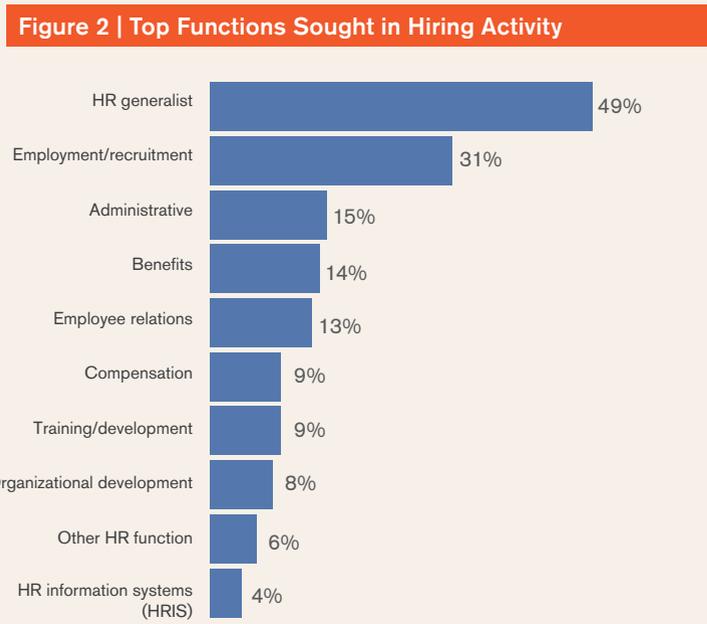


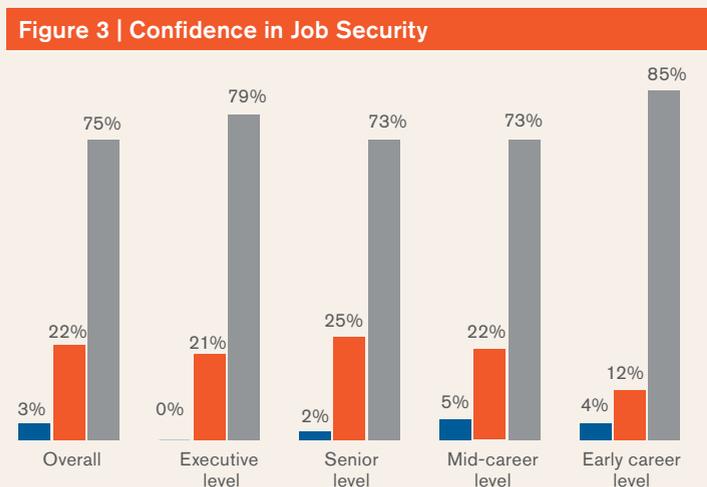
**Figure 1 | Hiring Activity for HR Jobs**

	Overall	1-99 Employees	100-499 Employees	500-2,499 Employees	2,500-24,999 Employees	25,000+ Employees
Yes	27%	4%	14%	37%	51%	78%
No	73%	96%	86%	63%	49%	22%

**Note:** n = 318. Respondents who answered "not sure" were excluded from this analysis. Only respondents who were currently employed were asked this question.  
**Source:** SHRM HR Jobs Pulse Survey Report (Summer 2016)



**Note:** n = 93. Percentages do not total 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 Report (Summer 2016)



**Note:** n = 353. Only respondents who were currently employed were asked this question.  
**Source:** SHRM HR Jobs Pulse Survey Report (Summer 2016)

Hiring remains flat for human resource positions compared with a year ago, but confidence in the stability of the profession has increased slightly, particularly among those who have just embarked on their HR careers, according to the Society for Human Resource Management's HR Jobs Pulse Survey.

The survey examines hiring trends in the human resource profession as well as HR professionals' faith in their own job security and ability to find work elsewhere. The results from the summer 2016 survey show that fewer HR professionals are looking for new work compared with a year ago, but those who are not pleased with their current positions are seeking better pay and more opportunities to advance their careers. Among the survey's highlights:

- **One out of four HR professionals (25%) had some degree of concern with their job security** (22% were somewhat concerned, and 3% were very concerned). That number is down slightly from 27% in the summer of 2015, and down sharply from 39% in January 2014, when the survey was first fielded. Among career-level categories, early career level HR professionals had the least combined degree of concern (16%), and mid-career level and senior HR workers had the highest degree of concern (27% each) 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.** That percentage is unchanged from the summer of 2015 and up somewhat from 79% in January 2014. Of the 88%, 56% said they were somewhat confident, and 32% said they were very confident (see Figure 4).
- **More than two out of five respondents (42%) who said they were looking or planned to look for a new job cited more compensation/pay as the reason.** More than one-third (37%) also pointed to better career advancement opportunities as the reason for seeking a new job (see Figure 7).

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, but are not limited to, HR generalists, administrative, benefits, compensation, employee relations, employment/recruitment and human resource information systems.

Fewer than three out of 10 respondents (27%) said their organizations were hiring for HR positions (17% needed replacement positions, and 10% were creating new HR jobs). That percentage is unchanged from the summer of 2015 and up from 20% in January 2014. As detailed in previous surveys, the need for HR expertise increases dramatically with company size. Just 4% of small companies (those with

one to 99 employees) were advertising for HR positions, according to the summer 2016 survey results. On the other end of the spectrum, more than three-fourths (78%) of employers with 25,000 or more workers were hiring for HR jobs.

Among the companies that are hiring for human resource positions, HR generalists continue to be in the highest demand (49%), according to the summer 2016 survey. Generalists were the most sought-after HR professionals in the summer 2015 survey (55%), and the December 2014 (53%) and January 2014 (70%) surveys as well. Those positions were also the second-highest category of job postings in SHRM's HR Jobs database in June 2016 (see Figure 9).

After HR generalists, 31% of companies were seeking HR professionals with employment/recruitment skills, according to the summer 2016 survey (see Figure 2). That category was followed by administrative positions (15% of companies hiring), benefits (14%), employee relations (13%), compensation (9%), training/development positions (also 9%), and organizational development (8%).

Fewer respondents in the summer 2016 survey said they were worried about the stability of their jobs compared with previous surveys. Overall, 25% of respondents had some degree of concern with job security (22% were somewhat concerned, and 3% were very concerned), down two percentage points from the summer of 2015 and a decline of 14 percentage points from January 2014 (see Figure 3).

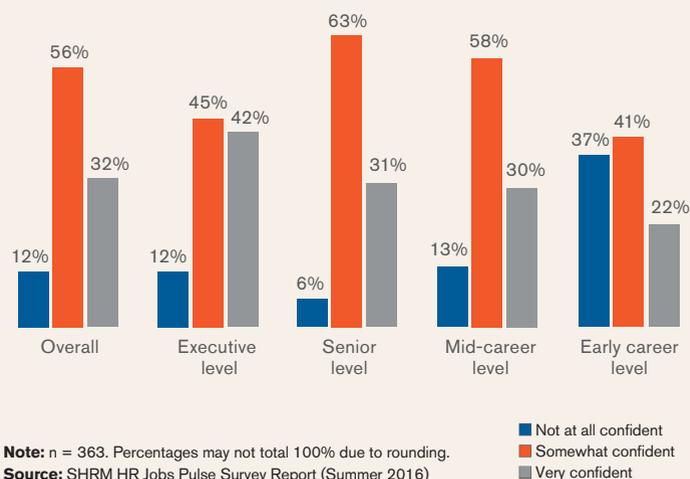
As in the previous Pulse Surveys, degrees of concern with job security varied with experience in the profession—79% of executive-level HR professionals and 73% of both senior and mid-level professionals said they were not at all concerned. For the first time in the Pulse Survey, however, early career level HR professionals had the most faith in their job security (85% said they were not at all concerned).

Despite the fact that job opportunities in HR have remained flat since the summer 2015 survey, the majority of respondents to the summer 2016 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, unchanged from the summer 2015 survey. That number is also down from 15% in December 2014 and from 21% in January 2014 (see Figure 4).

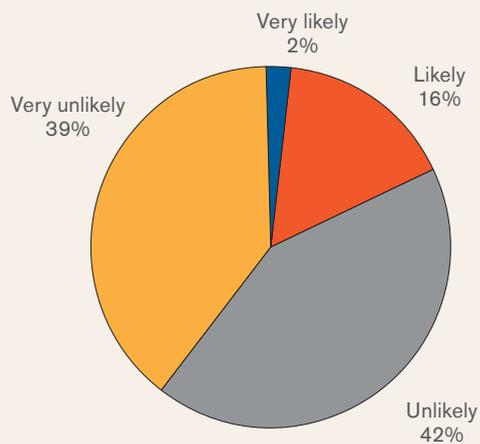
Confidence levels were high among experienced HR professionals: 94% of senior-level HR respondents had some degree of faith that they could find work if necessary, as did 88% of mid-level and 87% of executive-level professionals. Early career HR professionals had less confidence (63%) that they could find a new job, perhaps due to a lack of experience in the profession.

It should come as no surprise that most HR professionals are confident in their ability to find work. The current

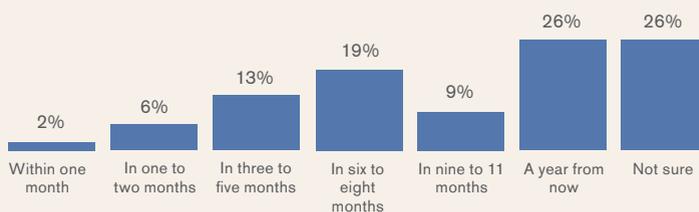
**Figure 4 | Confidence in Finding a New Job**



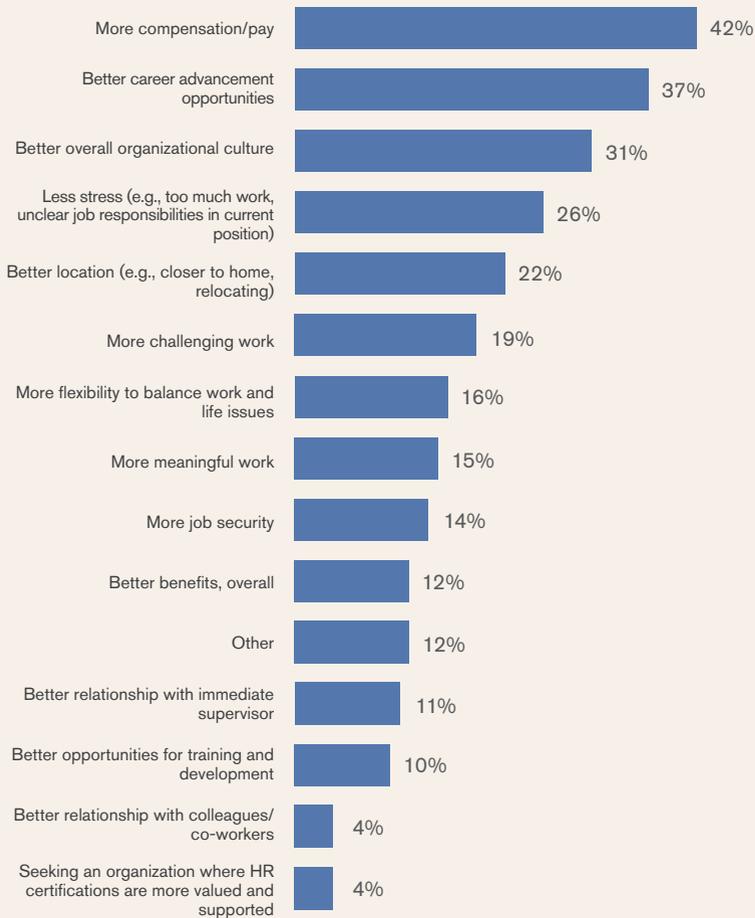
**Figure 5 | Likelihood of Starting a Job Search**



**Figure 6 | When the Job Search Will Begin**



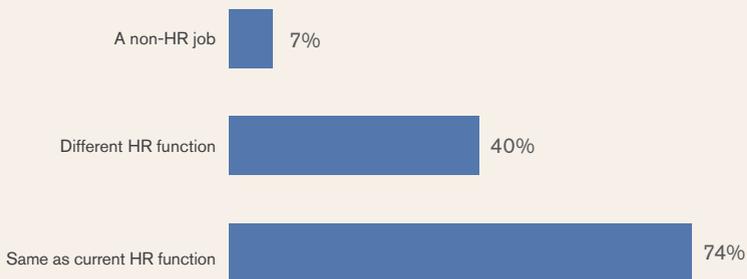
**Figure 7 | Reasons for Starting a Job Search**



**Note:** : n = 113. Percentages do not total 100% due to multiple response options. Only respondents who indicated they were currently looking voluntarily or were likely or very likely to begin looking for a new job were asked this question.

**Source:** SHRM HR Jobs Pulse Survey Report (Summer 2016)

**Figure 8 | Type of Job Sought**



**Note:** n = 121. Percentages do not total 100% due to multiple response options. Only respondents who indicated they were currently looking or were likely or very likely to begin looking for a new job were asked this question.

**Source:** SHRM HR Jobs Pulse Survey Report (Summer 2016)

U.S. labor market expansion has included the best two-year period of job growth, 2014-2015, since the late 1990s, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). And although the pace of hiring has slowed slightly in 2016, plenty of opportunities for work still exist. In April 2016, for example, there were 5.8 million job openings, the highest number since the BLS began tracking that metric in December 2000.

However, not all of the survey respondents were optimistic about labor market conditions, and some HR professionals expressed concern about their ability to land a new job. When asked why they were not confident they would be able to find an HR position in the current market, nearly half (49%) said it would be difficult to find a job with compensation/pay comparable to their current job. Another 33% cited a poor overall job market/lack of new jobs available, and 19% said it would be difficult to find a job with benefits comparable to their current job.

Other data from the summer 2016 Pulse Survey show that HR professionals have a wide range of reasons for staying in their current positions. More than two out of five (41%) said they continue to work at their current organization because of flexibility to balance work and life issues, and one-third (33%) cited compensation/pay as a factor for keeping their jobs.

Another 38% of HR professionals pointed to positive relationships with colleagues/co-workers as motivation for remaining in their positions. This is an important factor for employees overall, according to other recent research from SHRM. More than three-fourths (77%) of employees placed some level of importance on relationships with co-workers as a determinant for job satisfaction, according to SHRM's 2016 *Employee Job Satisfaction and Engagement* research report.

Although most HR professionals are content with their current positions, others are in the market for new work. Nearly one out of five (19%) respondents to the summer 2016 survey said they were already looking for a new job, either by choice (18%) or involuntarily (1%, due to a layoff, being fired or other reason).

Apart from that group, another 18% 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. Among those who indicated they were already looking or planning to pursue a new job in the next 12 months, 42% cited more compensation/pay as the top reason for the job search (see Figure 7). Another 37% pointed to better career advancement opportunities, and 31% said they were seeking better overall organizational culture.

Sixteen percent said they were looking for more flexibility to balance work and life issues.

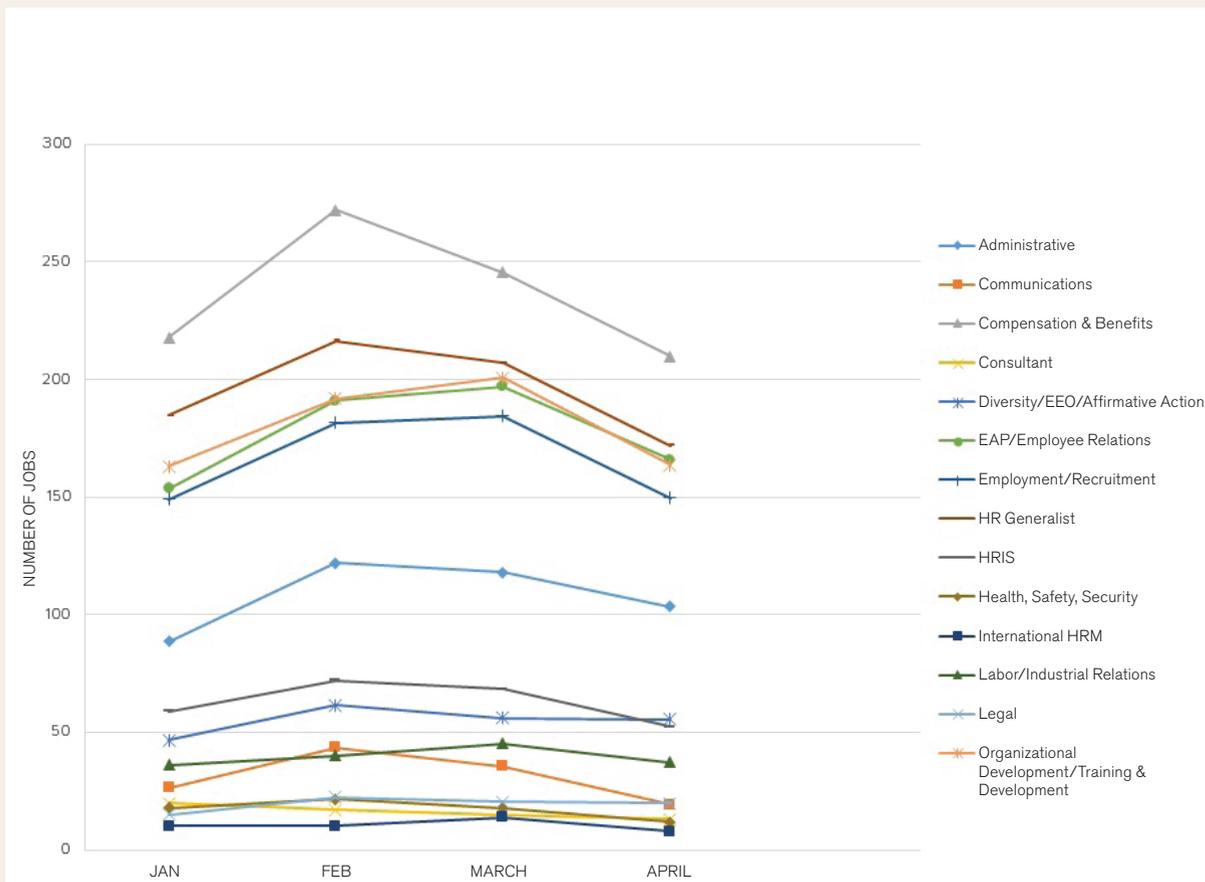
Of those who were currently looking or planned to look for new jobs, the majority indicated that they would stick with the HR profession: 74% said they would pursue a job that was same as their current HR function, and 40% said they would apply for a job with a different HR function. Another 7% said they would pursue a non-HR job, as illustrated in Figure 8.

Many HR professionals also indicated they plan to improve their skills in the near future. About two-thirds (67%) 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, more than three out of five (61%) said the primary driver for that decision was the need for development, and 14% said the current trends in their field indicated the need for specific competencies.

To achieve that goal, 66% said they would take classes/seminars offered by another body (such as a professional organization, private training organization or a trade group), and 30% said they would work with a mentor. Another 28% of respondents said they would obtain a professional certification.

Figure 9 | SHRM HR Jobs Data



Source: SHRM HR Jobs data (June 2016) <http://jobs.shrm.org>

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

**Early level:** a specialist in a specific support function, or a generalist with limited experience; holds a formal title such as HR assistant, junior recruiter or benefits clerk.

**Mid level:** a generalist or a senior specialist who manages projects or a program; holds a formal title such as HR manager, generalist or senior specialist.

**Senior level:** a very experienced generalist or specialist; holds a formal title such as 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.

## **PROJECT TEAM**

**Project leaders:** Joseph Coombs, senior analyst, Workforce Trends and Forecasting; Karen Wessels, researcher, talent management and workforce skills

**Project contributors:** Jennifer Schramm, M. Phil, SHRM-SCP, manager, Workforce Trends and Forecasting; Evren Esen, SHRM-SCP, director, Survey Program; Alexander Alonso, Ph.D., SHRM-SCP, senior vice president, Knowledge Development

**Copy editing:** Katya Scanlan, copy editor

**Design:** Terry Biddle, senior design specialist

## **SHRM HR Jobs Pulse Survey Methodology**

A sample of HR professionals was randomly selected from SHRM's membership database, which included approximately 285,000 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 April 2016, an e-mail that included a hyperlink to the SHRM HR Jobs Pulse Survey was sent to 3,000 randomly selected SHRM members, and 365 HR professionals responded, yielding a response rate of 11%. The survey was accessible for a period of four weeks and has a margin of error of +/-5%.