

What you really need to know **NOW** to hire great talent



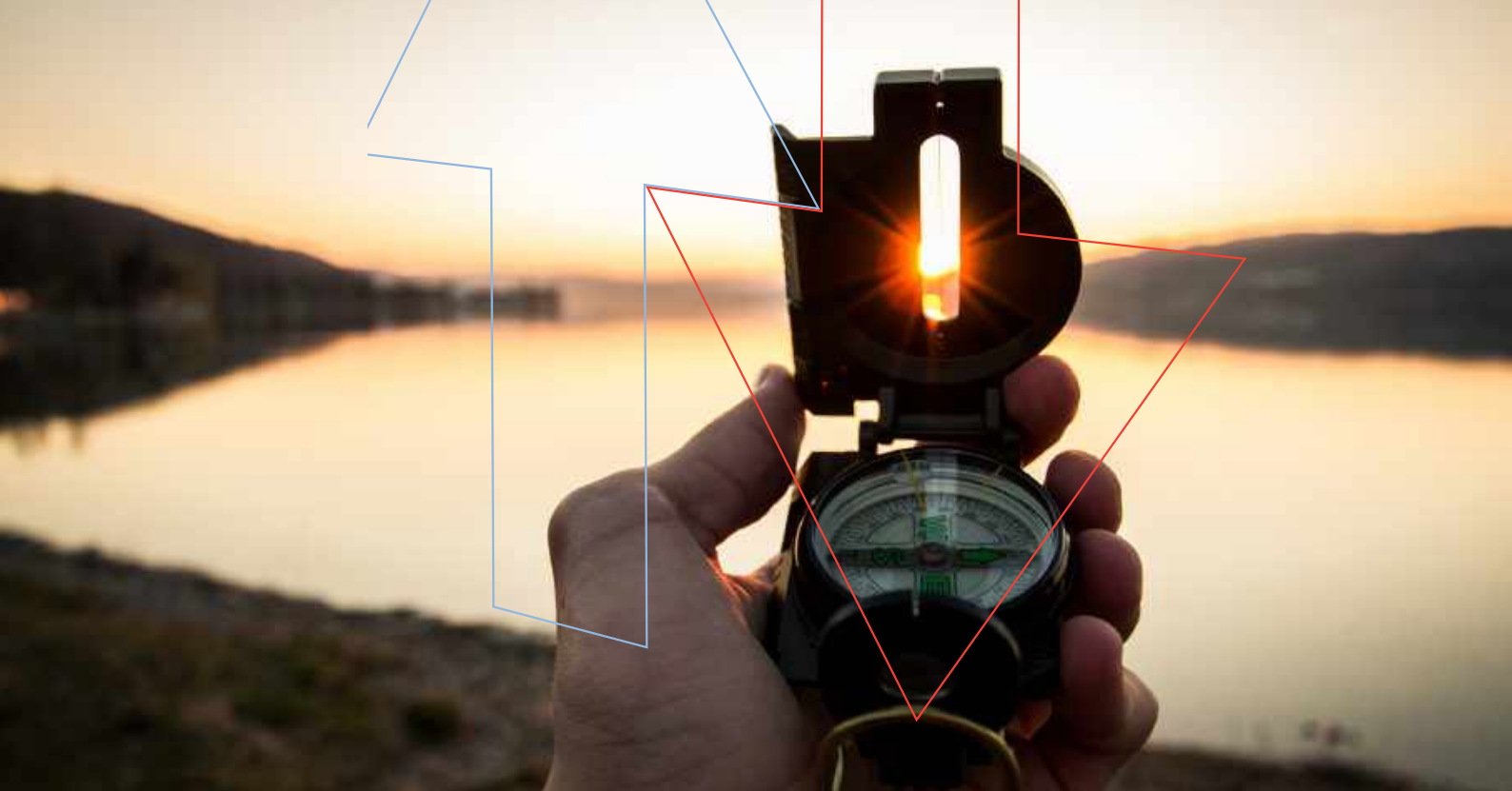
SURVEY 2021

The current and future drivers and deterrents of leadership and professional candidates when choosing a new employer.



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Executive Summary.

We may well be entering the most competitive market for leadership and professional talent in over fifteen years. It is a complex talent market due to the rebound speed in certain sectors. Much like the dramatic assimilation of technology to support remote working, there has also been a rapid acceleration of pre-existing trends such as working from home and flexible work practices.

Great talent always has choices, the challenge employers now face is to develop a fit-for-purpose employee value proposition (EVP), that meets new expectations of the talent you wish to recruit or retain.

This report based on a survey of 1,882 leaders and professionals looks at how the pandemic has altered the expectations of candidates when considering a move to a new employer. We asked what do companies need to do to compete for the very best talent?

A question, what % of your employees do you feel want to work full time again in offices or on site? The survey answers this later in the report, indicating a remarkably changed employment landscape. While we know work life balance has grown in importance over the last decade, today it is the standout reason that the talent you seek to hire, will change job. What does your firm do to promote its policy on work/life balance into the talent pools you target?

A very significant 44% of leaders and professionals surveyed for this research, say they will refuse a job offer from you without the opportunity to work remotely in whole or in part. How well prepared is your organisation for long term remote working?

With high demand for professionally skilled talent making this a candidate market, now is the time to ensure your EVP is fit for future purpose.



Global Reach.



Global reach at HRM, as the Irish office of IIC Partners, one of the world's top 10 executive search organisations, brings the best leadership and professional talent to your organisation. It blends deep local market knowledge with national and international talent pools to deliver outstanding solutions.

IIC Partners is passionate about finding the best executives for clients wherever they are in the world. We work tirelessly to advise, inform and guide organisations to make the right decision about hiring executives that will drive their operations forward, improve efficiency and increase profits.

Established over 30 years ago, our executive search consultants have experience working with all types of organisations.

From global corporations and national firms to family-owned businesses, we have partnered with many of the world's most recognised brands to solve their leadership challenges.

IIC Partners is a global partnership of independently owned and managed executive search firms. The independence of our firms allows IIC Partners to be highly responsive and flexible to client needs, creating successful, bespoke talent solutions.

Through global presence, industry expertise, and local knowledge, IIC Partners is trusted to deliver the highest quality retained executive search services.

If you would like an introduction to a partner office in the Americas, across EMEA or in Asia Pacific, please contact our COO, Paul O'Donnell. (paul.odonnell@hrmrecruit.com)



Local Knowledge.

40 Consultants & Researchers in Ireland and 450 Consultants around the World, combine deep local market knowledge with national and international talent pools to deliver outstanding solutions. For 30 years we have pioneered talent acquisition solutions, working closely with clients and candidate talent. We achieve great outcomes in the shortest cycle times for permanent and contract, professional and leadership talent needs.

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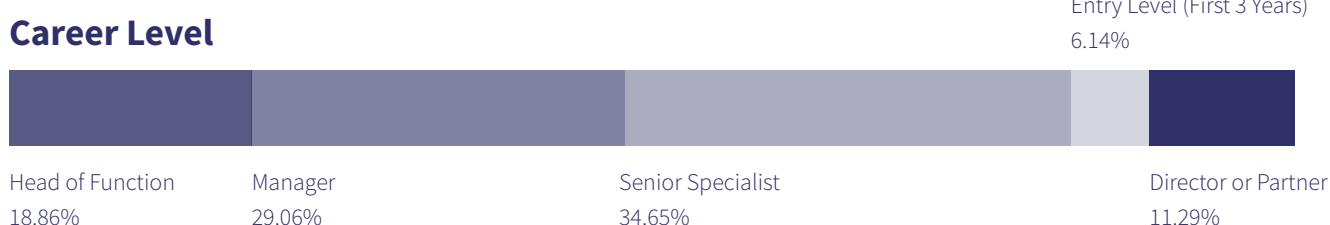
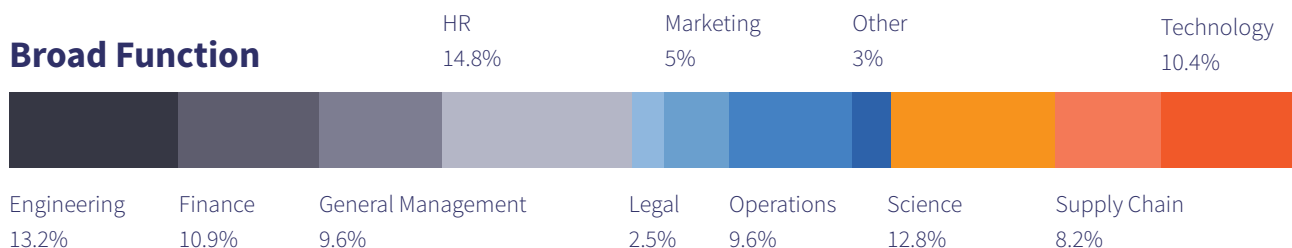
Introduction.

The future of work? What you need to know. Now.

In “future of work” discussions and presentations, the emphasis is often on new roles and theoretical constructs as to how the relationship between employer and employee will change. However, the real focus for employers needs to be on what we need to do now to attract new talent to enable future success? In many ways the pandemic has accelerated organisation change, so what decisions must be made today, to ensure organisations have competitive futures? How do firms need to adapt to ensure they are relevant and attract interest from the best candidates? So much has changed during the period of the pandemic it is difficult to grasp all of the implications, but now is the time to make those decisions and build optimal workplaces that attract and retain the highest performers.

The Survey

Throughout April 2021, we asked 1,882 leaders and professionals, what companies needed to do in order to attract them to their organisations. We addressed motivation to move, deterrents from engagement in recruiting processes and the impact of employer brand and publicity on decisions about potential new workplaces. We asked respondents about how EVPs should be structured to attract them. Organisation models are changing, in particular in the area of remote engagement. We looked at long term expectations around remote working and also at pre-employment remote processes when hiring. Lastly, we looked at what now influences an offer acceptance or rejection decision for leaders and professionals. The broad breakdown of respondents’ career level and function are as follows:



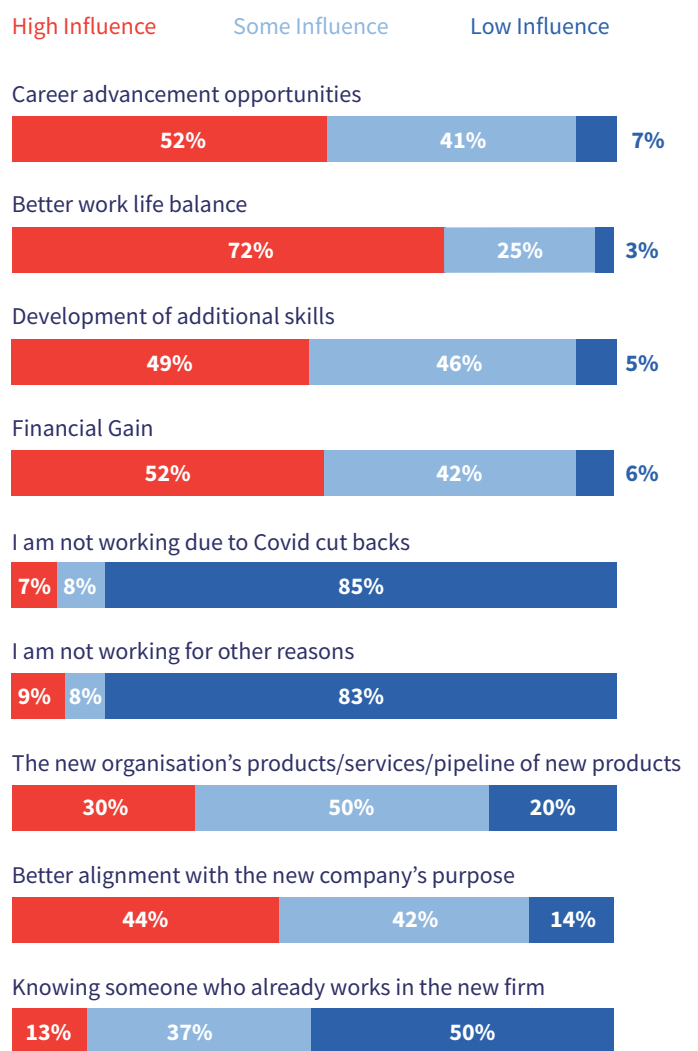
How to get to Yes.

Create an employee value proposition for the hard road ahead.

On site gyms, large contemporary office spaces with break out rooms and restaurant standard canteens serving four meals a day may no longer have any real pulling power. Many current EVPs are being ripped up. According to three quarters of survey respondents, and unsurprisingly in the context of the last year, the engagement drivers for candidates now centre around how a company approaches the sustainable, wellbeing of it's employees. Physical wellbeing has been an important feature of employee engagement for many years, the pandemic however, has made it much safer to have out-loud conversations around mental health. Companies who want to attract and engage the best talent are adopting a "human centred" approach to wellbeing which includes multiple dimensions of physical and mental health, safety and security for their employees. While many organisations have adopted this approach during the pandemic, it is essential that these are not dropped or reversed as workplaces begin to open up.

At its highest amongst 83% of respondents in Engineering and its lowest with those working in General Management (60%), wellbeing also rates higher amongst early career stages, a reflection too of changing generational expectations. Personal and career development also feature strongly, the challenge for organisations is how to showcase these factors before a candidate even applies or is approached about an opportunity. Equally important is a firm's ability to demonstrate with examples, all of these factors throughout an interview process.

Factors of influence when deciding on whether to engage in an interview process with a new employer:



Why talent says No.

The factors that deter top talent from joining your company.

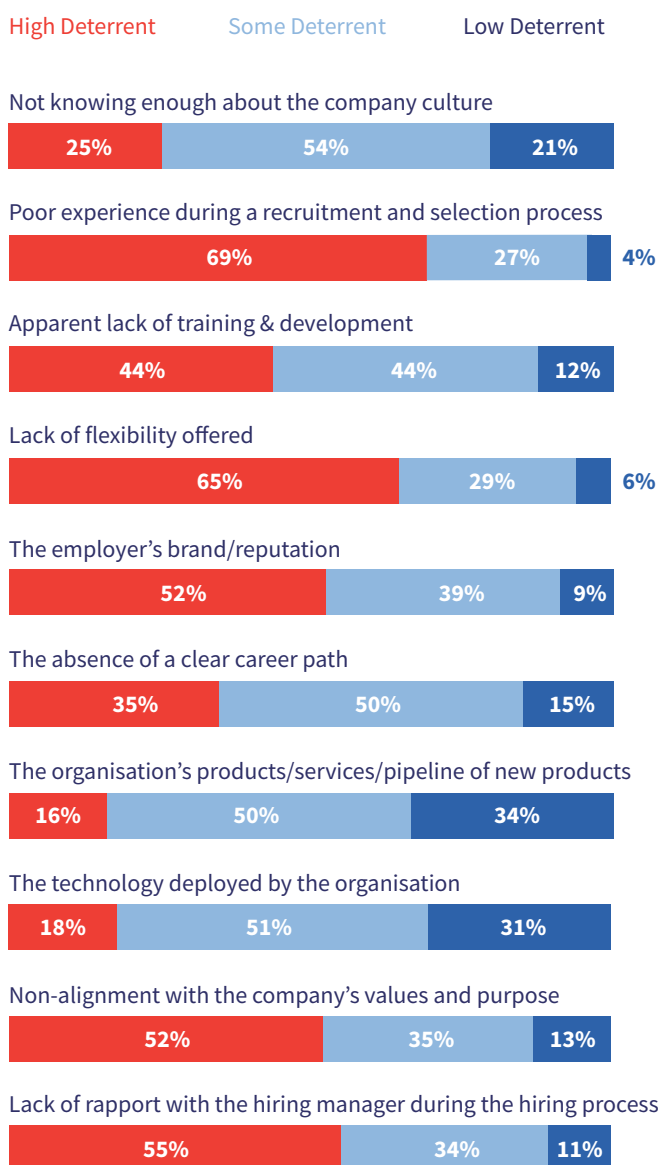
How often does your organisation mystery shop your recruitment process? What metrics do you set for hiring managers and TA functions to ensure you can measure their hiring performance? How strenuously do you test your recruitment partners on what they know about your firm’s purpose, culture and detailed understanding of your need? The absence of these are the real hidden costs of recruitment and are lost opportunities. Poor performance in the former two may indicate that recruitment is seen as an administrative chore and treated as such. In the case of the latter, you hand your employer brand over to a recruitment partner, their authenticity and care, or lack thereof, is either enhancing or damaging to that brand. *(A future research-based guide from HRM on optimal recruitment processes will be released in Q3)*

The term “flexibility” previously referred to “When” an employee worked but now also means “Where”. Employees place high value on flexibility around time off, often at short notice, for necessary occasions and in particular when it is made easy to ask for it. They also wish to work from home at least for part of their week. Often the employer argument against both of these can boil down to little more than an absence of trust. Trust is the cornerstone of engagement.

Most organisations in Ireland are taking a positive view about sustained remote working practices. Many see similar or increased levels of productivity. Though it demands new management and system capabilities and requires a balanced approach, having the option to hybrid work is highly valued.

No vacuum exists in hiring processes, so make sure to tackle these potential deterrents. Remember that your competitor for the talent you seek may well be presenting each of these in the opposite, as positive EVP elements in their organisations.

Deterrents from continuing in a recruitment and selection process or from joining a new employer organisation:





Finders. Keepers.

PERMANENT SERVICES

Identifying and attracting future-ready, high performing leaders and professionals is every organisation's primary hiring challenge. Through our own deep market knowledge, combined with the global presence of IIC Partners' and the international reach this provides, we search far and wide to bring you the best leadership and professional talent.

Our retained solutions, Executive Search and Professional Search, draw on our internal research team to deliver accurate shortlists of the best talent. For less senior roles we use Talent Search, our contingency solution, which leverages the consultants' own networks.

- Four-dimensional assessment to support hiring decisions.
- High touch candidate experiences to build engagement.
- International network and internal research team.
- Price positioning to ensure access to solutions for organisations of all sizes.



Fits. And Starts.

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Speed and accuracy are essential when short term critical talent is needed. For high value niche skills required over a defined period, whether for project delivery or driving essential change, peaks in workload or to cover a key role, ready-to-start contractors are the solution.

Our Contract & Interim Solutions team provides an immediate response to your short-term professional skill needs in all leadership and specialist areas. We deliver high quality and experienced, interim leaders and professional contractors who fit your immediate need. We deliver standalone contractors or contracting teams while our contractor management programme gives you a single point of contact and ensures a totally seamless back office experience.

- Consultants operate in professional verticals and at predefined levels of experience for rapid, accurate response.
- Seamless online backend process management.
- Continuous contractor management support throughout assignment.
- Expertise on site when you need it, cost removed when you don't.

Other Influencers.

Years to build, minutes to destroy.

Even organisations who are strong on communicating detailed and authentic business or product brand strategies, regularly neglect their employer branding. At the same time, the standards to which employees hold their organisations have changed and risen substantially. Adverse publicity about your firm or a public scandal involving one of your employees is enough to dissuade a large majority of candidates from considering your firm as an employer.

Your employer brand is the firm's reputation in the talent pools that matter to you. It should be tightly aligned to your organisation's purpose and be an honest reflection of the firm's values. It must be authentic and do what you say you do, as gaps undermine your culture and lead to low market engagement when you seek to hire. Do you know today how your firm is viewed by external candidates? What would your current employees say if asked about your organisation as a place to work?

Would adverse publicity about an organisation impact your decision to interview with or join a new organisation?



Would a public scandal involving an executive or senior employee with a potential employer impact your decision to interview with or join a new organisation?

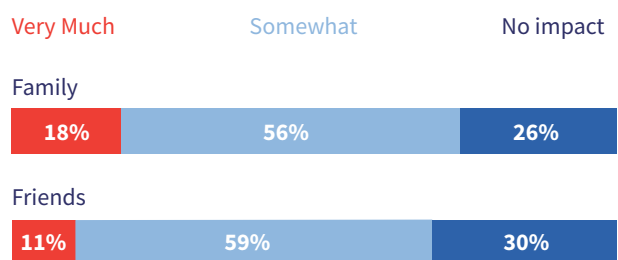


Whether written by you or others, whether accurate or fake 'facts', there is an abundance of commentary on your organisation available to anyone considering your company as a potential employer. So much so, that traditional influencers such as friends and family are now much lower in their impact. But social media is as fast as it is furious, bad news travels around the globe at the speed of light. The absence of a robust employer brand in the face of adversity can mean significant reputational damage. The talent impact can last a long time.

Your employer brand and the narrative about your firm in talent pools of interest, should speak of your employee value proposition and give evidence of how it lives up to it.

How often do you review your employer brand online to see what others see? How well would your organisation's hiring programmes stand up to challenging adverse publicity?

To what extent, if any, would the view held by family or friends of an organisation, influence your decision whether to interview with or join an organisation?



Remote Control.

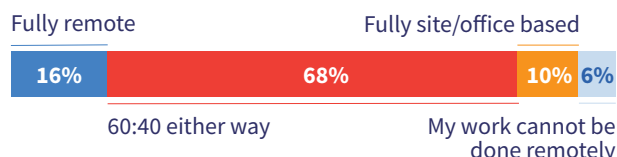
The virtual work world is actually here.

While there will be some inevitable post-pandemic settling, the fact that more respondents to this research chose Fully remote than Fully site/office based as their future preferred workplace option, is significant. Just 10% of leaders and professionals want to fully return to their workplaces. More than two thirds opted for a hybrid pattern of two or three days alternating between remote and site-based working.

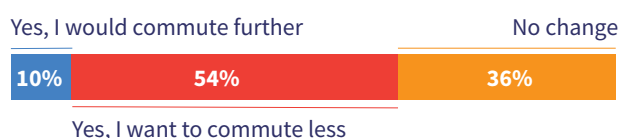
Firms that assume their entire workforces are going to return to being fully based at the company's premises risk losing their most important staff and as they try to attract replacements, may face the prospect of continuously reducing workforce capability. Customers may be lost due to key contact turnover and a possible reduction in the product or service experience. EVP and Remote Working in particular are critical bottom line issues now. How well developed is your organisation's long-term remote working programme?

In contrast to anecdotal reports of employees seeking to leave cities in large numbers, almost 80% of respondents do not expect to change where they live. A notable number would like to reduce their commute nonetheless.

I prefer my work to be:



Has the last year changed your opinion on how far you would be willing to commute for a role?



Has the increase in remote work policies changed your opinion on where you would like to live?



Remote Possibilities.

This is not the future, this is now.

The pandemic has had a rapid and significant impact on organisation culture. The consequences leave companies seeking to design new sustainable programmes of culture and engagement and it must begin with the hiring process itself.

Almost 80% of leaders and professionals want at least part of the interview process to be undertaken remotely. Candidates have a strong preference when using this format, to meet with one or two interviewers at any one time and report a strong aversion to panel interviews. More than two thirds of respondents would also prefer their onboarding to be undertaken remotely, in whole or in part.

Remote interviewing presents its own challenges but also offers new opportunities for candidates and clients alike, including those working or seeking talent from abroad. However, creating a bond between the hiring manager and the candidate through a virtual process can be difficult. Assessing candidates on a remote platform and pitching / showcasing your organisation and its role is also more challenging.

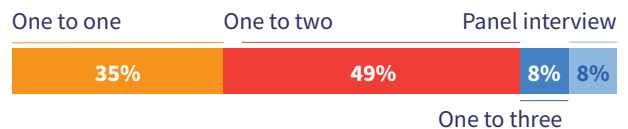
If not already done, it is important to review your in-person assessment process and not simply try to transfer it online. Adapt it as appropriate, because achieving accurate assessment and building engagement from the outset is more important now than ever. To support this, we provide clients with significantly more upfront detail on a candidate to improve pre-interview knowledge and build objectivity and transparency. We also provide candidates with a written brief and additional discussion notes to give a strong sense of culture and purpose and to outline any nuances of the role that the candidate would normally observe at a face-to-face meeting.

I prefer interview processes to be:

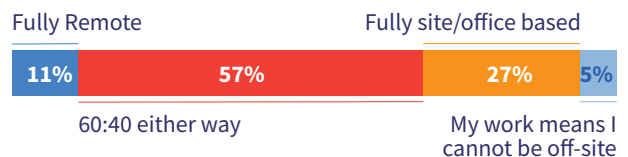


If you experienced an interview in the last 12 months or are going to interview shortly, which of the following interview scenarios would you be most comfortable with?

(Please offer your view even if you have not interviewed recently or have no current plans to).



I would prefer my onboarding into a new company to be:



Best Offer.

Target needs and meet expectations.

The talent you seek to hire and retain, is highly selective about their potential employers. They use a wider range of EVP attributes to support their decisions. Your EVP should be compelling, blending the elements charted here. The one certainty is that freedom to work remotely must be central to your proposition.

Would you refuse a job offer from a company, solely on the basis that they would not let you work remotely, either in whole or in part?

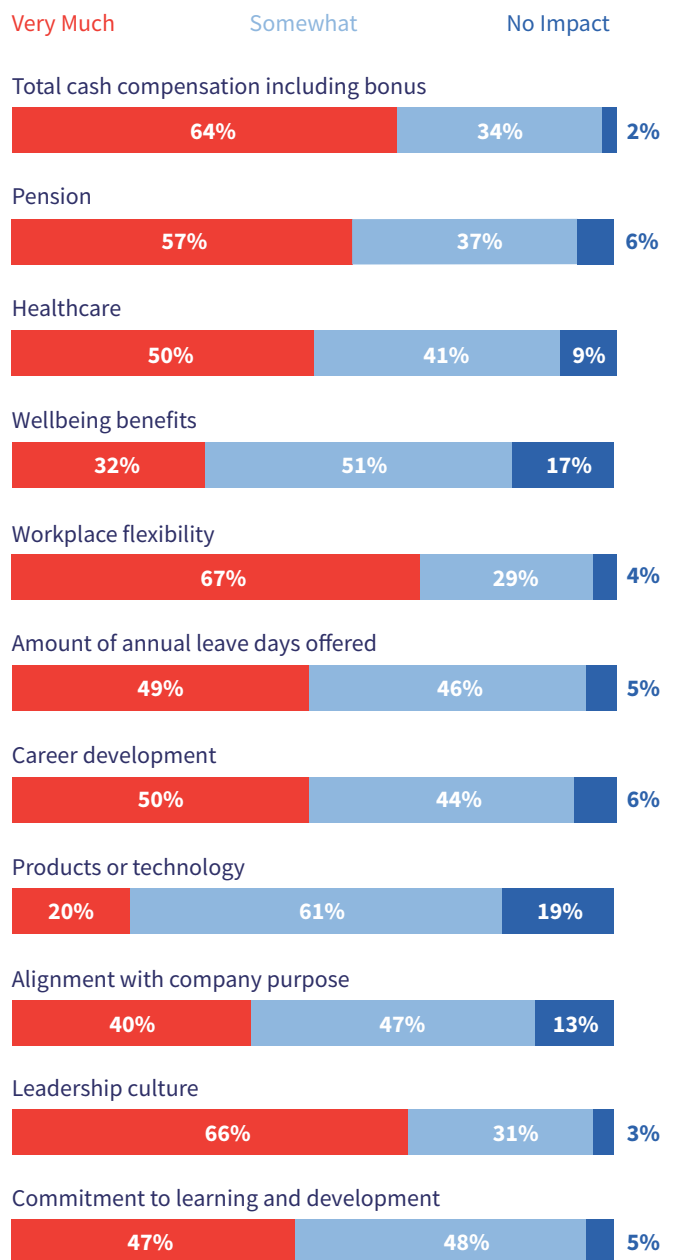


Forthcoming legislation will provide an entitlement for many employees to work remotely. The Workplace Relations Commission has already found in favour of a claimant on this issue. Nearly half the respondents to this survey say they would refuse an offer from your company on this basis alone. This is not a 'future of work' issue it is a seismic shift that has already occurred.

Though we foresee intense competition in a number of talent pools, a winning EVP is as important during periods of high unemployment, when high performing candidates can be reluctant to consider a change. One size does not fit all, it is important for firms to build their proposition towards the talent they seek.

Cash compensation is clearly important but matched by leadership culture. As with many of the listed EVP elements here, the former varies considerably by function, however the latter applies consistently to all.

To what extent would each of the elements listed below, impact your decision on whether to accept an offer with a new company?





Act Now.

If hiring the best talent is important to your organisation, now is the time to review your talent acquisition programme. Here are six considerations that emerge from this report as you do so:

1. How well do you understand your current EVP? How clear is it to your key talent pools? Is it fit for post-pandemic purpose?
2. What happens when you go to market to hire? What is the candidate's experience? How does this impact target talent behaviour?
3. Is hiring treated in your organisation as a key investment decision or as an administrative chore? What might the consequences of this be?
4. Is your hiring process clearly mapped and measured for performance? Do the 'actors' all know their roles? Firms who manage TA extremely well, consider a job offer refusal as a process failure, it should never occur.
5. How often do you test your employer brand in the external market? Is it authentic and robust enough to mitigate public criticism or adverse publicity?
6. Has your firm fully accepted the role of remote working and increased flexibility? Do you have a sustainable programme for implementation?

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Our investment priorities as a business are in the professional development and wellbeing of our people, the continuous advancement of in-house technology, ongoing process / stakeholder experience improvement and increasing the depth of our market knowledge.

Each year our employees choose a charity to support. This year they have chosen Jigsaw, who work in the area of youth mental health. A contribution on behalf of all respondents to this survey is being made.

www.jigsaw.ie

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Know. Better.



For more information on HRM talent acquisitions services, email us at solutions@hrmrecruit.com



In Q3 2021, we will release the first ever research backed report on how to build a great candidate experience during a hiring process. Drawing on almost 2000 responses from professionals and leaders, along with HRM's 30 years in executive and specialist talent acquisition, the research highlights the most influential points and simple steps to take to improve your hiring results. If you would like to receive an advance copy, email communications@hrmrecruit.com

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