

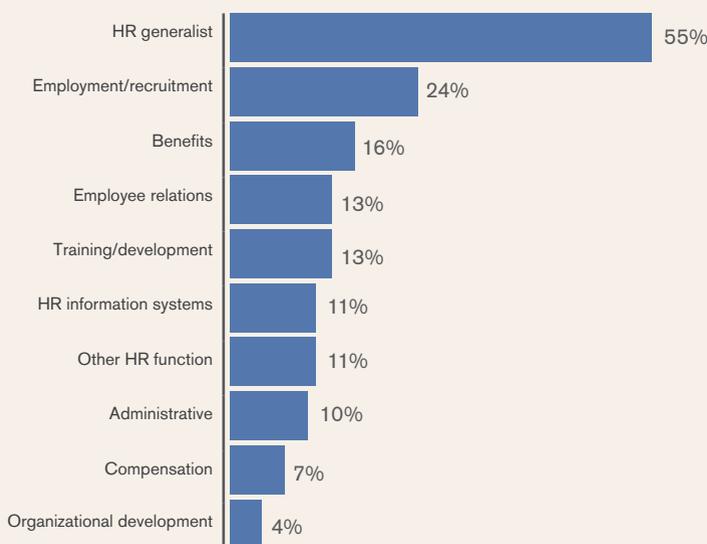
Figure 1 | Hiring Activity for HR Jobs

	Overall	1-99 Employees	100-499 Employees	500-2,499 Employees	2,500-24,999 Employees	25,000+ Employees
Yes	27%	1%	12%	27%	66%	65%
No	73%	99%	88%	73%	34%	34%

Note: n = 378. Respondents who answered “not sure” were excluded from this analysis. Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding. Only respondents who were currently employed were asked this question.

Source: SHRM HR Jobs Pulse Survey (July 2015)

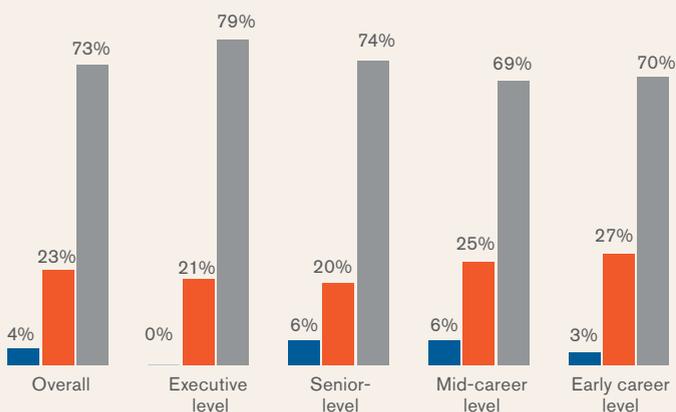
Figure 2 | Top Functions Sought in Hiring Activity



Note: n = 107. Percentages do not equal 100% due to multiple response options. Respondents who answered “not sure” were excluded from this analysis. Only respondents whose organizations were currently hiring were asked this question.

Source: SHRM HR Jobs Pulse Survey (July 2015)

Figure 3 | Confidence in Job Security



Note: n = 403. Only respondents that were currently employed were asked this question.

Source: SHRM HR Jobs Pulse Survey (July 2015)

■ Very concerned
 ■ Somewhat concerned
 ■ Not at all concerned

Confidence remains high in the stability of the human resource (HR) profession, and although job opportunities have been flat since the start of 2015, there is increased faith among HR professionals that they can land new jobs in their field, if necessary, according to the Society for Human Resource Management’s HR Jobs Pulse Survey.

The survey examines hiring trends in the HR profession as well as HR professionals’ faith in their own job security and ability to find work elsewhere. The results from the summer 2015 survey show that many HR professionals are content with their compensation and their ability to balance work and life issues. However, others are not satisfied with their advancement opportunities and their organization’s overall culture, leading them to seek new jobs in the near future. Among the survey’s highlights:

- **More than one out of four HR professionals (27%) had some degree of concern about their job security** (23% were “somewhat concerned,” and 4% were “very concerned”). This number is down slightly from 29% in December 2014, and down sharply from 39% in January 2014. Among career-level categories, executive-level HR professionals had the least combined degree of concern (21%), and mid-career level workers had the highest level (31%) of concern with job security (see Figure 3).
- **The vast majority of HR professionals (88%) had some level of confidence that they could land a new position, if needed.** This number is up slightly from 85% in December 2014 and 79% in January 2014. Of the 88%, 59% said they were “somewhat confident,” and 29% said they were “very confident” (see Figure 4).
- **More than one out of three respondents (37%) who said they were looking or planning to look for a new job cited “more compensation/pay” as the reason.** Thirty-three percent also pointed to “better career advancement opportunities” as the reason for seeking a new job (see Figure 8).

SHRM’s HR Jobs Pulse Survey is based on the responses of HR professionals at early career, mid-career, senior and executive-levels. Their functions of HR work include HR generalists, administrative, benefits, compensation, employee relations, employment/recruitment and human resource information systems, among others.

Fewer than three out of 10 respondents (27%) said their organizations were hiring for HR positions (21% needed replacement positions, and 6% were creating new HR jobs). This number is unchanged from December 2014 and up from 20% in January 2014. The need for HR expertise increases dramatically with company size. Just 1% of small companies (those with one to 99 employees) are recruiting for HR positions, according to the summer 2015 survey

results. On the other end of the spectrum, nearly two-thirds (65%) of employers with 25,000 or more workers are now hiring for HR jobs.

Among the companies that are hiring for human resource positions, HR generalists continue to be in the highest demand (55%), according to the summer 2015 survey. Generalists were the most sought-after HR professionals in the December 2014 survey (53%) and the January 2014 survey (70%) as well, and those positions were the second-highest category of job postings in SHRM's HR Jobs database in May 2015 (see Figure 9).

Median compensation for HR generalists across all levels of experience also improved at a better rate in 2014 than for HR positions overall, according to the *2014 General Industry Human Resources Compensation Survey Report-U.S.* by global HR consultant Towers Watson. Generalist jobs were paid a median total cash compensation of \$79,200 in 2014, up 6% from 2013. In comparison, median total cash compensation for all HR positions rose just 2.6% in 2014, the Towers Watson study reported.

Almost one-quarter (24%) of companies are seeking HR professionals with employment/recruitment skills, according to the summer 2015 survey. That category was followed by benefits positions (16% of companies hiring), employee relations (13%), training/development positions (13%), human resource information systems (HRIS) (11%) and other HR function positions (also 11%).

Fewer respondents in the summer 2015 survey said they were worried about the stability of their jobs compared with previous surveys. Overall, 27% of respondents had some degree of concern with job security (23% were "somewhat concerned," and 4% were "very concerned"), down two percentage points from December 2014 and a decline of 12 percentage points from January 2014.

As in the previous pulse surveys, degrees of concern with job security varied with experience in the profession—79% of executive-level HR professionals and 74% of senior-level professionals said they were "not at all concerned," while 70% of early career level HR professionals and 69% of mid-career HR workers had no concern about job security.

Despite the fact that job opportunities in HR have remained flat since the December 2014 pulse survey, the majority of respondents to the summer 2015 survey said they could find a new job if needed. Only 12% said they were "not at all confident" that they could land a job, down from 15% in December 2014 and 21% in January 2014.

Confidence levels were high among experienced HR professionals: 89% of executive-level, senior-level and mid-career-level respondents had some degree of faith that they could find work if necessary. Nearly three out of four (74%) early career HR professionals had some level of confidence in finding a new job.

Figure 4 | Confidence in Finding a New Job

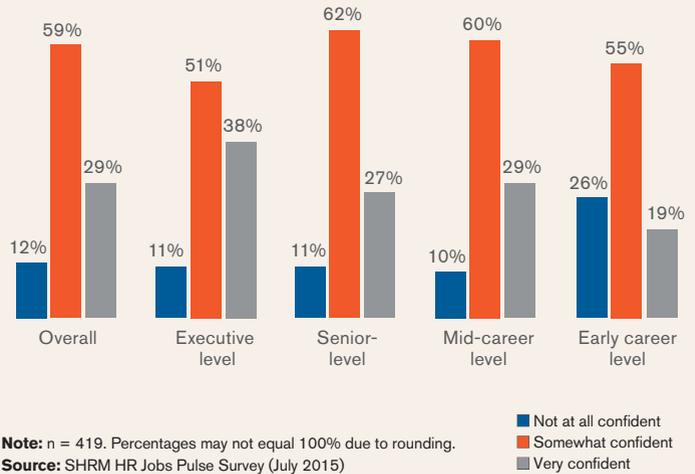


Figure 5 | Likelihood of Starting a Job Search

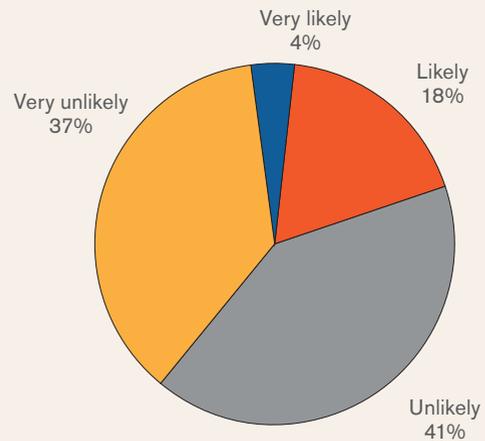


Figure 6 | When the Job Search Will Begin

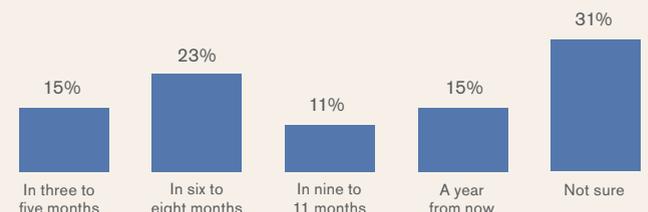
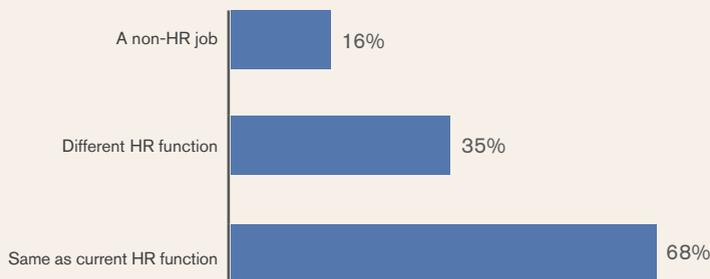


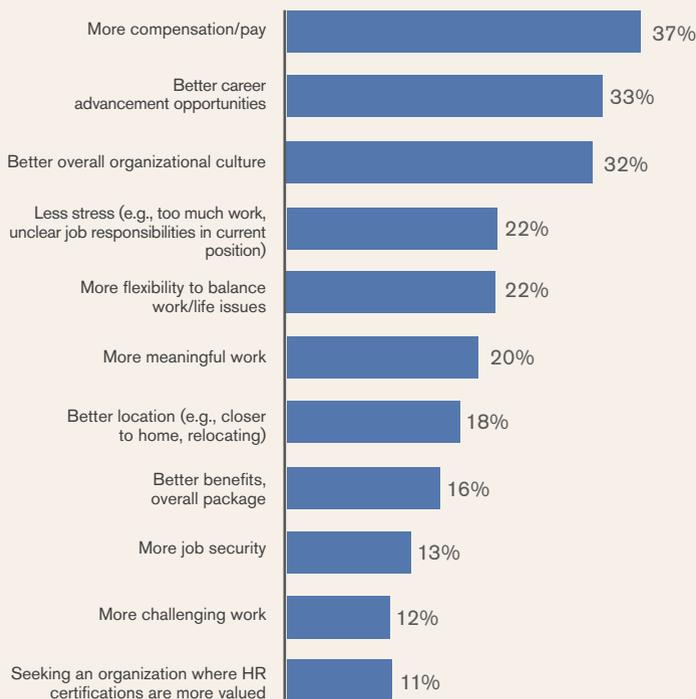
Figure 7 | Type of Job Sought



Note: n = 173. Percentages do not equal 100% due to multiple response options. Only respondents who indicated they were currently looking or “likely” or “very likely” to begin looking for a new job were asked this question.

Source: SHRM HR Jobs Pulse Survey (July 2015)

Figure 8 | Top Reasons for Starting a Job Search



Note: n = 158. Percentages do not equal 100% due to multiple response options. Only respondents who indicated they were currently looking voluntarily or “likely” or “very likely” to begin looking for a new job were asked this question.

Source: SHRM HR Jobs Pulse Survey (July 2015)

The increased confidence among HR professionals may be due to improved conditions in the broader labor market. In 2014, the U.S. labor force added 3.1 million jobs, the most since 1999, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Also, in April 2015, there were 5.4 million job openings, the highest number since the BLS began tracking that metric in December 2000.

Other data from the summer 2015 survey show that HR professionals have a wide range of reasons for staying in their current positions. Nearly two out of five (38%) said they continue to work at their current organization because of “flexibility to balance work and life issues.” Another 34% pointed to “compensation/pay,” and one-third of HR professionals (33%) cited “positive relationships with colleagues/co-workers” as motivation for remaining in their positions.

Some HR professionals, however, expressed concern about their ability to find a new job. When asked why they were not confident they would be able to find an HR position in the current market, 44% said it would be “difficult to find a job with compensation/pay comparable to my current job.” Another 25% cited a “poor overall job market/lack of new jobs available,” and 15% said it would be “difficult to find a job with benefits comparable to my current job.”

Although many HR professionals are content with their current positions, others are in the market for new work. Nearly three out of 10 (28%) respondents to the summer 2015 survey said they were already looking for a new job, either by choice (24%) or involuntarily (4%) due to a layoff, being fired or another reason.

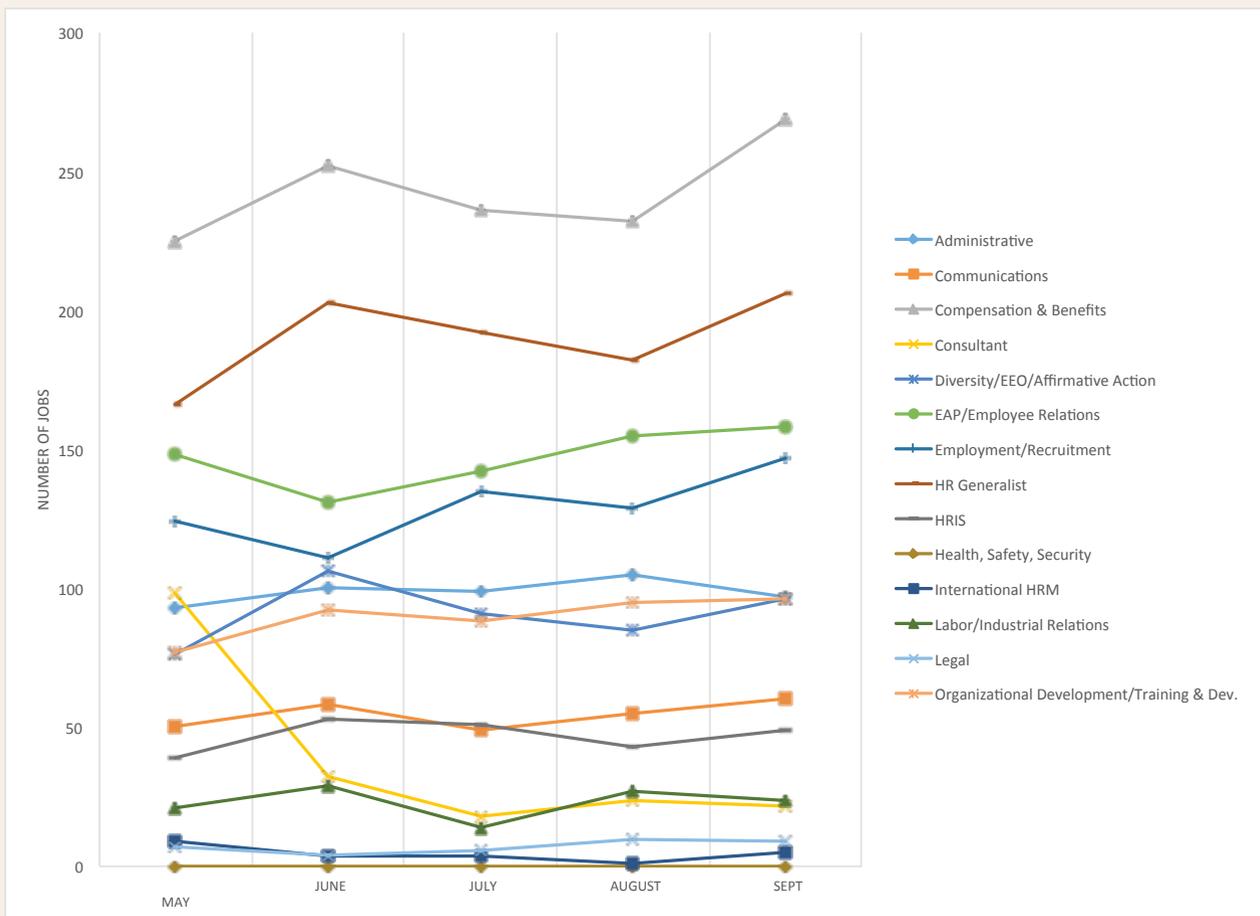
Apart from that group, another 22% of HR professionals said it was either “likely” or “very likely” that they would voluntarily begin looking for a job within the next 12 months. For all those respondents who indicated they were already looking for or planned to pursue a new job in the next 12 months, 37% cited “more compensation/pay” as the top reason for the job search. Another 33% pointed to “better career advancement opportunities,” and 32% said they were seeking “better overall organizational culture.” Slightly more than one out of 10 respondents (11%) said they were seeking an organization “where HR certifications are more valued and supported.”

Of those respondents who were currently looking or planned to look for a new job, the majority indicated that they would stick with the HR profession: 68% said they would pursue a job that was “same as current HR function,” and 35% said they would apply for a job with a “different HR function.” Another 16% said they would pursue “a non-HR job.”

Many HR professionals also indicated they planned to improve their skills in the near future. Nearly two-thirds (64%) of respondents said they would be focused on developing HR competencies in the next six to 12 months in order to advance their careers. Of that group, slightly more than half (51%) said the primary driver for that decision was their belief that “they needed the development,” and 17% said the “trend in my field indicated the need for specific competencies.”

To achieve that goal, 61% said they would take classes/seminars offered by another body (such as a professional organization, private training organization or a trade group), and 35% said they would obtain a professional certification. Another 34% indicated they would take classes/seminars at an educational institution.

Figure 9 | SHRM HR Jobs Data



Source: SHRM HR Jobs data (July 2015), <http://jobs.shrm.org>

Note: For the purpose of this survey, the following is a list of HR career level descriptions:

Early career level: a specialist in a specific support function or a generalist with limited experience; holds a formal title such as, but not limited to, HR assistant, junior recruiter or benefits clerk.

Mid-career level: a generalist or a senior specialist who manages projects or a program; holds a formal title such as, but not limited to, HR manager, generalist or senior specialist.

Senior-level: a very experienced generalist or specialist; holds a formal title such as, but not limited to, senior manager, director or principal.

Executive-level: typically one of the most senior leaders in HR; holds the top HR job in the organization or a VP role.

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SHRM HR Jobs Pulse Survey Methodology

A sample of HR professionals was randomly selected from SHRM's membership database, which included approximately 275,000 individual members at the time the survey was conducted. Only members who had not participated in a SHRM survey or poll in the last six months were included in the sampling frame. Members who were students, located internationally or had no e-mail address on file were excluded from the sampling frame. In May 2015, an e-mail that included a hyperlink to the SHRM HR Jobs Pulse Survey was sent to 3,000 randomly selected SHRM members, and 423 HR professionals responded, yielding a response rate of 14%. The survey was accessible for a period of three weeks and has a margin of error of +/-5%.