Robert Half Canada

Up for Debate: is it OK to Talk Politics With Colleagues?

Majority of Workers (66 per cent) Say It's Not a Clear-Cut Yea or Nay

TORONTO, Aug. 20, 2020 /CNW/ - Politics may be top of mind for many people right now, but is the topic safe to talk about at work? It depends, new research from global staffing firm Robert Half shows.

Workers were asked "**Is it appropriate to discuss politics with coworkers?**"

Yes, it is appropriate	15 per cent
Maybe, depending on the situation and people involved	66 per cent
No, it is not appropriate	19 per cent

Additional findings:

- One in five (21 per cent) men say talking politics is appropriate, compared to fewer than one in ten (9 per cent) women
- More working parents (19 per cent) than professionals without children (12 per cent) reported that it is appropriate to discuss politics at work
- Workers across Canada varied only slightly in response; 18 per cent of workers in bothToronto and Montreal felt political conversations are appropriate versus 10 per cent in Vancouver

"While it can be tempting to engage in political discussions in the workplace, it is important for professionals to be respectful of opinions and perspectives that differ from their own," said David King, senior district president of Robert Half inCanada.

"As many employees continue to work remotely, it is also natural to see a slight rise in social conversations as a way to stay connected with colleagues," added King. "Being considerate in these exchanges is critical to help avoid miscommunication and unnecessary conflict, as these can be catalysts for compromising productivity and morale."

Robert Half offers three tips for navigating political talk with colleagues:

- **Tread lightly.** If you choose to participate in political conversations, keep it light and constructive. Should the discussion become confrontational, move onto another subject.
- **Decline politely.** Don't feel pressured into sharing your political views. It's okay to bow out of a conversation and let others know you prefer not to chime in.
- **Speak up.** If your colleague says or does something that makes you uncomfortable, pull the person aside and explain what's bothering you. For more serious matters, consult your manager or human resources.

About the Research
The online survey was developed by Robert Half and conducted by an independent research firm fromJuly 7-30, 2020. It includes responses from 500 workers 18 years of age or older and typically employed in office environments in five major Canadian cities.

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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