

Press release
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Finance and Accountancy Jobs Boom as NZ Executives Foresee Business Growth

- 42% of New Zealand CFOs and finance directors will expand their finance and accounting teams in the first half (Jan-June) of 2016
- 88% are confident about their company's growth prospects in 2016
- 88% find it challenging to find skilled finance professionals today
- 86% are concerned about losing their top financial performers this year

Auckland, 26 January 2016 – Strengthening confidence in the economy and business growth will see nearly half of New Zealand executives in finance and accounting create new finance and accounting jobs over the next six months, according to the latest independent survey by specialist recruiter [Robert Half](#).

A great majority of New Zealand companies are planning to further strengthen their financial and accounting teams, with 42% of financial executives planning to create **new financial positions** and 46% planning to fill **existing positions** that will become available. A little over one in ten (12%) will not fill vacating positions nor create new ones. None of the financial executives plan to reduce headcount.

The survey also revealed that there's a sense of optimism in the market with 74% of finance leaders feeling confident in New Zealand's economic outlook and 88% feeling confident in their company's growth prospects for 2016.

Despite global economic fluctuations, **Megan Alexander, General Manager of Robert Half New Zealand** said she expected that the hiring intentions identified in the survey were already locked into businesses plans and would proceed.

"Assuming there is no major economic downturn, the majority of businesses have ambitious growth plans for 2016, and are approaching the year with confidence. The increased demand for highly skilled finance and accounting staff is a direct reflection of this. Companies are pushing ahead to identify the financial talent required to support their growth strategies," **Megan Alexander** said.

When asked for the top three reasons behind planned increases in the number of permanent finance and accounting professionals, over half (52%) selected business growth, followed by new projects and initiatives (48%) and product and service expansion (45%).

Many CFOs and finance directors are however finding it difficult to find qualified candidates: 88% consider it a challenge to find skilled finance professionals in today's job market, with 32% citing the lack of specialist technical expertise as the primary reason, followed by general demand outweighing supply (24%) and lack of commercial business skills (20%).

"The 'war for talent' remains stronger than ever across New Zealand businesses. Companies continue to hunt for talent, and regularly compete with one another in recruiting those top financial performers," **Megan Alexander** said.

Top 5 fields in which CFOs and finance directors are finding it challenging to find skilled finance staff

Accounting	33%
Business / Financial Analysis	26%
Risk	21%
Compliance	20%
Financial Planning & Analysis	18%

Source: independent survey commissioned by Robert Half among 100 CFOs and finance directors in New Zealand

Only 6% of those surveyed felt it was not challenging to find skilled candidates across accounting and finance.

While identifying and recruiting highly skilled employees remains a challenge, so does retaining the best and brightest with 86% of CFOs and finance directors concerned about losing their top financial talent this year.

“Staff retention has obtained a top position on today’s business agenda. Highly skilled employees – especially those with niche skills - are in demand, and they know it. Companies need to look beyond traditional salary increases to retain key staff. Instead they need to find additional creative ways to retain employees and keep them engaged. It is worth considering options such as offering more flexible working hours, internal career opportunities or bonus incentives,” **Megan Alexander** concluded.

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Notes to editors

About the research

The annual study is developed by Robert Half and was conducted in December 2015 by an independent research firm, surveying 100 Chief Financial Officers (CFO) and finance directors in New Zealand. 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 over 340 offices worldwide. The office in Auckland provides temporary, interim and permanent recruitment solutions for accounting and finance and technology, professionals. More information on roberthalf.co.nz

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For more information

Lynn Reviere
PR & Communications Manager Robert Half ANZ
Lynn.reviere@roberthalf.com.au
+61 280 287 752

Stephanie Crush
SenateSHJ
stephanie@senateshj.co.nz
027 885 0618