

Canadian Employees Share Views on Current and Post-Pandemic Workplace

- 55% of office professionals who transitioned to a remote setup say they have better work-life balance, according to new Robert Half research
- 74% of workers would like to telecommute more often when physical distancing restrictions lift
- 72% of employees say they will rethink shaking hands with business contacts

TORONTO, May 1, 2020 /CNW/ - Professionals in Canada have gone from the shock of life in lockdown, to weeks of working from kitchen tables and makeshift offices. But now, many are turning their attention to the impending move back to their workplaces, and what the new normal will look like. Robert Half surveyed 500 professionals in Canada to find out more about their current situation, concerns for the future at work, and what they see changing the most.



"COVID-19 has impacted so many aspects of our daily lives — and when buildings reopen, the office environments we return to may look very different from the ones we left," said David King, Robert Half senior district president. "Now is the time for both organizations and employees to explore new ways to create safe, motivating and engaging spaces as business needs, and work cultures, evolve."

Silver Linings

Of employees surveyed, 79 per cent said they are currently working from home. These workers were asked, **"Which of the following positive sentiments have you felt with respect to your job in the past several weeks?"** The top responses included:*

I realize my job is doable from home.	60%
My work-life balance has improved due to a lack of a commute.	55%
I'm more comfortable using technology.	26%
I've grown closer to colleagues.	10%
I've grown closer to my boss.	8%

**Multiple responses were permitted.*

Concerns About Returning to the Office

According to the research, professionals feel some apprehension about going back to their typical workspace:

- 46 per cent of professionals worry about being in close proximity to their colleagues.
- 74 per cent would like to work remotely more frequently than before the outbreak.
- At the same time, 59 per cent believe it will be more difficult to build strong relationships with colleagues if teams aren't in the same building as much.

Business Protocol in a Post-Pandemic World

Once physical distancing guidelines ease, the workplace will likely change. Of office professionals surveyed:

- 72 per cent will rethink shaking hands with business contacts.
- 73 per cent plan to schedule fewer in-person meetings.

- At the same time, 75 per cent feel they will go back better prepared to support or cover for coworkers who need to be out of the office.
- 56 per cent anticipate spending less time in common areas in the office.
- Six in 10 will reconsider attending in-person business events (61 per cent) and travelling for business (59 per cent).
- 69 per cent think there will be fewer in-person social and team-building activities with colleagues.

Staff expect their organization to adapt to the new normal. Workers were asked, "**As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, which of the following measures do you think your company needs to take?**" Their responses:*

Allow employees to work from home more frequently	85%
Have better cleaning procedures	73%
Hold fewer in-person meetings and trainings	68%
Stagger employees' work schedules	48%
Change the office layout	40%
Require employees to wear masks	26%

**Multiple responses were permitted.*

"People have had a chance to reflect during this period of isolation, and many workers are now looking at their professional lives, and overall career expectations, with new eyes," added King. "Employers should take advantage of this time of transition to reevaluate their priorities and integrate positive change — whether through more innovative office layouts, health standards or flexible work options — that will resonate not only with current staff, but also appeal to future employees."

About the Research

The online survey was developed by Robert Half and conducted by an independent research firm from April 17-22, 2020. It includes responses from more than 500 workers 18 years of age or older and normally employed in office environments in Canada.

About Robert Half

Founded in 1948, Robert Half is the world's first and largest specialized staffing firm. The company has more than 300 staffing locations worldwide and offers hiring and job search services at roberthalf.ca. For additional career and management advice, visit the Robert Half blog at roberthalf.ca/blog.

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