

# Employee Intentions Report

Michael Page International  
Singapore, 2011/12



# Executive Overview

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## Key findings

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Employees in Singapore are becoming increasingly confident about their career prospects following 12 months of positive hiring activity across the professional employment market. High levels of business confidence are being fuelled by multinationals investing in Singapore, given its strategic importance as a regional business hub in Asia. This is translating into robust jobs growth across the full spectrum of professional occupation groups.

Some 87% of the white-collar professionals surveyed for this report consider the current jobs market to be strong or very strong. The demand for suitably skilled workers is outweighing supply across a range of sectors and this is giving job seekers multiple opportunities to consider. Almost half of the employees surveyed believe it is highly likely they will change jobs within the next six months.

The retention of top talent is already a key concern for employers in Singapore because skills shortages are intensifying. For 38% of the employees surveyed for this report, being offered financial rewards for achievement was the primary reason they would choose to remain with their current employer. The opportunity for career progression was the second most influential reason to stay in their job, particularly for respondents in the early and mid stages of their careers.

Gaining an increase in salary is high on the agenda of professionals in Singapore. Most respondents (31%) will be asking their current employer for a salary increase in the next six months. The majority will have an expectation of a 10-12% increase on base salary.

Looking ahead, the vast majority of employees surveyed are confident about the job market outlook for 2011. Some 72% expect the employment conditions for their profession to improve throughout the year.

## Methodology

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The Michael Page Employee Intentions Report is based on the online survey responses of 900 professional workers in Singapore. Participants represent a broad range of professional occupation groups and hold positions that range from entry level through to senior management. The scope of the report includes key indicators such as the likelihood of staff attrition, salary expectations, preferences for attraction and retention strategies.

“ Skills shortages are intensifying ”

# Attracting New Talent

## Job Seeker Activity

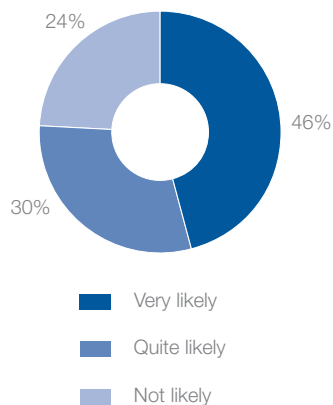
The professional employment market in Singapore continues to strengthen following 12 months of steady growth. There are more jobs available across professional occupation groups and employees are far less cautious about the risks of moving when compared to the conditions that existed during the global financial downturn. Of the employees surveyed for this report, some 46% say it is very likely they will change jobs within the next six months.

Employees in the oil and gas industry, as well as in the property and construction industry are the most likely to change jobs in the coming months. The growing number of multinational companies expanding into Singapore is increasing the scope of employment opportunities for these professionals.

Throughout 2010, most hiring activity was in front line areas in an effort to build revenue and increase market share. Now that the recovery is well underway, opportunities for sales professionals are stabilising as employers begin recruiting more broadly across their business.

Sales employees are the least likely to move roles within the next six months.

### Employee turnover next six months



### Top 5 areas for predicted turnover



# Attracting New Talent

## Preferred Attraction Strategies

Almost half of the employees surveyed for this report rated the opportunity for career progression as the most important factor when choosing a new role. This was of particular importance to professionals in the banking and financial services, legal and human resources areas. From an experience perspective, mid-level employees identified the ability to

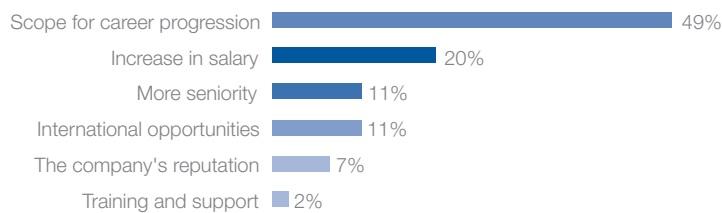
progress their career as a key motivator to change roles.

An increase in salary was the second most influential factor for respondents when deciding to change jobs. Securing a pay rise was of particular importance to accounting and finance professionals. If business conditions continue to improve,

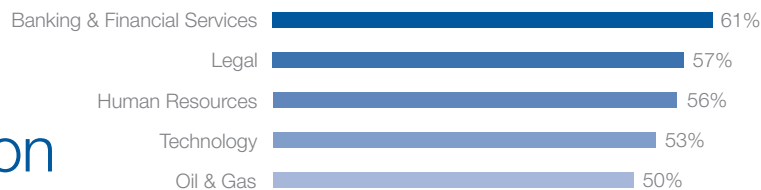
the pressure on employers to offer competitive salaries will increase.

Another leading factor in the decision to change jobs is the opportunity to gain more seniority. The prospect of gaining a more senior title was particularly attractive to professionals in the procurement and supply chain industry.

What job seekers are looking for in their next role



Sectors in which career progression is most important



# Attracting New Talent

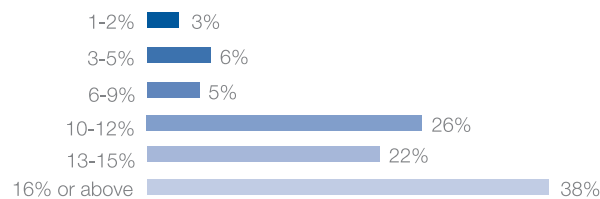
## Jobseeker Salary Expectations

As the employment market continues to improve, job seekers are becoming increasingly confident about moving roles in order to increase their salary level. For the majority of respondents (38%), an increase of 16% or above on base salary is required in order to change jobs. A further 26% of

employees would move companies for a rise of 10-12%. This salary expectation reflects the strength of the current employment market, in which the skills shortage is placing job seekers in a strong position to negotiate for competitive salaries.

Employees in the procurement and supply chain industry have the highest salary expectations. This is followed by employees in the banking and financial services industry.

## Salary expectations for job change



## Top 5 areas with the highest salary expectations

Discipline	Rank
Procurement & Supply Chain	1
Banking & Financial Services	2
Technology	3
Accounting & Finance	4
Marketing	5

# Retaining Top Performers

## Preferred Retention Strategies

The retention of key talent is becoming a significant challenge for many companies in Singapore as the professional labour market tightens and skills shortages intensify. For most respondents (38%), being offered financial rewards for achievement was rated as the most influential factor in deciding to remain in their current role. This was considered particularly important to mid-level employees. As concern grows around the cost of living in Singapore,

employers will need to review salary levels and offer competitive market rates in order to keep top performers from seeking financial rewards elsewhere.

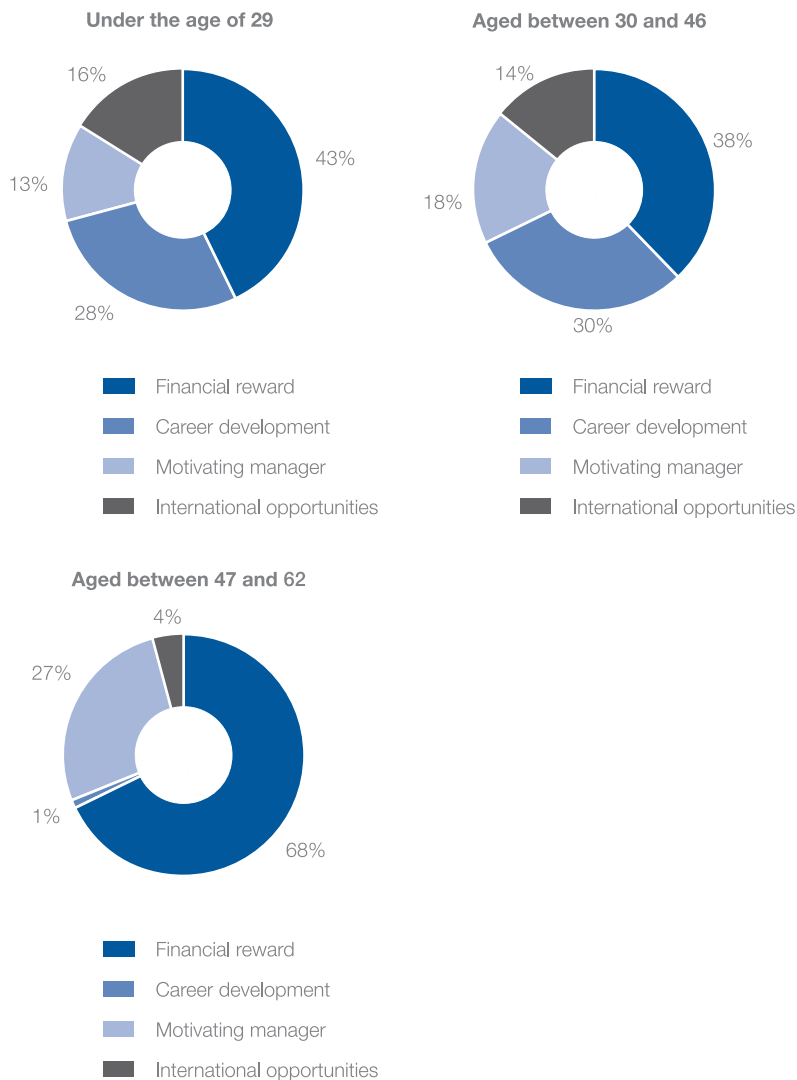
Survey respondents ranked career development opportunities as the second most important factor in choosing to remain with their current employer. The ability to progress with a structured training and development plan was especially

valued by employees in the early and mid stages of their career.

The possibility of working overseas was identified as the third most influential factor in staying with a current employer.

Senior level respondents were most interested in financial reward and having a motivating manager.

### What will keep employees in their current role



# Retaining Top Performers

## Employee Salary Expectations

As economic conditions continue to strengthen across Asia, the pressure is growing on employers to review the salary levels of their staff. Employee salary expectations are rising in line with improving market conditions, so employers will need to offer strong financial incentives in order to remain competitive and retain their top performers.

The majority of respondents (31%) will be asking their current employer for a salary increase in the next six months. Most

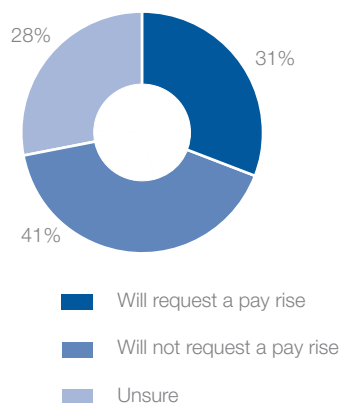
employees will have an expectation of a 10-12% increase on base salary. Companies that cannot meet these expectations will need to offer other incentives to help retain their staff, such as training and development opportunities.

Professionals in the oil and gas and human resources industries are the most likely to ask their current employer for a salary increase over the next six months. The majority of employees in oil and gas will be asking for a 10-12% increase on base salary,

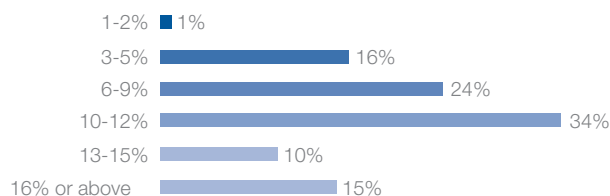
with most human resources professionals requesting a raise of 6-9%.

Professionals in the procurement and supply chain sector are the least likely to ask their current employers for an increase in salary over the next six months. For the majority of these respondents, the opportunity to progress their career through training and development was rated as more important than financial rewards when deciding to remain with their current employer.

### Salary pressures over next six months



### What employees will ask for



### Top 5 areas for predicted pay rise requests



# Job Market Confidence

## Current Job Market

The professional jobs market in Singapore is performing strongly after what has been a sustained period of strong economic growth post the global financial crisis. Overall employee confidence in the job market is high, with some 87% of respondents considering the current market to be strong or very strong.

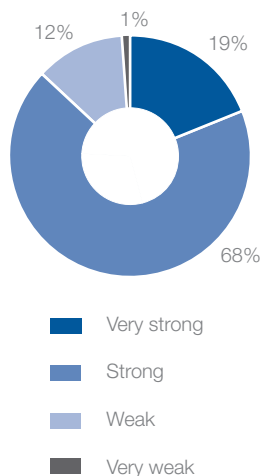
Employees in the healthcare, life sciences, accounting and finance industries are the most confident about the extent of job

opportunities for their professions. Singapore is a prime location for pharmaceutical and biomedical operations, which is helping to drive strong jobs growth in the sector. Opportunities for accounting and finance professionals are also growing as more multinationals enter the Singapore market or expand their existing operations.

Banking and financial services professionals are not as positive about the extent of job

opportunities in the current market. This sector experienced aggressive hiring in 2010, when companies were re-establishing the headcount lost during the global economic downturn. Now that capability has been restored, opportunities in this industry have stabilised. Despite the lack of confidence in the current job market, some 78% of banking and financial services respondents do expect to see an improvement in job opportunities over the next year.

### Employee confidence in job market



### Top 5 areas of strongest confidence



# Market Outlook

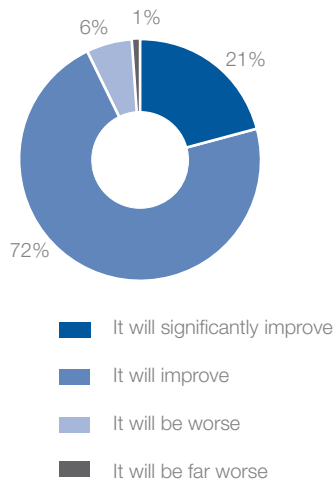
## Job Market Outlook

The vast majority of employees surveyed are confident about the jobs market outlook. Some 72% predict that employment conditions in their profession will improve, with a further 21% expecting a significant improvement.

Professionals in the areas of healthcare, life sciences and marketing have the most optimistic outlook for their job markets. A growing number of multinational companies are establishing their regional research and development activities in Singapore, which

is driving opportunities in the healthcare and life sciences area. The demand for skilled marketing professionals is also predicted to increase throughout the year as companies begin to re-establish their back office functions to support further business growth.

### Employee confidence in job market 2011 vs 2010



### Top 5 areas of job market optimism



# Market Outlook

## Employee Concerns

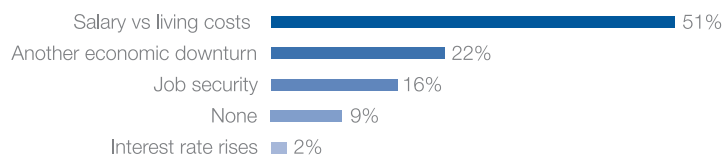
As the economy continues to strengthen in Singapore, the rising cost of living is registering as a concern. For the vast majority of respondents (51%), the ability to meet the rising cost of living is the issue of most concern over the next six months. With economic conditions predicted to improve

further throughout 2011, the pressure will be on employers to provide salary increases for their employees to compensate for the rising cost of living.

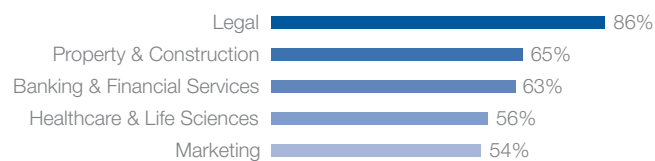
Survey respondents ranked the prospect of another economic downturn as their

second highest concern for the next six months. The ongoing weakness in the US and European economies is keeping this possibility in sharp focus.

### Employee concerns over next six months



### Areas most concerned about salary vs living costs



# Office Locations

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### About Michael Page International

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The Group operates through 148 offices in 32 countries worldwide. First established in London in 1976, we've been bringing job seekers and employers together for more than 30 years.