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Professionals know their worth

LINDA WHITE

Canadian employees are doing their homework when it comes to salaries. According to new research from global staffing firm Robert Half, 75% of professionals are well-informed and know what they should be making in their position.

The survey found 56% of professionals have checked their salary against market rates through online resources, salary guides or job postings in the last year—up from 52% in a similar survey two years ago. Nationally, 49% of workers feel underpaid, 50% believe they're paid fairly and 1% feel overpaid.

While 53% confess they've compared notes on compensation with co-workers, just 11% of workers who've talked salary with colleagues used the information to ask for a raise and 4% tapped it when negotiating a new job offer.

"To successfully navigate a salary discussion, workers must be able to articulate the value of their expertise and demonstrate the tangible impact they've had on an organization or team," said David King, senior district president for Robert Half.

"While negotiating with a solid pay range in mind is important, professionals should know where they're willing to compromise and be open to considering alternatives like extra vacation days, remote work options or flexible schedules if the company isn't able to meet their salary request."

The research was released in conjunction with the Robert Half 2020 Salary Guides, which provide starting salary ranges for more than 400 positions in the accounting, finance, technology, creative, legal and administrative support fields. The Robert Half Salary Calculator includes starting salary ranges for hundreds of positions adjusted for local markets.

Employers should stay current on local compensation trends because employees are more likely to stick around if they believe their contributions are valued and rewarded, King said.

BUILDING TRUST IN THE WORKPLACE



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Receive a free "Trust Rules" book and join "Trust Rules for People Managers Workshop" with Bob Lee, author and global expert on workplace trust. Register at trustrules.ca using the promo code SunRules. Limited quantities/space available.

LINDA WHITE

When people believe their managers trust them to do their job, they're twice as likely to believe their leaders are competent and three times as likely to believe their workplace is great.

So, what's the secret to building high-trust relationships at work? Managers — not employees — must make the first move. "Managers matter. A manager makes the difference between whether an employee loves or hates their job," said Alison Grenier, head of culture and research at Great Place to Work Canada.

Despite their best intentions, managers too often manage people as an "afterthought," she said. "This is a major mistake and a missed opportunity, because what sets the world's best employers apart is the quality of relationships in the workplace. And what single factor decides the quality of those relationships? Simply the level of trust between managers and their employees."

According to Great Place to Work research, organizations that build high-trust workplaces attract and retain top talent, innovate more and better, give higher quality service and deliver

stronger financial performance.

Grenier pulls from "Trust Rules" (The Trust Lab Press), the international bestseller by Bob Lee, former CEO/founder of Great Place to Work U.K. and Ireland and a workplace culture adviser, on how managers can build trust with their teams:

1. Trust first. As a manager, it would be wonderful if you could wait until each member of your team has shown themselves to be reliable, truthful and able — and then trust them. But it doesn't work that way. For trust to take root, somebody must make the first move. You're the manager, so that's on you," Grenier said.

There are numerous great reasons why managers should trust first. "Think of the limitless potential that you would unleash if every member of your team was free to do their best work and share their best ideas. That's the prize on offer when you fully trust your team," she said.

Also, being the first to trust leaves you exposed and makes you vulnerable while showing your strength. "But don't trust your employees blindly. Instead, extend intelligent trust — the right amount of trust given to the

right person at the right time."

2. Live with integrity. In a nutshell, this means being true to your word in everything you do. "It means people can trust you because you do what you say. In the workplace, integrity matters because how you conduct yourself with your employees, customers, vendors and suppliers shows the standard of behaviour you expect from them," Grenier said.

"When employees know you as a person of integrity, you become easier to predict and, therefore, easier to trust." Living with integrity at work requires setting non-negotiable values. "If a decision or action doesn't feel right, it probably isn't. Don't compromise and don't try to silence your inner voice. Listen to it," she said.

"If given a choice between organizational values and your own, back yourself. Real success begins with knowing who you truly are. When it comes to matters of integrity, act as if the whole world is watching — because it is."

3. Keep your promises. Why do so many managers fail to keep their promises? "Because promises are like a baby: easy to make, but hard to deliver. Most

managers keep their big promises; the problem lies mainly with the small promises — or small broken promises, to be precise," Grenier said.

How can you keep your promises? Think before you promise. To break fewer promises, *make fewer promises.* Better a simple "no" today than a long apology tomorrow. Clarify the promise. Make sure you each have a shared understanding of your commitment. But if you have no alternative but to break a promise, let anyone affected know as soon as you possibly can.

4. Give straight answers. Answering your employees' questions clearly and fully saves them from having to decipher your answers and figure out what you're really saying, leaving them free to focus on their work. "Straight talk takes courage and that is why some of us are evasive or economical with the truth sometimes," Grenier said.

For starters, don't wait to be asked. Communicate proactively. Remember, it's not only what you say that matters — what you *don't* say is also important. Creating a misleading impression by purposely omit-

ting important information is simply lying by a different name, and both impact trust in the same way. Finally, be clear and generous in the information you share. "You can't have trust without truth," Grenier said.

5. Make your expectations clear. Your employees need to know what you expect of them, she said. "In fact, they have a *right* to know, because how else can they succeed in their role? When they understand your expectations, your employees can set their goals, choose the right priorities and trust that they know where they stand with you."

Sit down regularly with each employee to discuss your expectations and share your ideas about what great performance looks like in any given role. Check understanding by periodically asking employees to tell you what *they* think you expect from them and what *they* think success looks like in their role. Lastly, if your company has a formal performance appraisal system, use it.

