

Robert Half: Nearly 6 in 10 Canadian employers plan to increase hiring before end of 2026

- Hiring plans climb to 58 per cent, up slightly from 55 per cent at the start of 2026
- 48 per cent have cancelled projects due to skills gaps

TORONTO, July 29, 2026 /CNW/ -- Nearly six in 10 Canadian employers plan to increase hiring before the end of 2026 as organizations advance business priorities and seek specialized talent to address persistent skills shortages, according to new research from talent solutions and business consulting firm Robert Half.

In a survey of more than 1,360 Canadian hiring managers, 58 per cent said they plan to increase permanent hiring during the second half of the year. 45 per cent also expect to hire contract professionals to access specialized expertise, support priority initiatives and keep critical work moving.

"Many organizations are ready to advance important business priorities, but successful execution relies on having the right skills in place," said Koula Vasilopoulos, senior managing director, Robert Half, Canada. "Employers are broadening their talent strategies, leveraging both permanent and contract professionals to access critical skills and keep strategic projects moving forward."

Specializations with the strongest hiring demand

Rank	Professional field	Plans to hire
1	Legal	74 %
2	Marketing and creative	66 %
3	HR	64 %
4	Finance and accounting	58 %
5	Technology	48 %
6	Administrative and customer support	41 %

Employers continue to face skills shortages

Despite growing hiring demand, employers continue to struggle to find professionals with the specialized skills they need. More than half (53%) say finding qualified talent is more difficult than before.

Skills shortages are also affecting business execution:

- **56%** of hiring managers have experienced significant project delays in the last year.
- **48%** have cancelled projects because they lacked the necessary skills.

The skills employers say are hardest to find include:

- Technical or specialized skills (48%)
- Industry-specific knowledge or experience (47%)
- Leadership abilities (41%)

53 per cent of hiring managers also cite specialized skills as the attribute they value most when hiring.

To address these challenges, nearly four in 10 employers (37%) prioritize hiring high-potential candidates and investing in their development when unable to find fully qualified talent who are ready to contribute immediately. Additionally, 56 per cent say they seek support from staffing firms to access specialized skills.

"Finding professionals with specialized, in-demand skills remains a challenge for many organizations, and employers are

increasingly seeking flexible ways to address talent gaps", Vasilopoulos added. "A staffing partner can provide access to skilled professionals who can contribute quickly, maintain business momentum and support long-term future growth."

For more insights into 2026 employment trends, including which professionals are hardest to hire and how to address hiring challenges, visit Robert Half's [Demand for Skilled Talent](#) report.

FAQ:

Why are organizations cancelling or delaying projects?

Employers are struggling to find professionals with the specialized skills needed to complete critical work, which leads to delays, reprioritization, and project cancellations.

Why is finding skilled talent difficult?

Many roles require specific qualifications such as specialized skills, industry knowledge, software proficiency, leadership abilities, and relevant experience, making it harder to find suitable candidates.

How are companies addressing skills gaps?

Employers are using a mix of permanent hiring, contract talent, and upskilling to fill gaps and keep projects moving.

Which industries have the strongest hiring demand?

Hiring demand in Canada is strongest in the legal and marketing and creative fields, followed by HR, finance and accounting, technology, and administrative and customer support.

About the research

The research is gathered from a survey developed by Robert Half and conducted by an independent research firm in April 2026. The survey contains responses from more than 1,360 hiring managers across Canada.

About Robert Half

Robert Half (NYSE: RHI) is the world's first and largest specialized talent solutions and business consulting firm, connecting highly skilled job seekers with rewarding opportunities at great companies. We offer contract talent and permanent placement solutions in the fields of finance and accounting, technology, marketing and creative, legal, and administrative and customer support, and we also provide executive search services. Robert Half is the parent company of Protiviti®, a global consulting firm that delivers internal audit, risk, business and technology consulting solutions. Robert Half, including Protiviti, has been named one of the Fortune® Most Admired Companies™, and by Forbes as one of Canada's Best Recruiting and Temporary Staffing Firms 2026. Explore comprehensive talent solutions, research and insights at [RobertHalf.ca](#)

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