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GLOBAL TALENT CRUNCH FOR ACCOUNTING AND FINANCE PROFESSIONALS

Report Highlights International Skills Shortage, Retention Concerns

MENLO PARK, CA -- Employers around the world continue to feel the effects of a shortage of accounting and finance professionals, according to the recently released *Robert Half International Global Financial Employment Monitor*. More than half of the finance and human resources managers surveyed -- 56 percent -- reported difficulty finding skilled job candidates, and 43 percent expressed concern about losing top performers to other job opportunities. The situation is most severe in Asia, where more than four out of five respondents from both Japan (83 percent) and Hong Kong (82 percent) reported finding skilled financial professionals was a challenge.

The international study was developed by Robert Half International, the world's first and largest staffing services firm specializing in accounting and finance, and conducted by an independent research firm. The survey includes responses from more than 5,000 finance and human resources managers in 17 countries throughout North America, Europe and the Asia-Pacific region. The overall margin of error is +/- 1.4 percent, and the results are within 95 percent certainty.

The report indicates widespread difficulty finding skilled candidates and significant time and effort spent on interviewing and hiring. Currently, companies around the globe are spending an average of five weeks to fill staff-level accounting and finance positions and eight weeks for management roles.

“Recruiting and retaining top financial professionals may become more challenging in the years ahead due to increasing demand for this expertise and the potential retirement of millions of baby boomers around the world,” said Max Messmer, chairman and CEO of Robert Half International. “To build effective teams, employers will need to offer attractive compensation packages, as well as programs that support professional development and work-life balance.”



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When asked to identify the most sought-after attribute for executives, respondents in nearly every country said experience in compliance was needed most. This underscores the increased international emphasis on corporate governance.

Managers in the United States reported the greatest difficulty hiring for executive positions. In response, companies are moving quickly to secure these candidates: U.S. respondents said their firms are taking six weeks to hire for management positions, two weeks less than the global average.

The *Global Financial Employment Monitor* analyzes current hiring trends in accounting and finance, including topics such as the challenge of finding skilled talent, the time it takes to fill staff and management positions, in-demand executive-level attributes, and employee retention concerns.

Robert Half International has more than 350 staffing locations in North America, South America, Europe and the Asia-Pacific region. For more information about the company, visit www.rhi.com.

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