particular, they are seeking legal specialists with backgrounds in corporate transactions and labor and employment law."

Sullivan added that as competition for experienced legal experts intensifies, lateral hiring is expected to increase in the coming months. "Law firms are recruiting senior-level associates with a book of business as a means to expand high-growth practice areas and grow revenue," she said.

Litigation Expertise in High Demand

More than one-third (35 per cent) of lawyers surveyed expect litigation to yield the most employment opportunities in the next six months, citing commercial litigation as the top driver of job growth within the practice area.

Lawyers were asked, "**Which one of the following practice areas will offer the greatest number of job opportunities in the second half of 2017?**" Their responses:**

Litigation	**35%**
General business/corporate law	20%
Real estate	15%
Regulatory or compliance	9%
Ethics and corporate governance	4%
Intellectual property	3%
Privacy, data and information law	3%
Other	5%
None/don't know/no answer	5%
	99%

***Total does not equal 100 per cent due to rounding.*

Lawyers who cited "litigation" as a response were also asked, **'Which of the following areas of litigation, if any, will offer the greatest number of job opportunities in the second half of 2017?**" Their responses:***

Commercial litigation	**40%**
Insurance defence	30%
Employment	13%
Class actions	11%
Personal injury	9%
Securities and corporate governance	8%
Personal/family law	8%
Intellectual property	6%
Medical malpractice	3%
Other	12%
Don't know	3%

****Multiple responses were permitted.*

Survey Methodology

The survey was developed by Robert Half Legal and conducted by an independent research firm. It is based on 150 telephone interviews with lawyers in Canada: 75 of the respondents are employed at law firms with 20 or more employees and 75 are employed at companies with 1,000 or more employees. All respondents have hiring authority within their organizations.

About Robert Half Legal

Robert Half Legal is the premier provider of legal staffing and consulting solutions for law firms and corporate legal departments. With North American and global locations, Robert Half Legal provides a customized approach, including managed review, legal project management and eDiscovery services, to help organizations handle constantly changing workloads. The company offers in-demand expertise across practice areas as well as highly skilled legal professionals on a temporary, project and full-time basis. More information about our full suite of legal staffing and consulting solutions can be found **roberthalf.ca/legal**, and for career and management advice, follow our Legal Blog at **blog.roberthalflegal.com**. Follow **@RobertHalf_CAN** and visit **blog.roberthalf.ca** for workplace news, trends and advice.

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