

Press release
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Too late! Hong Kong bosses rescinding job offers because jobseekers are taking too long to decide

- 52% of Hong Kong bosses have rescinded a job offer because the candidate took too long to consider.
- Multiple job offers (29%) and uncompetitive salary offer (26%) are the top reasons why candidates take so long to consider a job offer.
- Two-thirds (68%) of bosses expect a response from candidates within one day to two weeks.

Hong Kong, 4 July 2019 – As Hong Kong faces a skills-short job market in many areas, there has been a power shift towards top candidates as recruiting for in-demand roles has become increasingly challenging. While taking the time to secure the ideal job is important to all jobseekers, the luxury of choice may ultimately be disadvantageous to candidates' prospects due to delayed response times. Research from specialised recruiter [Robert Half](#) reveals that many jobseekers are at risk of losing out on job opportunities *after* the offer has been made. In a survey of 225 Hong Kong bosses, more than half (52%) have rescinded a job offer because a candidate took too long to consider the offer.

Why are jobseekers taking so long to consider a job offer?

The survey shows candidates receiving multiple job offers is the most common reason why they take a long time to decide, cited by almost one-third (29%) of Hong Kong bosses. More than a quarter (26%) refer to the salary not being competitive enough for the candidate and 20% say applicants receiving a counteroffer from their current employer is the main reason. Other common reasons for candidates delaying their decision – according to Hong Kong employers - include a lack of seriousness about the role (16%) and job content failing to meet expectations (9%).

How long is too long to consider a job offer?

With so many employers rescinding job offers because of delays in decision-making, jobseekers need to consider the hiring managers' expectations when to hear back. According to the survey, more than one-quarter (28%) of hiring managers expect a response from candidates within one day to one week, while four in 10 (40%) think between one to two weeks is acceptable. Less than one in five (18%) consider two to three weeks a reasonable amount of time and 12% think even three to longer than six weeks is reasonable.

Elaine Lam, Associate Director of Robert Half Hong Kong says: *"In a candidate-short market, in-demand talent can be more selective about the roles they choose to pursue. However, lengthy decision-making times can cause frustration for both candidates and hiring managers. When it comes to filling vacant roles, time is usually of the essence which means hiring managers are inclined to move forward with another candidate if their preferred applicant takes too long to decide."*

"Securing top talent efficiently requires a streamlined recruitment process alongside the offer of a competitive salary and benefits. When it is likely candidates are considering multiple job offers, a fast and highly-organised recruitment process could be what it takes to win the top talent while saving the business time and money in the process."

"And yet the recruitment process goes both ways – companies need to communicate reasonable expectations around response timeframes so they can act quickly and accordingly on a candidate's decision. And finally, jobseekers need to be courteous to all potential employers by communicating regularly during their decision-making process to avoid having the offer rescinded."

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Notes to editors

About the research

The annual study is developed by Robert Half and was conducted in January 2019 by an independent research firm, surveying 225 business leaders in Hong Kong. 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. Founded in 1948, the company has more than 300 offices worldwide providing recruitment solutions for accounting and finance, financial services and technology professionals in Hong Kong. More information on roberthalf.com.hk.

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