

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**Almost 80% worry about their pensions in Nigel Wright Group's North East employment trends survey**

Amidst a buoyant job market and modest salary growth, North East employees are worried about pension security, according to Nigel Wright Group's latest report.

The leading recruitment consultancy surveyed over 1,000 North East respondents working across different disciplines and levels, in a cross-section of sectors.

The data revealed that 78% of people have some level of concern which is clearly an issue for the future.

The company also gathered information on the average salary and benefits people receive within the region, as well as data on job satisfaction, the reasons for leaving jobs, gender differences in pay, and the methods used by candidates in their job search.

Some of the highlights of the survey are outlined below:

**Income**

- As part of their last salary review respondents received, on average, a 2.9% increase during the last 12 months. Executive salaries saw the biggest increase at 3.8% while managers received 2.9% and non-managers received 2.4%.
- When asked how much they would need to win on the national lottery to stop working, 26% said £1m, 38% said between £1m - £5m, 13% said £5m - £10m and 10% said over £10m. Interestingly, 13% said they would keep working.

**Benefits**

- The number of people who said they received a guaranteed bonus in this year's survey was unchanged from the previous year, with the average also static at 11%;
- Company bonuses were largely stable at 10.5% from 10% in 2016, while personal bonuses stayed at 9%. In both instances, those receiving personal and company bonuses remained the same.
- 27% of respondents indicated they would be tempted to change jobs if offered better flexible working conditions elsewhere, up from 21% in 2016. 69% said they already enjoy some flexible working arrangements in their current role, the most common being working from home (44%).

Flexible working (56%) is now the third most popular benefit amongst employees behind holiday entitlement (58%), an employer contributory pension (57%).

**Job satisfaction**

- Respondents demonstrated fairly high levels of job satisfaction. The results show that just over a fifth (21%) of the workforce are dissatisfied, but that 63% say they are either moderately or very satisfied.

**Searching for jobs**

- Alongside approaching recruiters and employers directly, using job boards and social networking continue to be popular methods for job seekers when securing a new role.
- Utilising social networking sites when searching for a job has increased by 30% in our survey between 2011 and 2017 and is now an integral part of the recruitment process.

#### **Hiring intentions**

- Over a third of respondents (35%) said that they expected their company to recruit more people in the next 12 months.
- A shortage of suitable candidates (48%) followed by competition from other employers (30%) were cited as the key challenges faced by companies seeking to increase headcount. The issue of candidate shortages has declined by 4% since 2016, while competition from other employers has risen by 3%.
- To address the skill shortage, respondents highlighted how firms are seeking to recruit apprentices (25%), increase training budgets (16%) and recruit from other industries (15%). While only 10% claimed that there were no skill shortages last year, the figure has risen to 26% in 2017.

Paul Wilson, CEO at Nigel Wright, commented on the findings:

*“Unemployment is low and skill shortages are increasing, meaning it’s a tight market for employers to find new talent. This also highlights the importance of keeping your good staff satisfied and challenged in their roles.*

*Pension concerns will likely increase and should be something employers remain vigilant of. And while businesses are still committed to staying in the region, attracting and retaining talent will mean doing more listening to what employees want.*

*The demand for flexible working isn’t going to go away and those companies that don’t find mutually beneficial solutions risk putting themselves at a competitive disadvantage.*

*A happy and healthy talent pool along with heightened competition for the best skills should raise standards overall which is better for all companies, big or small.”*

The full report can be downloaded from [nigelwright.com](http://nigelwright.com)

**Note to editors**

Nigel Wright Group is the leading specialist recruitment firm based in the North East of England. We are Europe's number one consumer sector recruitment specialist.

Our international reputation is for recruiting Executive, Sales, Marketing, Supply Chain, Manufacturing, Engineering, Finance, IT and HR roles across all sectors.

We have offices in Newcastle upon Tyne, Teesside and London with 13 offices across Europe sourcing the best local and international talent.

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