Survey: Finance Executives in Canada Report Leadership and Tech Skills Most Difficult to Find When Hiring

80% of CFOs Say Business Analytics Skills Mandatory for at Least Some Accounting and Finance Positions

TORONTO, Aug. 22, 2019 /CNW/ - As digital transformation reshapes businesses, Canadian organizations seek strong leaders with technical know-how to help manage this change across a range of financial roles. Companies, however, struggle finding professionals with this expertise, new research from staffing firm Robert Half Finance & Accounting shows. In the survey, CFOs in Canada reported that leadership abilities and technology experience or aptitude are the most difficult to find in accounting and finance job candidates.

One area of expertise in high demand is business analytics; 28 per cent of CFOs said these skills are mandatory for all accounting and finance positions, and another 52 per cent reported they are mandatory for some roles. The survey findings also suggest employers are taking steps to address the need: 89 per cent of respondents' firms provide related professional development opportunities.

In separate research for Robert Half's Jobs and AI Anxiety report, finance managers cited big data and advanced analytics among the top three currently used technologies, following cloud-based systems and mobile applications. In addition to the 25 per cent of finance and accounting functions currently using analytical tools, such as predictive analytics, another 27 per cent expect to use them within the next three years.

"As businesses become increasingly reliant on data for strategic decision making, they're more focused than ever on finding professionals with the analytical abilities to interpret and act on these insights." said David King, senior district president of Robert Half Finance and Accounting. "By offering training in data literacy, analysis and new IT innovations, managers cultivate more engaged finance teams driven to help the organization find efficiencies and improve the bottom line."

"Business analytics tools will continue to advance, with newer technologies that allow finance staff to focus less on manual tasks and more on leading projects that speak to the broader goals and strategies of the organization," added King. "Professionals should proactively educate themselves on emerging and in-demand skills to demonstrate their command of the field and promote their marketability in the evolving financial space."

About the Research
The online survey was developed by Robert Half Finance & Accounting and conducted by an independent research firm. It is based on responses from more than 300 CFOs at companies with 20 or more employees in Canada. The survey developed for the Jobs and AI Anxiety report includes responses from more than 100 accounting and finance managers in Canada.

About Robert Half Finance & Accounting
Founded in 1948, Robert Half Finance & Accounting, a division of Robert Half, is the world's first and largest specialized financial recruitment service. The company has more than 300 locations worldwide. For more information, visit roberthalf.ca/finance.

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