



NEW WORK PRACTICES

Candidate survey

2024



Recrutement

FED GROUP

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The year 2024 had been pivotal for companies in the Greater Montreal area. It would be perfectly appropriate to characterize the job market evolution over the past four years as a roller coaster. After an unprecedented period of stagnation followed by a meteoric recovery, the current situation is tending towards a return to normal. However, the lessons of the crisis should not be ignored.

As we emerge from the Covid-19 pandemic, how much faith is there in the future of work practices and habits acquired during this period? How do Greater Montreal's professionals see their professional future in such a context? This is the theme of our annual survey.

Since 2015, our mission has been to foster meaningful encounters between the region's talent and local, national or international companies. We achieve this every day through a specialized approach to recruitment, because we are convinced that understanding the specific needs of regional sectors is the key to successful connections. To do this, it is essential to grasp developments in the labour market, and that's precisely what this study is all about.

Frédérique Tahon
Managing Partner, Fed Group



About

FED GROUP

Since 2015, Fed Group firms have been supporting companies in the Greater Montreal area with their temporary and permanent recruitment needs. Specialized by business sector, our firms have a clear and precise mission: to create meaningful encounters between companies of all sizes and sectors, and talented candidates looking for their next professional adventure.

Experts in their field, Fed Group's advisors are active in several segments of the Greater Montreal job market, through recruitment agencies with a unique identity that are attentive to the needs of their candidates and clients.

99%

Client satisfaction

98%

Candidate' satisfaction



SECTORS

Finance | Accounting | Payroll

IT

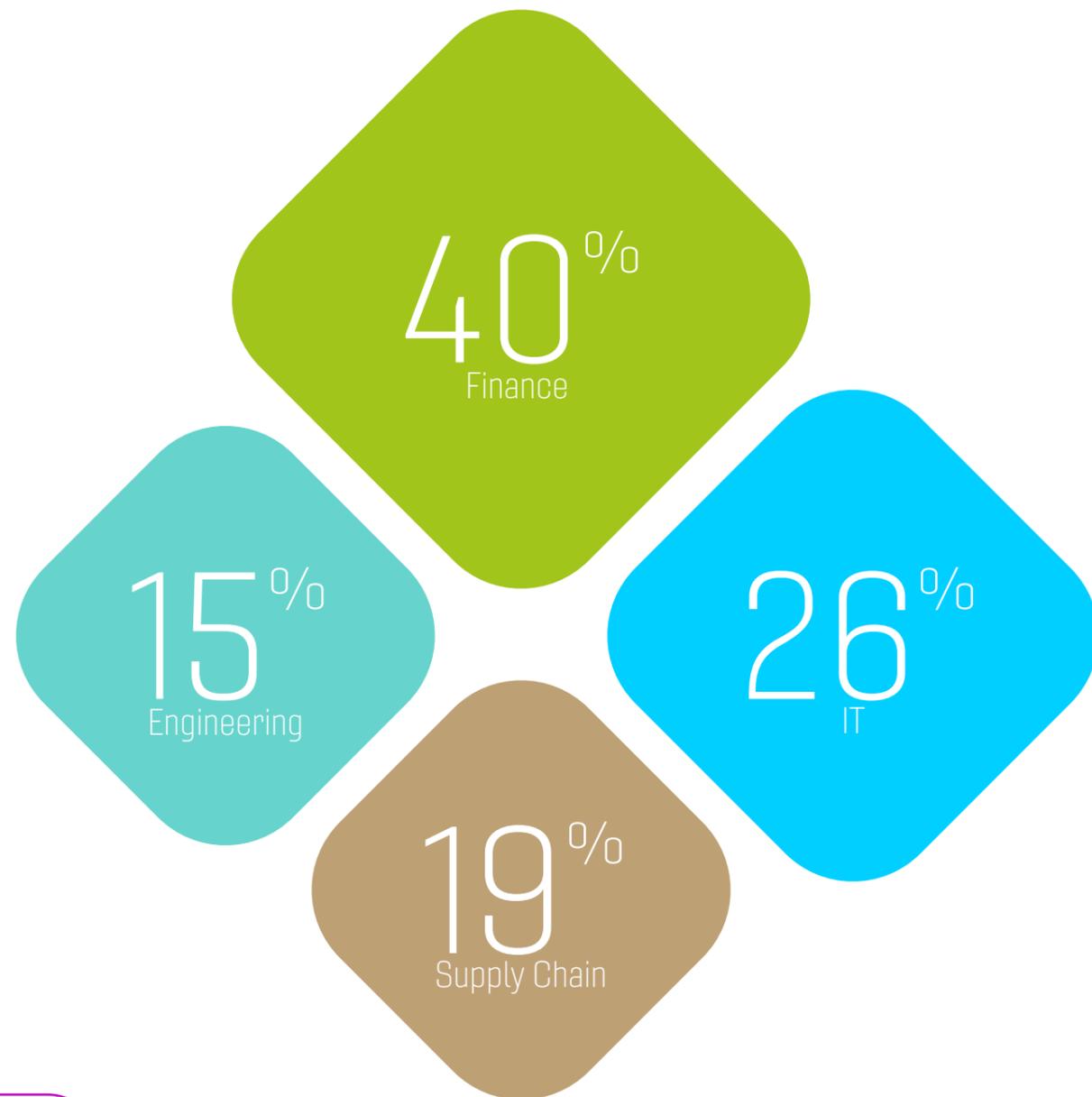
Supply Chain

Engineering

Distribution of respondents by area of expertise

This candidate survey was carried out among 635 professionals in the Greater Montreal area, contacted by email and social networks, representing a cross-section of the job market segments served by Fed Group firms.

Responses to this questionnaire were collected anonymously, and no compensation of any kind was offered in exchange for an answer.



THE JOB MARKET AND APPLICATION HABITS

In an increasingly competitive and fast-moving job market, we began by asking professionals in the Greater Montreal area about their job search habits. What channels do they use? What do they look for in a job offer? What are the important elements they take into consideration when considering a change of position.

Ressources used for a job search :

3 answers maximum

	Finance	Supply Chain	IT	Engineering
LinkedIn	80%	72%	91%	84%
Companies' websites	44%	36%	48%	42%
Recruitment firms	36%	49%	28%	30%
Job boards	21%	26%	20%	18%
Spontaneous application	19%	16%	21%	25%
Co-optation	16%	13%	20%	20%
Trade shows	5%	4%	5%	1%
Social medias	2%	2%	2%	1%

LinkedIn is the most used channel by candidates in Greater Montreal: 80% said they use the social network when looking for a job, a figure that rises to 91% for candidates in the IT sector.

Nearly one in two (44%) also use company career sites on a regular basis. Recruitment agencies are also well represented, particularly in finance, where almost half of the candidates say they have submitted their CV to an employment agency with a view to finding a new professional opportunity.

«Recruitment agencies are a well-established job search channel for candidates in the Greater Montreal area. Although the reflex is more regular for candidates in the finance sector, this does not mean that other sectors are not promising. The key is to ensure that these structures are more effective in facilitating meetings with professionals in these other sectors. Relying on a specialized firm obviously makes sense here: they are the ones who have the ideal profiles, tailored to the needs of companies in their sectors, and who are the best trained in the day-to-day use and headhunting of LinkedIn.»

Marian Babin
Director, Fed Finance

Criteria of importance on a job opening

3 answers maximum

		Finance	Supply Chain	IT	Engineering
Tasks / missions make sense to me	63%	62%	56%	63%	76%
Job's location is within my search range	54%	57%	60%	47%	50%
Working conditions are flexible (remote, ...)	48%	55%	44%	52%	28%
Compensation is clearly stated in the ad	31%	31%	37%	28%	22%
Benefits are clearly stated in the ad	19%	14%	20%	23%	27%
Company's values are clear in the ad	18%	20%	19%	16%	15%
The application process is simplified	17%	13%	13%	26%	21%
The company is in my sector of activity	13%	13%	12%	9%	16%
The job description is clear and concise	6%	5%	5%	8%	9%
Growth opportunities are clear	6%	5%	8%	6%	6%
The company is not in my sector of activity	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%

In 2024, the quest for meaning in one's job and missions is paramount for Greater Montreal professionals (63%). The importance of this criterion is even more evident in the manufacturing sector: more than three out of four respondents (76%) ticked this box on the questionnaire.

There's a disparity between candidates in the engineering sector and the rest of the market: only 28% rank the flexibility of their working conditions as important, compared to over half of finance candidates. This discrepancy can be explained by the day-to-day nature of manufacturing, where more professions require employees to work in the factory or on site. (63%).

As we can see, criteria vary according to the candidate's sector of activity: it's the recruiter's job to recognize these differences, and adapt their advertisements to the realities and needs of candidates in this market.

Proportion of respondents able to work from home

		Finance	Supply Chain	IT	Engineering
Yes	83%	89%	75%	93%	63%
No	17%	11%	25%	7%	37%

«In today's fast-paced world, recruiters have a duty to make information clear and intelligible to attract the best candidates. The more information a potential applicant has about the position he or she is applying for, the more likely he or she will be to decide whether or not the job is for him or her. Whether we're talking about remuneration, mission information or job location, presenting everything in a precise and readable way is often a winning strategy.»

Julie Baptista
Team Lead, Fed Manutech

Best practices for job seekers when applying

3 answers maximum

		Finance	Supply Chain	IT	Engineering
Customize my CV for each vacancy	64%	66%	69%	60%	58%
Contact a recruiter directly	46%	47%	44%	49%	43%
Send unsolicited applications	29%	25%	27%	32%	32%
Post, react, comment on social medias	17%	15%	15%	21%	16%
Use AI to help in my job search	6%	3%	6%	8%	9%
Showcase my creativity (video CV, ...)	3%	3%	1%	5%	3%

Almost two out of three candidates regularly follow recruiters' advice to put chance on their side by adapting their CV to the job vacancy in question (64%). Nearly one candidate in two (46%) also say they have already contacted a recruiter directly in connection with a job vacancy.

CURRENT VIEWS AND FUTURE PROJECTIONS

How do Greater Montreal candidates see their future in the medium term? We asked them about their current vision of their position, and their forecasts for the next 6 months.

Candidates' opinion on their compensation package

		Finance	Supply Chain	IT	Engineering
I'm satisfied with my remuneration	42%	41%	46%	38%	46%
I'm not satisfied with my remuneration	44%	37%	39%	42%	36%
I would rather not say	36%	22%	14%	20%	18%

Overall, the situation is fairly balanced. More of our panel are satisfied with their current remuneration. It is important to note that 20% of candidates did not wish to answer this question.

Do candidates think they'll be job searching in 6 months ?

		Finance	Supply Chain	IT	Engineering
Actively looking	48%	43%	49%	38%	46%
Open, but not searching	36%	39%	39%	42%	36%
No	16%	18%	12%	20%	18%

The Greater Montreal job market is, and is likely to remain, volatile over the next 6 months. Nearly half of the candidates (48%) will be actively seeking employment in the medium term. This trend is somewhat less marked in the IT sector, where candidates are highly sought-after.

"The job market is likely to be active over the next 6 months. It is important to note the relevance of headhunting, as almost a third of the market is dormant. It is crucial for recruiters to be proactive and reach out to those candidates whose interest is present, but who will not actively go looking for a new professional opportunity."

Frédérique Tahon
Managing Partner, Fed Group

The main criteria for rejecting an offer

1 réponse maximum

		Finance	Supply Chain	IT	Engineering
Compensation below my expectations	26%	23%	26%	22%	33%
Remote or hybrid work are unavailable for this position	18%	14%	19%	25%	10%
Work /personal life balance	13%	16%	10%	16%	6%
Lack of professional recognition	12%	14%	14%	9%	11%
Office is too far away from home	12%	14%	13%	6%	16%
Lack of agility / flexibility in the company	7%	7%	6%	11%	3%
Lack of management / vision	4%	2%	4%	4%	11%
Absence of team spirit	4%	5%	4%	4%	5%
Absence of a clear company culture	3%	1%	4%	3%	5%
Too much remote work (>3 days a week)	1%	3%	0%	1%	0%

While a large proportion of respondents consider their current remuneration to be satisfactory, it is not a minor criterion in their decision to consider a future job: one in four candidates (26%) place insufficient remuneration as a prohibitive criterion if they were to change jobs. This phenomenon is even more pronounced for candidates in the manufacturing engineering sector, with 33% selecting this item.

Telecommuting is also an important criterion for almost one in five candidates (18%). This figure rises to 25% for IT candidates, who are historically more accustomed to hybrid or even 100% teleworking.

EMPLOYMENT AND WORKING PATTERNS

Since the Covid-19 pandemic, business practices have radically changed the landscape of the global job market, and Greater Montreal is no exception: the democratization of telecommuting, the dematerialization of workspaces and new office layouts in response to these changes are just a few examples. However, at a time when some companies are preparing for a shift to the world of the future, we felt it important to give a voice to the region's professionals on the issues that govern their working lives.

Tomorrow's work practices

		Finance	Supply Chain	IT	Engineering
100% remote	19%	20%	13%	33%	3%
100% at the office	7%	6%	6%	0%	22%
Hybrid (office > home)	35%	36%	36%	22%	51%
Hybrid (home > office)	39%	38%	45%	45%	24%

While no single answer achieves an absolute majority, we can nonetheless see that hybrid mode, mixing workdays at the office with workdays at home, is the preferred work mode for candidates in Greater Montreal (74%).

While all sectors are more or less in agreement, there are some disparities: manufacturing engineering professionals consider hybrid work with more days at the office to be preferable (51%), while IT candidates, unsurprisingly, advocate hybrid work favoring telecommuting (45%, as do logistics candidates), or even 100% remote work (33%).

Work at the office : what are the main goals ?

		Finance	Supply Chain	IT	Engineering
Forge links and enjoy more informal moments	42%	44%	46%	43%	35%
Work better together	25%	25%	22%	19%	38%
Going to the office is a constraint	15%	15%	16%	26%	6%
A way to be informed about important matters	13%	11%	13%	5%	19%
No opinion	5%	5%	4%	8%	2%

According to the job candidates surveyed, creating connection is the main objective of working at the office. In fact, 42% put this criterion as the most important when asked why working in an office is important. This notion is confirmed by their other criteria of importance: 25% cite face-to-face work as an opportunity to collaborate better. Engineering professionals are particularly sure of this answer: 38% chose it and rated it first in this ranking.

Workspaces at the office should ...

		Finance	Supply Chain	IT	Engineering
Promote creativity, interaction and well-being	40%	40%	35%	45%	38%
Offer welcoming, collaborative spaces	26%	25%	35%	20%	24%
Help you live an experience (break rooms, etc.)	15%	15%	15%	15%	17%
Be mainly individual offices	13%	13%	14%	11%	13%
Offer partitioned areas for seclusion	6%	7%	1%	9%	8%

The same is true when it comes to defining the goal towards which office workspaces should strive: 40% of professionals in the Greater Montreal area rank interaction, well-being and creativity as their top criteria.

Challenges of remote work are ...

3 answers maximum

		Finance	Supply Chain	IT	Engineering
Ensuring a sense of belonging and cohesion	53%	46%	61%	57%	53%
Supporting remote teams in difficult times	51%	56%	50%	47%	44%
Detect when someone needs guidance/support	44%	44%	44%	47%	40%
Integrating new team recruits	37%	33%	42%	38%	37%
Launching new projects involving the whole team	27%	30%	20%	26%	35%
Developing a culture of innovation	20%	22%	20%	20%	16%

To make remote work for their teams in the long term, candidates in the Greater Montreal area feel that managers should emphasize the team's sense of belonging and cohesion (53%). This cohesion dimension is reinforced by the second most important item for 51% of candidates, namely supporting teams in difficult times.

"Candidates identify maintaining a sense of belonging and team cohesion as a central issue in teleworking. This concern is followed by the need to support remote teams during difficult times, underlining the importance of maintaining human support despite distance. These priorities illustrate the importance of proactive, empathetic management in overcoming the challenges of teleworking and fostering a healthy, committed work environment."

Frédérique Tahon
Managing Partner, Fed Group

WORK AND RELATIONS WITH MANAGERS

As we saw in the previous section, new ways of working pose challenges for teams in terms of collaboration and sense of belonging to the team. To complete the picture, we also asked professionals in the Greater Montreal area about their vision of the manager, who has historically played the role of liaison between different divisions and team members. What type of manager are the region's professionals looking for? What traits do they prefer, or avoid?

The ideal manager ...

		Finance	Supply Chain	IT	Engineering
Supports teams by listening to their needs	59%	62%	57%	66%	45%
Trusts their teams and colleagues	53%	52%	54%	59%	45%
Communicates and explains course changes	51%	43%	41%	40%	44%
Gives employees autonomy	36%	36%	34%	44%	27%
Gives meaning to the team's work	33%	34%	34%	27%	40%
Gives frequent and coherent feedback	30%	28%	30%	26%	40%
Makes decisions and stand by them	17%	18%	19%	10%	23%
Is able to innovate with their team	11%	11%	9%	13%	8%

If we were to draw a portrait of the manager, they would be a good listener (59%), trust their teams (53%) and be a good communicator (51%). However, it's interesting to look at the disparities between sectors too. While finance and logistics professionals tend to agree with the average results, manufacturing engineering professionals are more nuanced.

In fact, their responses are more homogeneous, and a majority trend is harder to identify. While support and trust are important, the manager's inspiring character (40%) and ability to provide regular feedback (40%) are equally crucial.

Unsurprisingly, and in line with previous responses concerning work arrangements, IT candidates (44%) are looking for more autonomy in their relationship with their manager.

Qualities professionals look for in a manager:

		Finance	Supply Chain	IT	Engineering
Trust and availability	69%	71%	68%	70%	60%
Communication and participation	58%	58%	56%	60%	57%
Achieving clear, realistic objectives	50%	53%	51%	47%	49%
Planning objectives and resources	31%	28%	34%	31%	32%
Partial or complete autonomy	29%	25%	29%	38%	26%
Delegating tasks	14%	14%	11%	14%	16%
Leading and managing relationships	8%	8%	11%	6%	3%

On the other hand, they don't want a manager who ...

3 answers maximum

		Finance	Supply Chain	IT	Engineering
Manages teams through manipulation or authority	60%	65%	52%	62%	57%
Does not communicate efficiently	48%	48%	46%	50%	48%
Sets unrealistic goals	45%	45%	47%	47%	42%
Overload their teams with work	33%	33%	34%	41%	21%
Does not take responsibility	30%	29%	33%	28%	29%
Gives no feedback on their work	27%	25%	28%	30%	29%
Monitors their work constantly	25%	23%	29%	22%	32%
Does not manager their teams	14%	17%	16%	10%	6%

Forget the manager who exercises authority without a sense of reciprocity: the time has come for managers to be available and communicative. And this applies regardless of the sector. Common to all professions is the expectation of clear, realistic objectives (50%).

This year has been a crucial milestone for Greater Montreal businesses, marked by a gradual return to normality after tumultuous years. Given that work practices have evolved in this post-pandemic context, this survey offers a glimpse of the new expectations of professionals. The results show that maintaining a sense of belonging, flexible working conditions and team support are at the heart of candidates' concerns.

Remote and hybrid work are preferred, but the resulting challenges, particularly in terms of cohesion and support, remain. Candidates in the Greater Montreal area value, above all, transparency, listening and trust on the part of managers. Professionals are looking for environments that encourage interaction and collaboration, and that revolve around employee well-being.

These elements confirm the importance of specialized recruitment firms like Fed Group, which, since 2015, have been facilitating meaningful encounters between companies and candidates while taking into account sector specificities. The 2024 study sheds light on current job market trends and the expectations of talents in the Greater Montreal area, offering valuable insights for companies wishing to attract and retain qualified professionals in a constantly evolving market.

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