

Survey: 56% of Law Firms, Companies in Canada Plan to Expand Legal Teams in Next Six Months

- General business or corporate law is top practice area expected to offer job opportunities, according to Robert Half Legal research
- Lawyers, legal secretaries and data privacy specialists are in greatest demand
- 93% of lawyers in Canada report challenges recruiting talent

TORONTO, Dec. 16, 2019 /CNW/ - Skilled legal professionals remain in high demand as organizations plan to boost hiring of these individuals in the next six months, according to staffing firm Robert Half Legal's State of Legal Hiring research. More than half of Canada-based lawyers (56 per cent) said their company or law firm will expand its legal team in the first half of 2020. Of those respondents, almost all (98 per cent) plan to staff at least some of the open positions with temporary or project professionals.



General business or corporate law is the top practice area expected to drive job growth, according to survey respondents. Within general business or corporate law, litigation, contracts and corporate transactions, corporate governance and operations, and intellectual property will reportedly offer the most employment opportunities.

"Many employers find hiring interim legal professionals to be an effective strategy for managing growing business demands and easing workloads for full-time staff," said Jamy Sullivan, executive director of Robert Half Legal. "In particular, companies often turn to legal consultants during peak periods or for projects that require specialized skills; the extra hands help to keep files on track, while providing new expertise and a fresh perspective."

Additional findings

- The top positions law firms and companies anticipate adding in the first half of 2020 are lawyers, legal secretaries and data privacy specialists. Associates and corporate counsel with 4-9 years' experience are in particularly high demand.
- Of the lawyers surveyed, 93 per cent said it's difficult to find skilled legal professionals. A shortage of qualified candidates is the greatest recruiting challenge for 33 per cent of respondents.
- Aside from legal knowledge, lawyers rate practice area expertise, management experience and industry/sector knowledge as the most important factors when evaluating legal candidates.
- More than eight in 10 lawyers (85 per cent) are concerned about losing legal talent to other job opportunities in the next six months.
- Beyond compensation and bonuses, lawyers said flexible work arrangements, professional development opportunities and challenging work or variety of assignments are the best incentives for retaining employees.

Sullivan added, "Top legal talent may have competing offers on the table. Organizations that set themselves apart by offering extra perks and benefits may have an edge over the competition when it comes to recruitment and retention."

About the Research

The online survey was developed by Robert Half Legal and conducted by a leading independent research firm. It is based on responses from more than 150 lawyers in Canada who work full time at law firms with 20 or more employees or in corporate legal departments at companies with 1,000 or more employees. Respondents possess five-plus years' experience in the legal profession and are involved in managing the hiring of legal personnel.

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 at roberthalf.ca/legal.

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