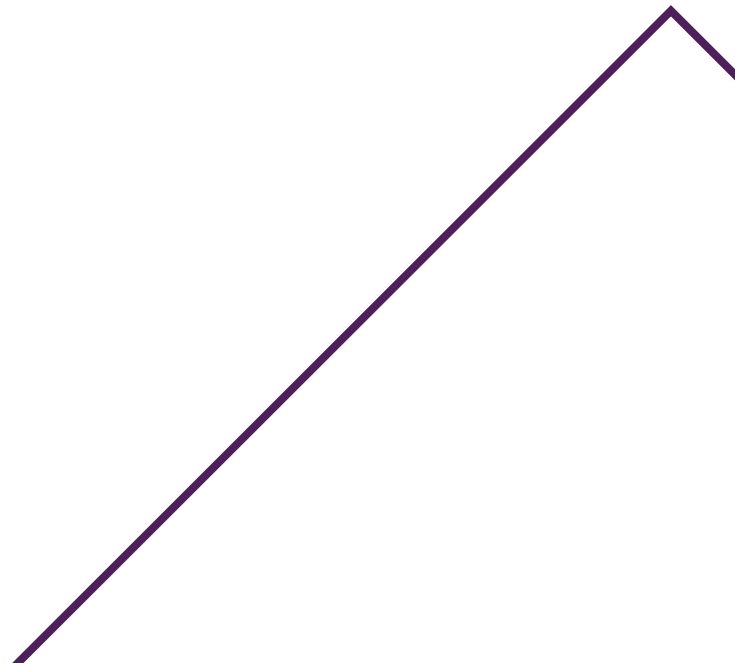


LHH



Career Mobility Outlook

Analyzing Trends and Trajectories in the Workforce



Introduction

Promoting from within is vital for retaining talent and sustaining long-term success. Global data from LinkedIn shows employees are 60% more likely to stay with employers that offer real opportunities for internal mobility. However, companies are taking varied approaches, leading to mixed results.





At LHH we're deeply interested in the future of career mobility within organizations, career transition between organizations, and career development at the individual level. That's why we decided to survey

2,524

HR leaders from organizations with 500+ employees

and

7,028

white-collar workers

in



Australia



Canada



France



United Kingdom



United States

to uncover insights, expectations, and trends on this topic for 2023 and beyond.

Redeployment preferred but under-resourced by most

While only 22% of our surveyed HR leaders said their organization currently operates a redeployment program, we found it heartening that the majority (53%) said they'd consider redeploying their people instead of layoffs if they could find the resources to do so. Redeployments are a powerful talent-retention tool, enabling employers to hold on to their people's skills and knowledge while offering workers opportunities for development and growth. The catch, though, is that organizations undertaking layoffs are unlikely to be able to find the resources to launch and operate a redeployment program.

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A more effective approach is a permanent career mobility and redeployment program that allows your people to find a new role within the organization even at times when their current role is not under threat. This will help create a culture in which people feel empowered to take control of their own career progression and professional development, as well as helping the organization retain the skills and knowledge of the business that employees have built up.

Our survey showed that 42% of workers would like to change roles but don't know how . In organizations with no career mobility and redeployment program, the obvious next step for those people is to look for jobs elsewhere – and if they are successful, they will be leaving with the knowledge of your organization's operations and culture that they have, in many cases, developed over years. Not only is that a significant loss by itself, but it also means you will need to hire, train, and develop their replacements, an exercise that will likely prove more costly than a redeployment program.

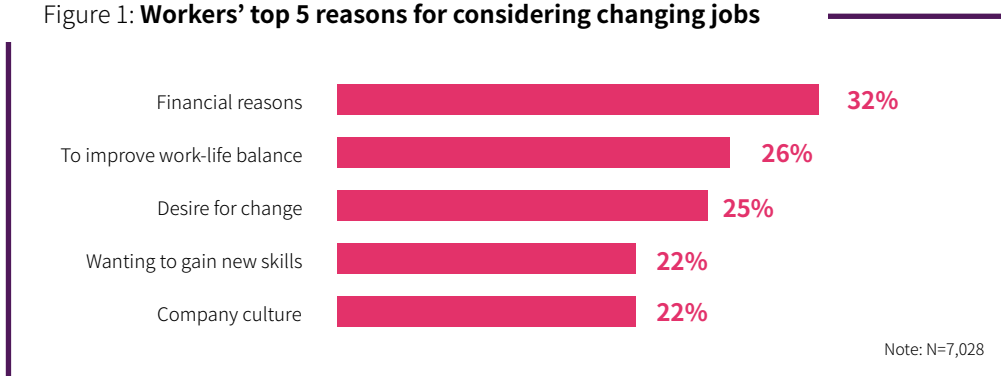
42%

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Holistic approach needed to maximize redeployment and mobility success

A redeployment program on its own is not a magic bullet, however. It needs to be integrated with an effective learning and development program, career coaching, leadership and manager support, reskilling/upskilling, and an organizational culture that will enable your people to identify and develop the skills they need for the role they want. This will go some way toward helping you retain the talents you need, who may well be considering leaving. More than half (57%) of our surveyed white-collar workers said they were considering a job change; the motivating factors are shown in Figure 1, below.

Figure 1: **Workers' top 5 reasons for considering changing jobs**





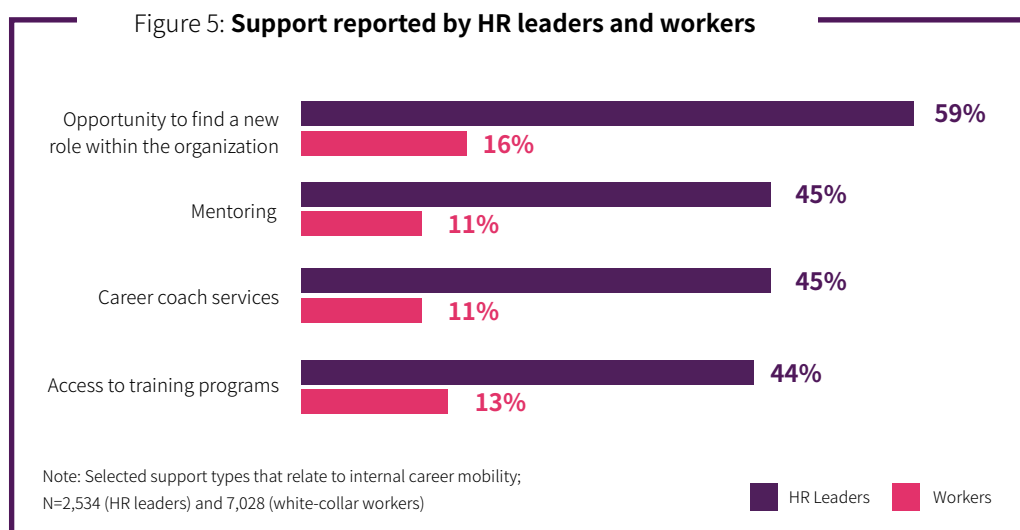
While 'desire for change' and 'wanting to gain new skills' are the only factors that are directly addressed by a redeployment and mobility program, such an approach will also help blunt the other factors. The prospect of being redeployed into a role with greater compensation or a more manageable work/life balance will make staying a more attractive proposition, while shifting toward a company culture with career development at its core will represent an improvement that not only makes it easier to retain talent, but also ensures you have the skills mix your organization needs for future success.

When asked about the reasons for staying with their employer, white-collar workers cited a culture 'where career & skills development are supported' (32%) and 'where employees can advance their careers' (29%). This supports our view that an integrated career mobility and redeployment program is a powerful tool in retaining workers.

Communication gaps highlight need for comprehensive, long-term solutions

In our research on layoff trends and insights for 2023, we were pleased to see the range of support that organizations offer during layoffs – but found it striking that many of these types of career support should ideally be offered by employers on a permanent basis. We also discovered an apparent issue in how this support is communicated to workers.

One notable statistic was that 59% of surveyed HR leaders said they offer laid-off workers an opportunity to find a new role within the organization (within a set time limit). When we asked white-collar workers about the support on offer, however, only 16% said this form of support was available. This represented the largest difference between HR leaders' and workers' perceptions, but a similar pattern was apparent when looking at the forms of support relating to career mobility, as shown in Figure 2, below.



The scale of this disconnect suggests that information about available support is not being communicated well to employees, which in turn implies that more effective communication is the solution. That's certainly a large part of any solution, but we urge employers to think more holistically and long term about this.

Rather than launching such support at the same time as announcing layoffs (a time when workers will be stressed and thus less receptive), it should be in place 24/7/365. All businesses must manage churn even during good times, as there will always be employees who are not a good

fit for their current role, as well as established, successful workers seeking new challenges.

Making such support available permanently means that your people will already know about it when they need to access it. Further, it helps ensure you have the right people with the right skills in the right roles by supporting poor-fit workers transition into roles (and, if necessary, to other organizations) that suit them better. At the same time, your strongest talents will be able to fulfill their ambitions without needing to look outside the organization for opportunities.



Centering career development in everyday working life

This is where communication becomes the vital factor: To maximize the value of such a support program, it should feature in regular career development discussions between employees and their direct managers. Too often, workers only get to discuss the trajectory of their careers at their annual review meetings and are only directed toward support (where it exists) if they are deemed to be struggling. This does employees a disservice, as they are keen to progress: The majority (59%) of our surveyed white-collar workers stated that they would like to develop new skills that will propel their careers but don't know what to pursue, while 43% expressed worry that their skills are not sufficiently up to date for future opportunities.

While the ideal cadence of career-development discussions will vary, we recommend that they be held at least quarterly, if not monthly. This level of regularity will help place career development in the organization's mainstream and ensure that career discussions are seen as a natural part of working life. It is worth noting that workers want to have these discussions and will not see them as an imposition if your organizational culture doesn't treat them as such. In our survey, 'regular career development discussions' was the third most cited form of support that workers wished their employer offered, just behind 'training to help move into a new role' and 'support for career-related stress or burnout.'

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If this approach is a new one for your organization, it may be wise to include training for line managers on how to get the most out of these discussions, which may include learning from an external specialist such as a career coach. Managers need to understand that hoarding talent offers, at best, only a short-term benefit for their team, as it will eventually lead to the team's high performers becoming unsettled or disengaged. Instead, managers should recognize that a high performer leaving the team to progress their career is a sign that they have been managed with skill and professionalism – this is a cause for celebration that reflects well on the manager, not a failure. A reputation as a team (or, indeed, an organization) where high performers can drive their careers forward will ensure the

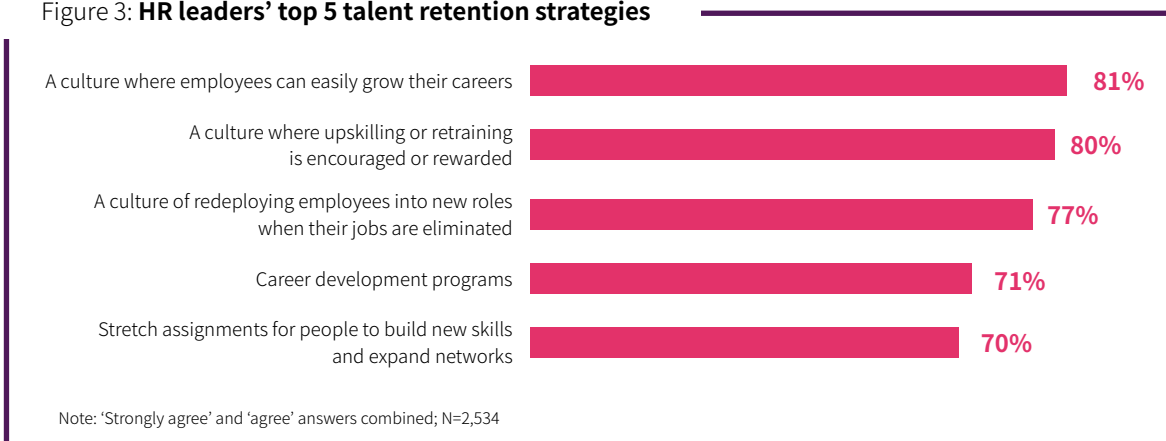
strongest talents among the next generation of workers are eager to come aboard.

Addressing these factors will help reduce expensive and risky external hiring and onboarding processes, in turn helping to ameliorate the strongest concern about such an approach – costs. This concern is understandable, given the scope of what we're recommending here: A permanent career mobility, development, and redeployment program that integrates career coaching, reskilling/upskilling, career management, and leadership, manager, and organizational support. But the cost of regularly replacing your strongest talents is likely to be much higher over time.

HR leaders recognize the power of career mobility and development

We were pleased to see that our surveyed HR leaders largely agree with us on the importance of career mobility in talent retention. We asked them to rate the effectiveness of different elements of talent-retention strategies, and their top answers all related to career mobility, development, and redeployment (see Figure 3, below).

Figure 3: HR leaders' top 5 talent retention strategies



These responses show that HR leaders recognize that, to retain their strongest talents, they need to offer opportunities for career growth and development. But we must question whether the real-world implementations of these strategies are as effective as they believe, given that (as mentioned earlier) 57% of white-collar workers are considering changing jobs.

This disconnect is likely to be driven by different factors in each organization, such as poor communication and inadequate resourcing. We know from experience that implementing such strategies to a high standard is a big undertaking, requiring a breadth and depth of specialist career development expertise and knowledge that only the very largest HR departments are likely to have in house. We therefore advise employers to consider bringing in outside support, whether that's in the form of auditing and consulting, fully outsourcing of these functions, or something in between.



Leveraging third-party partnerships for cost-effective, scalable support



Keeping a comprehensive career mobility and development program in house permanently, with all the required expertise, will be resource intensive for many organizations. That's why we recommend the use of third-party providers. A partnership with an established, committed third party will give your program a level of scalability that cannot be achieved through in-house provision, helping to minimize costs while also ensuring that redeployment and career mobility support is available to your people whenever they need it.

This means your program can be relatively low-key during stable times, yet still available to those who want or need to move to a new role; and, when economic conditions are more turbulent, it can scale up to help you retain the people and skills you need to retain. LHH can work with you to build a bespoke program to your specification, giving you the benefit of our experience and leveraging the entire Adecco Group ecosystem to ensure your people have the opportunities they want – and your organization has the skills and talent it needs.



Conclusion

In today's competitive job market, leveraging existing talent through redeployment and internal mobility is a strategic imperative. Rather than endlessly seeking outside hires, forward-thinking organizations will focus on nurturing the talent they already have.

Across the economy and around the world, the specific mix of skills required for any given role is shifting more rapidly than ever before as new technologies transform the ways we do business and live our lives. Against this backdrop, employers must recognize that they can't rely on continually recruiting new skills – not only will they face tough competition, but before long, their new recruits with in-demand skills will themselves need even newer skills and start seeking opportunities for development. Instead, employers should look to future-proofing their existing workforce by offering opportunities for development and progress internally.

Providing career coaching, reskilling, upskilling, and internal hiring opportunities incentivizes and engages employees while rewarding institutional knowledge. Investing in the development of current talent strengthens workforces for the future and equips organizations to navigate change. With the right support, today's employees can become tomorrow's innovators and leaders. Organizations that cultivate and redeploy internal talent will build agile, future-proof workforces able to adapt and thrive.

Five key points for impactful internal mobility

- 1 Leveraging existing talent is smarter than competing for talent in a tight market
- 2 Employees are engaged and incentivized by redeployment, reskilling, and internal mobility opportunities
- 3 Investing in internal talent strengthens organizational adaptability and future-readiness
- 4 With the right development, employees become an internal pipeline of future leaders and innovators
- 5 Cultivating internal talent builds an agile, thriving workforce able to navigate change





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