BIZCOMMUNITY

More professionals in search of a better work life outside of South Africa, global study reveals

Issued by CareerJunction

13 Feb 2019

More young South African working professionals are willing to relocate for work compared to their contemporaries around the rest of the world, according to new research by the The Boston Consulting Group (BCG) and The Network, in association with CareerJunction.

The study, which surveyed 366,000 jobseekers and 6,000 recruiters in 197 countries, was conducted to determine mobility preferences of talent around the world, reasons to move abroad and key elements that jobseekers want in a job.

Of the respondents, 57% said that they would move to another country for work. This number, however, is much greater for South Africans, where 71% of respondents (young and working professionals) said that they are willing to relocate for work. The study also showed that South Africans' willingness to relocate increased from 64% in 2014.

"The research revealed quite a few idiosyncrasies among young working South African professionals. More of them are willing to travel abroad for work and see it as an opportunity to improve their skills and secure their careers. Many multinationals can offer exactly what these young people are looking for, both in international markets and in South Africa. For example, we see in our BCG office in South Africa that employees have instant access to global Digital and AI experts, thanks to BCG's global network of 80 offices, and opportunities to temporarily transfer to another BCG office through internal programs. What is important is that the skills that South Africans learn while working for multinationals, are brought back to contribute to the betterment of South Africa," says Stefano Niavas, Partner and Managing Director at BCG in South Africa.

So, where are South Africans looking to relocate to?

According to the study, the US remains the most favourable work location for South Africans — even amid the volatility of its national politics - followed by Australia, the UK, Canada and Germany. New Zealand, the UAE, France, China and Switzerland also fell in the top 10 most desirable countries to work. Comparing 2018 findings to those of 2014, China moved up a staggering 23 places, indicating a growing desire among South Africans to work there. The UAE moved up three places.

Why? What are South Africans after?

South Africans seem to have unique work preferences compared to the rest of the globe. While respondents around the globe listed things like “good relationships with colleagues” and “good relationships with superiors” as top motivating factors for relocating, South African respondents tend to value “career development possibilities” and “learning and skills training” more. “Good work-life balance”, however, was listed in the top three motivating factors for South Africans and the rest of the world. So, while workers around the globe are more focused on intrinsic workplace rewards, such as those provided by good interpersonal office relationships, South Africans seem to be more set on future-proofing their careers and attaining the necessary skills to secure work and grow within their careers. Other factors that are listed as important for South Africans include “job security” and “company values”.

This comes as no surprise given South Africa’s high unemployment rate and, ultimately, the competitive nature of SA’s job market.

Global attractiveness of South Africa

South Africa, on the other hand, seems to be a less attractive location to work for most respondents across the globe. Out of the 198 participating countries, SA ranked at #40, compared to #27 in 2014. African countries that indicated a desire to work in South Africa include Angola in top position, followed by Ivory Coast, Kenya, Benin, Ghana (down 4 places since 2014), Cameroon and Nigeria (down five places from 2014), among others.

For more findings on this study, read the full report here: https://www.bcg.com/publications/2018/decoding-global-talent.aspx.

About CareerJunction

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