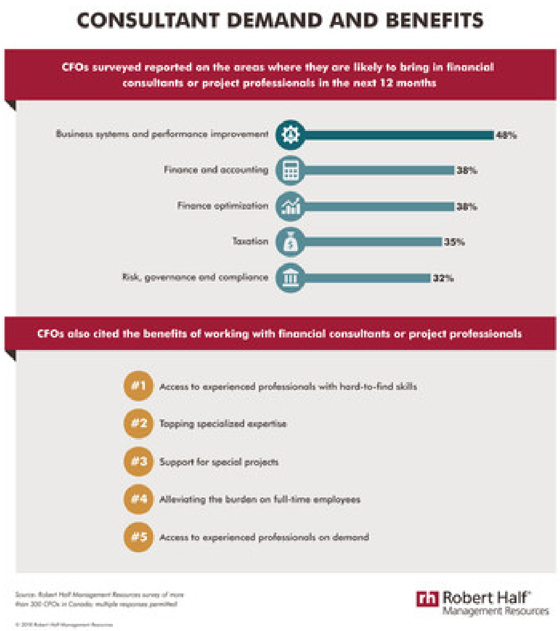
Robert Half Canada

Canadian Finance Leaders Look to Consultants for Specialized Skills and Expertise



Survey Finds Demand Most Focused on Business Systems, Optimization and Accounting

TORONTO, Oct. 30, 2018 /CNW/ - Consultants play a key role in the labour model for the digital age. A new Robert Half Management Resources survey reveals 48 per cent of CFOs in Canada plan to bring in these professionals for business systems and performance improvement initiatives over the next 12 months. Additional areas requiring consultants include finance optimization, finance and accounting (38 per cent, respectively) and taxation (35 per cent).

Interim professionals deliver a number of benefits to companies, CFOs reported. Most notably, financial executives said working with consultants offers firms on-demand access to experienced professionals with hard-to-find, specialized skills and support for special projects, helping to alleviate the workload on full-time staff.

CFOs were asked, "**In which of the following areas is your company likely to bring in financial consultants or project professionals in the next 12 months?**" Their responses*:

Business systems and performance improvement	**48%**
Finance optimization	**38%**
Finance and accounting	**38%**
Taxation	**35%**
Risk, governance and compliance	32%

CFOs were also asked about the business benefits of working with financial consultants or project professionals. Their responses*:

Access to experienced professionals with hard-to-find skills	**45%**
Tapping specialized expertise	**41%**

Support for special projects	**39%**
Alleviating the burden on full-time employees	**38%**
Access to experienced professionals on-demand	34%
Facilitating knowledge transfer and professional development for full-time staff	31%
Addressing workload spikes	30%

** Multiple responses allowed*

"Many organizations are embracing a flexible staffing strategy to better manage shifting business needs, including expanded finance and digital transformation efforts," said David King, president of Robert Half Management Resources. "Business systems and financial consultants are especially sought after as companies turn to specialized expertise and outside firms for on-demand support with major projects, and help identifying competitive growth opportunities."

This new labour model is attractive to both employers and professionals, noted King. "Working with interim specialists allows companies a more agile approach to navigating business challenges, while consultants gain exposure to diverse engagements, industries and work environments."

Robert Half Management Resources highlights finance and accounting consulting options available to companies:

- **Project and interim professionals —** Consultants cover essential roles and support key projects. They are instrumental in moving initiatives forward when companies are confronted with personnel gaps.
- **Consultant teams —** Larger initiatives, such as a system implementation or transitioning to the new lease accounting standard, require a broader range of resources and expertise. A team of interim professionals can support a strategic initiative or assist with the work of core staff dedicated to the project.
- **Long-term and recurring consultants —** Companies work with professionals for cyclical and regularly occurring needs, such as year-end close. This promotes staff continuity and operational stability on longer-term projects.
- **Managed services —** Managed business services providers assist with major and one-off initiatives and oversee entire functions. They analyze operations, identify needs and deliver specialized staffing resources.

About the Research
The survey was developed by Robert Half Management Resources and conducted online by an independent research firm. It is based on responses from more than 300 CFOs at companies with 20 or more employees in Canada.

About Robert Half Management Resources
Robert Half Management Resources is the premier provider of senior-level finance, accounting and business systems professionals for companies' project and interim staffing needs. Customizing its approach for each organization, Robert Half Management Resources can provide a single consultant, a financial team or full-service consulting services, delivered through Protiviti, a Robert Half subsidiary. With more than 140 locations worldwide, Robert Half Management Resources works with companies of all sizes, including more than half of the top 100 companies from the FORTUNE 500®. Visit roberthalf.ca/management-resources for more information.

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For further information: Natasha Ferraro, 647-956-5575, natasha.ferraro@roberthalf.com

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