Press release

23 August 2023

New data shows how generative AI is affecting Australian businesses, from hiring trends to workplace processes

- 33% of employers have increased hiring to keep up with innovation
- 53% of Australian employers are comfortable with candidates using generative AI to craft resumes and cover letters
- 39% of companies are using generative AI to automate IT support services, and 29% use it to produce financial reports and dashboards

Sydney, 23 August 2023 – Generative AI is shaping Australian hiring trends as jobseekers and employers are increasingly using this emerging technology, new independent research by specialised recruiter Robert Half finds.

AI is having an impact on hiring

Generative AI is having a direct impact on most employers' hiring plans:

- 34% have hired contractors or consultants to bring in specialised skills
- 33% have increased hiring to keep up with innovation
- 30% have shifted their focus to different skills that are more in demand due to advancements in AI
- 23% have outsourced certain projects for these initiatives

Only 28% of employers report that AI and digital transformation processes have not impacted their hiring efforts.

"Generative AI will change how work is done, but that doesn't mean it will eliminate jobs in the process," said **David Jones, Senior Managing Director APAC, Robert Half.**

"*It is precisely in the environment of automation by and with AI that new job profiles are emerging that need people more than ever. While there is a growing demand for workers who already hold these skills, employers know it is an emerging field and so are willing to facilitate the upskilling of staff."*

How jobseekers are using generative AI

On average across five examples of job application materials, 53% of employers are somewhat or completely accepting of generative AI being used by jobseekers. Meanwhile, 28% of employers think using generative AI to craft job application materials is somewhat or completely unacceptable.

Using generative AI to craft job application materials	% of employers who think using generative AI is somewhat or completely **acceptable**	% of employers who think using generative AI is somewhat or completely **not acceptable**	% of employers who have no opinion on using generative AI
Email correspondence	**59%**	26%	15%
Resume	55%	26%	19%
Cover Letter	54%	28%	19%
Writing sample	48%	29%	**23%**
Technical evaluations	52%	**31%**	17%

Independent survey commissioned by Robert Half among 300 business leaders including 100 CFOs, 100 CIOs, and 100 general hiring managers.
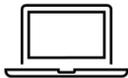
"Job seekers have been using tools such as resume and cover letter builders, and spelling and grammar checkers for some time to make the application process easier and more efficient — and leveraging generative AI is the next step for many. Employers are largely onboard with candidates using generative AI to help craft their job application materials as innovation and adaptability become a core business focus. Employers seek employees who do not fear the emergence of new technology as it hints at a forward-thinking mindset and openness to leverage new capabilities," said **Jones.**
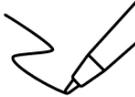
"While generative AI can streamline aspects of a job search, those who opt to utilise it should consistently regard the generated content only as a starting point. From there, individuals must apply their expertise to customise the content with their unique selling points relevant to the role they're applying for. Further, professionals need to be aware of the risks of relying on generative AI. When used irresponsibly, it can produce incorrect or misleading information while also leading to misunderstandings or misinterpretations.

"Using generative AI tools to complete simple tasks like resume and cover letter formatting is a good place to start for many. The workforce will increasingly be tasked with understanding this technology and how it could assist them in their roles. Jobseekers that demonstrate an understanding of how generative AI in the correct way can assist them in their roles will have an edge over those that don't."

Employers are using AI themselves

Companies are also embracing generative AI such as ChatGPT/GPT-4 to improve productivity and save time.

Usage of AI in the workplace		
	Currently use	**Plan to use**
Most common	Automating IT support processes (39%)	Automating software development processes, such as code generation and optimisation (53%)
	Automating appointment scheduling and calendar management (34%)	Processing large volumes of data to improve system performance (49%)
	Automating software testing and QA (33%)	Analysing and categorising customer feedback (49%)
	Processing large volumes of data to improve system performance (30%)	Automating appointment scheduling and calendar management (45%)

	Producing financial reports and dashboards for decision-making (29%)	Automating software testing and QA (38%)
	Automating data entry (29%)	Automating IT support processes (36%)
Less common	Writing job descriptions (29%)	Benchmarking compensation and benefits (31%)

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"Employers understand the rapid pace of technological change and do not want to be left behind. They realise the advantages and efficiencies generative AI can bring to their employees and the business.

"Jobseekers and workers need to understand the importance of keeping up with technological changes in the workplace. Opportunities are abundant for those who are nimble. And like past generations of workers, staying pace with technological advancements positions them as the most desirable. In the case of generative AI, workers are discovering new ways of it being utilised in-house and while this is preferred, being mindful of the risks and pitfalls is essential to ensuring the new technology is being used in the right way," concluded **Jones**.

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Notes to editors

About the research

The study is developed by Robert Half and was conducted online in June 2023 by an independent research company, surveying 300 hiring managers, including 100 CFOs and 100 CIOs, from companies across Australia. This survey is part of the international workplace survey, a questionnaire about job trends, talent management, and trends in the workplace.

About Robert Half

Robert Half is the global, specialised talent solutions provider that helps employers find their next great hire and jobseekers uncover their next opportunity. Robert Half offers both contract and permanent placement services, and is the parent company of Protiviti, a global consulting firm. Robert Half Australia has offices in Brisbane, Melbourne, Mount Waverley, Perth, and Sydney. More information on roberthalf.com.au.

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