

GET THE JOB

The Secret to Career Happiness

Many workers struggle to answer the following question: What's the No. 1 thing you are looking for in a new job?

Is it pay? Benefits? Culture? Since the COVID pandemic began rocking every industry — and every employee — across the world, more workers are expecting their employers to offer job flexibility. This is according to LinkedIn's latest Workforce Confidence Index.

Flexibility, it turns out, is the key to career happiness for the majority of working people.

Here are some findings from the survey announced earlier this week:

- Fifty percent of respondents said that flexibility of hours or location is more important to them post-COVID when it comes to looking for a new opportunity.

- This was ahead of work-life balance (45%), benefits such as health coverage (41%), pay (36%) and work-force culture (36%).

- Flexibility is the biggest priority among all workplace generations, but it's growing most among millennials (55%).



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This is not surprising. You can find numerous articles that point to how pay continues to slip down the list of must-haves, especially among today's younger professionals.

A couple of years ago, psychologists from Purdue University and the University of Virginia analyzed World Gallup Poll data from 1.7 million people in 164 countries and concluded that the ideal income for individuals is \$95,000 a year for life satisfaction and \$60,000 to \$75,000 a

year for emotional well-being.

You can scale those numbers up and down depending on where you live — city or rural — but the point remains the same. Putting all of our value on the amount of money we earn can leave us feeling empty, overworked, and unable to enjoy the flexibility we may be able to find in a lower-paying job.

COVID'S LESSONS

With so many people exposed to remote work for

the first time in their careers, it's not surprising to see how many professionals are just as productive from home.

In the early stages of COVID-related shutdowns (May 2020), a LinkedIn survey found 66% of respondents said they thought they could be effective when working remotely. That number has remained the exact same one year later.

In fact, media professionals were very optimistic (77%) last May about their remote-work effectiveness, and even

more so (85%) last month. Optimism also increased in arts, design and sales, while lower confidence crept into occupations in health care, human resources, administration and finance.

Regardless, many professionals have taken advantage of getting more time at home and are now hoping this level of flexibility becomes the new norm.

WHAT DOES FLEXIBILITY LOOK LIKE?

For many people, flexibility means the chance to adjust on-the-job hours depending on how crazy life is that day or week.

Are you able to work two or three days a week from home so you can be more present for your family? Can you wake up early to knock out a key project and take the afternoon off to run errands?

These are things to consider as work life goes back to some sort of normalcy. Not all companies will take the same approach post-COVID. Many have permanently done away with the corporate office, while some are bringing back their workers in full force.

Understand what you want from an employer and don't bend on your expectations. We've all heard that money can't buy happiness. Flexibility may be the golden ticket.