

9 December 2021

## Why counter-offers don't work

Half of employees change jobs within a year of accepting a counter-offer  
60% of companies do not implement counter-offers

On 9 December, specialist professional recruitment firm Robert Walters Japan announced the results of a survey on counter-offers in which 873 company employees working in Japan, mainly in the Tokyo and Kansai areas, and 172 companies responded.

### 50-50 chance of employees accepting a counter-offer

When company employees were asked whether they would consider a counteroffer after accepting a new job offer, 47% responded “no” while 53% responded “yes.” The most common reason for not accepting a counter-offer was because “the reason(s) for quitting could not be resolved” (43%) followed by “once I've made up my mind, I stick to it” (42%). Based on the results, which suggest that income and work styles were not the primary reasons behind the decision to change jobs, it can be inferred that employees are primarily motivated by the desire to challenge themselves in a new job and environment.

On the other hand, the most likely condition for accepting a counter-offer was a raise in salary (87%), followed by increased work style flexibility (43%). A promotion (41%) and retention bonus (32%) were also common responses to consider a counter-offer. Given that a majority of professionals prioritise flexible work styles these days, it is no surprise that 23% of company employees mentioned full remote work (23%) as a condition for considering a counter-offer.

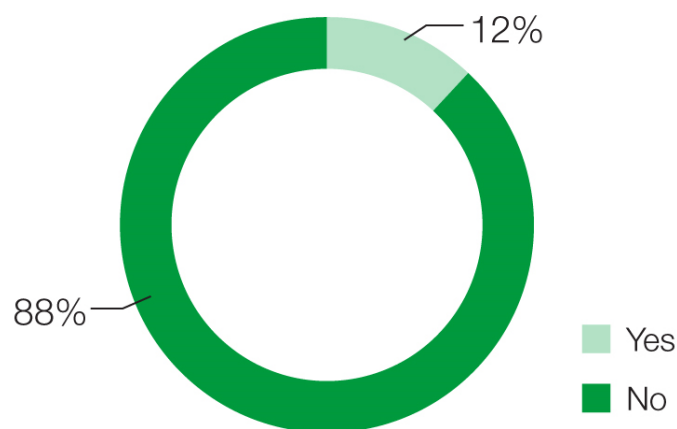
### Reasons for not accepting a counter-offer (multiple answers allowed)



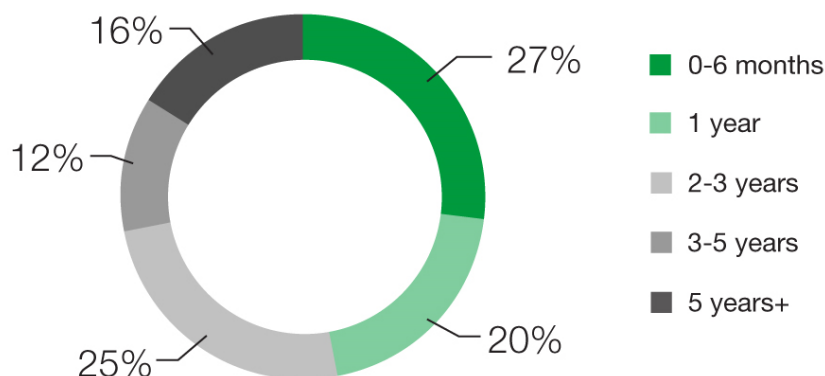
### 47% of employees changed jobs within 1 year of accepting a counter-offer

About 90% of company employees have never accepted a counter-offer while 12% did. Of the employees that accepted a counter-offer, almost half (47%) of them left the company within a year (27% within six months). This indicates that in many cases, employees who are considering resigning will not stay with the company for the long term, even if they are offered all kinds of conditions. It is important to consider whether a counter-offer will solve the reason why the person thought of leaving in the first place, and whether it will affect their position in the company if they accept the counter-offer. In general, it can be assumed that the counter-offer does not eliminate the problem of the reason for the employee's resignation.

#### Have you ever accepted a counter-offer?



#### After accepting the counteroffer, how long did you stay in that company?



### 60% of employers do not believe in making counter-offers

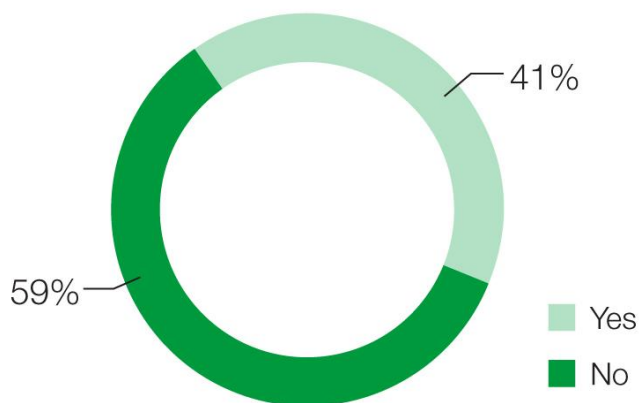
Of the 172 companies that were asked if they would make a counter-offer, almost 60% said they would not. The top reason given for not doing so was to avoid the risk of creating pay or role title inequality in the team (50%), followed by concern that it can negatively impact the company or team culture (46%). Last year, many companies temporarily froze hiring due to

economic uncertainty, but with the trend towards recover in 2021, companies are not planning to make counter-offers to provide opportunities for the next generation of talent within the company (34%) and allow for new hires (25%).

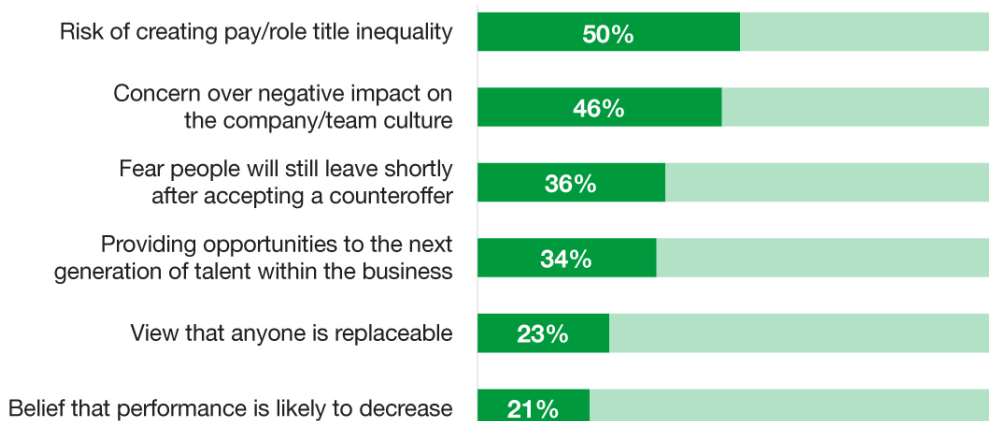
Conversely, the top reasons for making a counter-offer were to prevent an exodus of talented people (46%) and not being able to attract the same level of talent as retiring employees (39%).

These results show that both employees and companies are cautious about making counter-offers based on their own long-term perspectives.

### Do you believe in making counteroffers?



### Reasons for not making a counteroffer (multiple answers allowed)



(Survey period: October - November 2021, Target: Domestic and foreign-affiliated companies in Japan n=172; Company employees registered with Robert Walters Japan and living in Japan n=873)

**About Robert Walters Japan:**

Established in London, United Kingdom, in 1985, Robert Walters is a specialist recruitment consultancy with operations in 31 countries around the world. Robert Walters Japan established its Tokyo office in 2000 and Osaka office in 2007. For over 20 years, we've been a driving force in the Japanese bilingual recruitment market, providing high quality candidates for our clients and access to the best jobs. Our consultants are experts in their respective industries and work in teams to provide recruitment consultation services across a wide range of industries and job categories.

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