

Revised ONS statistics demonstrate the importance of the younger workers' voice, yet new research shows that more than 60% don't feel listened to in the workplace

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The changes to the labour force survey announced by the Office for National Statistics to improve the accuracy of their data shows the effects of failing to understand how the new generations of workers behave. Reaching this group via old-fashioned survey methods does not work as the younger generation is different in more ways than one - something many employers have also come to realise in recent years as they integrate new generations into their workforce.

However, Robert Half's recent Candidate Sentiment Survey reveals that the majority of staff under the age of 34 don't believe that employers are listening to the wants and needs of their employees, cited by 62% of those aged 18-34 (above the national average of 56%).

When considering what workers want, the firm's data shows that more than a third (39%) of those under the age 34 would take a pay cut in exchange for more flexible working arrangements. A further 72% believe that attracting new staff will be hard for companies that don't offer flexible working –higher than all other age groups.

The Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) agenda is also high on the priority list for the younger generations, with nearly half (48%) of those under 34 revealing that they are likely to look for a new role if their employer does not improve on ESG activity soon. This was by far the most impacted age demographic, with just 23% of those aged 35-54 stating the same.

As Matt Weston, Senior Managing Director UK & Ireland, at Robert Half explained, regardless of the hiring trends being reported across the country, firms need to be able to engage future workers effectively if they are to remain competitive:

“No matter what direction the labour market and economic landscape is heading, the ability to engage effectively with younger generations of the workforce – and work with them for future success – should be a top priority for businesses planning for sustainable growth. However, our candidate sentiment data suggests that far too many firms are at risk of neglecting the wants and needs of younger workers.

“Those in this segment of the workforce aren’t necessarily feeling listened to, which is reflected by the broader sentiment around their willingness to move jobs. If we look at Generation Z, for example, it’s widely recognised that they are more enticed by flexible working and the social responsibility of a brand, but they seemingly feel they aren’t getting what they want from employers.

“It’s crucial that businesses not only listen to the needs of the different generations of the workforce, but also act on the nuances. A lack of action will only lead to increased talent shortages further down the line.”

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Notes to editor

About Robert Half

Founded in 1948, Robert Half is the world's first and largest specialised talent solutions consultancy, working to fill professional services roles at all levels within the finance and accounting, banking, technology, HR, marketing and legal sectors. The company has more than 300 staffing locations worldwide and offers hiring and job search services at www.roberthalf.co.uk Robert Half understands that it takes time and effort to evaluate the best talent strategy for different businesses. For further independent advice to assist with your recruitment and workforce planning efforts, visit www.roberthalf.co.uk/advice.