

Press release
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The rise of the gig economy: One third of global workforce expected to be contractors by 2023

- Global business leaders forecast a 66:34 split between permanent and temporary workers by 2023
- The main benefits of contract workers enjoyed by employers: more control over staffing costs (36%), support for long-term absences, such as parental leave, secondments or sick leave (34%), and better management of workload fluctuations (32%)

Sydney, 16 January 2019 – As the world of work continues to evolve with the growing influence of the gig economy, businesses around the world are increasingly realising the benefits of temporary staffing. Global research by specialised recruitment company [Robert Half](#) reveals business leaders aim to achieve a 66:34 split between permanent and temporary workers by 2023, highlighting how the professional gig economy is transforming traditional staffing and recruitment strategies.

Australia is following a similar trend. With the latest ABS statistics confirming more than one million Australians are classified as independent contractors¹, Australian hiring managers predict a 70:30 split between permanent and temporary employees by 2023 – a strong indication of the future direction of Australian workplace dynamics.

Robert Half's research polled over 3,800 business leaders in 12 countries worldwide, and the research found that 97% of business leaders identified benefits of adopting a more flexible approach to recruitment in the years to come, including more control over staffing and recruitment costs (36%), support for long-term absences, such as parental leave, secondments or sick leave (34%), and better management of workload fluctuations (32%).

This compares to 31% who respectively referred to access to new ideas/initiatives to support innovation and providing a stop-gap when permanent hiring takes too long. Furthermore, 30% respectively said flexible recruitment would provide access to technical/niche skillsets and knowledge transfer to existing employees.

The increasing adoption by employers of the gig economy and a flexible workforce is being driven by several factors, mainly by new technologies that allow for greater workplace flexibility such as collaboration tools which offer businesses a more flexible approach to how they manage key project initiatives and workload fluctuations. Other contributing factors include the difficulty of acquiring specific skills on a permanent basis owing to the worldwide war for talent, and the evolving complexity of traditional job roles.

Andrew Morris, Director of Robert Half Australia said: *“The gig economy is crucial for addressing businesses’ demands for greater flexibility, both today and in the future. Growing technological complexity is changing businesses, requiring more specialist and hard-to-find skills, and with traditional job roles evolving rapidly, businesses need to adopt more flexible approaches to recruitment to find the right balance of skills.”*

“Contract workers are essential for scaling any business and ensuring a contingency workforce. With the growing split of permanent and contract workers, employers need to ensure they are maximising the benefits of the professional gig economy and embracing the long-term strategic gains that

¹ <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/6333.0>

temporary workers provide, such as increased staffing flexibility, access to skills, and better management of workload fluctuations.”

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Notes to editors

About the research

The annual study was developed by Robert Half and was conducted in June 2018 by an independent research company. The research polled 3,840 business leaders in 12 countries worldwide: Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, United Arab Emirates, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Singapore, Switzerland, The Netherlands, and the UK. 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 world’s first and largest specialised recruitment consultancy and member of the S&P 500. Founded in 1948, the company has more than 300 offices worldwide providing temporary, interim and permanent recruitment solutions for accounting and finance, financial services, technology, and administrative professionals. Robert Half Australia has offices in Brisbane, Melbourne, Mount Waverley, Perth and Sydney. More information on roberthalf.com.au.

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