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Who wants to return to work?

LINDA WHITE

Despite new safety and social distancing protocols, only one-fifth of Canadians are willing to return to their physical workplace as soon as it is allowed, according to LinkedIn's latest Workforce Confidence Index.

Primary concerns include: exposure to others who aren't taking enough precautions; working in close proximity to colleagues or customers; shared spaces; the commute to work; and lack of support from their employer's sick-leave and remote-work policies.

Education professionals are the most likely to willingly return to the physical workplace as soon as it's allowed (37%) and also the most likely to feel obligated to return (17%). Workers in the construction, entertainment and consumer goods industries are also more likely than average to willingly return to a physical workplace as soon as possible. Those in software and information technology services, media and communications, finance and corporate services are less likely to willingly return.

Business travellers worried

As companies begin to plan for the return of business travel, human resources leaders need to address key concerns among business travellers, according to a survey by SAP Concur, a leader in integrated travel, expense and invoice management solutions.

About 90% of Canadian business travellers expect increased discrimination related to symptoms and country of origin in the wake of COVID-19. Infecting their families and getting sick themselves are among their top concerns. That same number of business travellers believe they'd benefit from company training, especially on how to protect their health and safety during travel, and how to maintain healthy habits while travelling.

Finally, 93% of business travellers consider some measures critical for their company to implement before safely returning to the road, including: mandatory personal health screenings for travelling employees; limiting business travel to only the most business-critical trips; real-time health and safety updates; and easier access to personal protective equipment.

HOW TO BECOME THE ULTIMATE GO-TO PERSON AT WORK

LINDA WHITE

If you're like many professionals, overcommitment and conflicts in work relationships are your two most pressing challenges. So how do you remain a good team player and continue to prove your value without succumbing to overcommitment syndrome?

"Organizations have not only steadily increased everybody's individual workload, but they have also been streamlining work by pushing increased collaboration," said Bruce Tulgan, CEO of RainmakerThinking, a management research, consulting and training firm. "That means everybody is dealing with a lot more people and all these people are almost always making requests of each other."

In turn, many people are saying "yes" to every new ask or project, even if they're stretched to their limits. Even before the pandemic hit, most employees didn't want to give the impression they weren't pulling their weight. "That is doubly true now, with so many people so worried about their job security," Tulgan said.

"The irony is that people who allow themselves to become overcommitted end up either dropping balls and letting people down, or start to suffer from what I call 'siege mentality' and start hiding from everyone and everything at work. Either way, their overcommitment ends up causing conflict in their work relationships."

In his new book, *The Art of Being Indispensable At Work: Win Influence, Beat Overcommitment, and Get the Right Things Done* (Harvard Business Review Press, July 2020), Tulgan offers advice on how to become a "go-to person" who builds influence by doing the right things at the right times for the right reasons, regardless of whether they have any formal designation of authority.

"These go-to people serve others more and better, add more value for more people consistently over time, and thus are the most relied upon by their peers. How? By pacing themselves, slowing down to make sure they do the right things in the right order for the right reasons, every step of the way," he said.



Bruce Tulgan, CEO of RainmakerThinking and author of *The Art of Being Indispensable at Work*. SUPPLIED

Here's a snapshot of what Tulgan describes in his book as a go-to person's credo:

Understand what real influence means. It's the power you have when other people really want to do things for you, make good use of your time and contribute to your success. But there's only one way to build real influence, he maintains: you must truly believe that the more you serve others by doing the right thing for the long term, moment by moment, adding value in every single interaction, the richer you become in real influence.

Know what's allowed. Often, the decision about when to say "yes" and "no" has already been made — implicitly or explicitly — by your boss or someone else further up the chain of command, Tulgan reminds readers. He recommends treating every decision about "yes" or "no" as a choice about investing your time and energy. Every "bad no," for example, is a missed opportunity or a delayed and soured opportunity if the "no" gets overturned, while every "good yes" is a chance to make the most of a good opportunity and serve others by adding value and building your real influence.

Take every request seriously. Do your due diligence, which starts with insisting on a well-defined task. If you're the person asking, make sure you include enough information so the decision maker can make a better choice. If you're the person being asked, ask good questions early and often at every step, know when to say "no" and "not yet" and remember

The Art of BEING INDISPENSABLE AT WORK



win influence
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BRUCE TULGAN

Bestselling author, *It's Okay to Be the Boss*

HARVARD BUSINESS REVIEW PRESS

that "yes" is where all the action is at.

Work smart. Whatever your job is, make sure you do it "really, really well" and get good training to prepare you, and good systems and tools to support you. Specialize in what you do best and steadily expand your repertoire of specialties. Know what specialties you want to be known for. The more work you do in your specialties, the better your outcomes.

Finish what you start. Avoid juggling and multitasking. Keep a long to-do list and schedule. Break work into small doable chunks and find gaps in your schedule for focused execution time. Remember: you can only finish one thing at a time.

Get better and better at working together. Lift people up and they will lift you up, too. Don't focus on building relationships through politicking and personal rapport, but focus on building on the work. Express gratitude for the help you receive.

"Go-to people don't do everything for everybody or even everything for one particular person," Tulgan says in his book. "Rather, they approach

every relationship determined to add value to every interaction and to every other person. They do no more and no less of what they can do with integrity, working smart and finishing what they start."

Are you a go-to person?

Bruce Tulgan, CEO of RainmakerThinking, says go-to people:

- Make themselves incredibly valuable to others;
- Are very good at their jobs;
- Maintain a positive attitude and double down on hard work;
- Take personal responsibility and get things done;
- Are creative and tenacious but do things by the book and follow orders;
- Do all those things consistently, in almost every interaction, over time.