

Press release
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Salary premiums would entice many workers back to the office

- 78% of Australian workers say the ability to work remotely is important for their overall job satisfaction
- 39% of workers would resign if their job no longer offered flexibility regarding where they work, while 39% of workers would turn down a job offer for the same reason
- 44% of workers say they require a salary premium to be enticed back into the office, with an amount of up to 10% on top of their base salary favoured the most

Sydney, 24 September 2024 – Despite an easing employment market, remote work options remain a key factor in workers’ decision-making process with more than one third (39%) of workers prepared to resign from their role or turn down a job offer that does not include flexibility regarding where they work, new independent research by specialised recruiter [Robert Half](#) finds.

Remote work is essential for job satisfaction

As employers attempt to restore pre-pandemic office attendance levels, the number of days they are mandating their staff to work in the office is on the rise. This year, 39% of workers are expected to be in the office full time, up from 19% in 2023¹.

However, 78% of workers state remote work plays an important role in their overall job satisfaction and just 22% say it is not important. Remote work is far more important for the job satisfaction of Gen Z (84%), Gen X (80%) and Millennial (79%) employees than Baby Boomers (71%), who have spent most of their working lives in the office.

“The future of work is not about returning to the past. It’s about finding new and innovative ways to meet the needs of both employers and employees,” said **Nicole Gorton, Director at Robert Half**. *“Flexibility is key to attracting and retaining top talent in the modern workforce. Employers need to be creative and adaptable in their approach to work arrangements. Depending on the industry and business operations, a hybrid model that combines in-office collaboration with remote flexibility can be a win-win solution for both parties.”*

The cost to entice workers to the office

Those employers who are willing to pay a salary premium to lure workers back to the office may have some success as 44% of workers stated they would be willing to return to the office full-time if they were offered a salary premium.

- 18% of employees would accept a salary premium of between 1% and 10%
- 16% of employees would accept a salary premium of between 11% and 20%
- 9% of employees would accept a salary premium of more than 20%

Only 17% of employees reveal they would not need a salary premium to return to the office full-time.

For 15% of workers, however, they would not be willing to return to the office full-time, even if they were offered a salary premium. The remaining 25% of workers say they are already in the office full-time.

¹ [Robert Half, July 2024, 39% of workers mandated to attend the office 5 days a week, up from 19% last year](#)

“Many workers believe they deserve a premium for giving up the flexibility and autonomy of remote work due to commuting costs, potential childcare expenses and the loss of personal time which many consider are all factors that contribute to the financial burden of returning to the office full-time. In a cost-driven environment, however, premiums might not always be an option for employers.

“Instead of offering a salary increase, employers can instead focus on enhancing the office environment, offering career development opportunities and highlighting the benefits of an in-person work arrangement to make the return to the office more appealing,” said **Gorton**.

Work location a big reason to refuse or leave an employer

Workplace flexibility options	I would turn down a job offer	I would leave a company
Not offering flexibility regarding <u>where</u> I work	39%	39%
Not offering flexibility regarding <u>when</u> I work	33%	34%
Not offering the option for me <u>to work in the office</u> , either part or full time	21%	19%

Independent survey commissioned by Robert Half among 1,000 full-time office workers in Australia in June 2024.

When asked about whether they would turn down a job offer or leave a company if they are not given flexibility regarding where and when they work, 39% of employees cite not having the option to choose their work location would cause them to turn down a job offer or resign from the company. However, flexible work hours are also a significant reason for many workers to stay or go.

Meanwhile, a minority of workers do want the option to work in the office, at least some of the time or they would turn down a job (21%) or leave the company (19%).

Workplace flexibility options would not impact the decision of 36% of Australian workers to turn down a job offer or 37% of workers to leave a company.

“Employees have experienced the benefits of remote work firsthand with many reluctant to give them up. To ensure top talent don’t leave an organisation for this reason, companies should aim to strike a balance where workers still feel a level of autonomy and an in-office work environment that sparks enthusiasm, not dismay,” concluded **Gorton**.

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Notes to editors

About the research

The study is developed by Robert Half and was conducted online in June 2024 by an independent research company, surveying 1,000 full-time office workers across Australia. This survey is part of the international workplace survey, a questionnaire about job trends, talent management and trends in the workplace.

About Robert Half

Robert Half is the global, specialised talent solutions provider that helps employers find their next great hire and jobseekers uncover their next opportunity. Robert Half offers both contract and permanent placement services, and is the parent company of Protiviti, a global consulting firm. Robert

Half Australia has offices in Brisbane, Melbourne, Mount Waverley, Perth and Sydney. More information on roberthalf.com/au.

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