Robert Half Canada

Survey: Litigation to Offer Greatest Legal Job Opportunities in Next Six Months; 33 Per Cent of Canadian Lawyers Plan to Expand Teams



TORONTO, Dec. 14, 2017 /CNW/ - Litigation is expected to yield the greatest legal job prospects in the months ahead, new research reveals, with one-third of lawyers planning to add to their existing teams. Thirty-three per cent of Canadian lawyers interviewed by Robert Half Legal anticipate that their law firms or companies will add legal jobs in the first half of 2018. This compares to 32 per cent six months ago and 30 per cent one year ago. Forty-nine per cent of lawyers said they plan to only fill vacant posts in the next six months, while 15 per cent said they would neither fill vacant positions nor create new ones. One per cent plan to reduce legal teams.

Legal Hiring Environment in the United States	**Jan.-June 2018**	**July-Dec. 2017***	**Jan.-June 2017**
Expanding/adding new positions	**33%**	**32%**	**30%**
Maintaining/filling vacated positions	**49%**	52%	48%
Freezing/not filling vacated positions or creating new ones	**15%**	10%	12%
Reducing/eliminating positions	**1%**	3%	3%
Don't know/no answer	2%	4%	7%
	100%	101%	100%

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

Other Key Findings

- More than half of lawyers (56 per cent) said finding skilled legal professionals is somewhat or very challenging, while 35 per cent of survey respondents expressed concern about losing legal personnel to other job opportunities in the next six months.
- Thirty-nine per cent of lawyers said that, aside from compensation or bonus, challenging work or variety of assignments

provide the greatest incentive for legal professionals to remain with an employer. Flexible work arrangements ranked second (26 per cent), followed by professional development opportunities, at 14 per cent.

"Law firms are focused on growing revenue in an increasingly competitive environment, while legal departments are being tasked to contain costs by managing more work in-house," said Jamy Sullivan, executive director of Robert Half Legal. "To improve service levels, these organizations are recruiting legal professionals with highly specialized skills, strong business acumen and in-depth knowledge of their industry or sector."

Sullivan added that to attract and retain the best talent, law firms and companies are promoting perks and benefits that job seekers covet most, including telecommuting, flexible schedules and professional development opportunities. "Aside from compensation, offering programs that help employees improve work-life balance and advance their careers are highly effective strategies for boosting recruitment and reducing turnover," she said.

Litigation Expertise in High Demand
One-third of lawyers (33 per cent) expect litigation to yield the most employment opportunities in the next six months, with 36 per cent citing commercial litigation as the top driver of job growth within the litigation practice area.

Lawyers were asked, "**Which one of the following practice areas will offer the greatest number of job opportunities in the first half of 2018?**" Their responses:**

Litigation	**33%**
General business/corporate law	22%
Real estate	11%
Regulatory or compliance	8%
Intellectual property	5%
Ethics and corporate governance	4%
Privacy, data security and information law	4%
Labour and employment	2%
Other	5%
None/don't know/no answer	7%
	101%

***Responses do not total 100 percent 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 first half of 2018?**" Their responses:***

Commercial litigation	**36%**
Insurance defence	34%
Personal/family law	12%
Personal injury	9%
Class actions	6%
Employment	6%
Securities and corporate governance	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.

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