



U.S. professionals drawn to cities for career success now want out

Driven by a housing crunch and high cost of living, new poll shows 70 percent of knowledge workers would move from major cities if they could perform their jobs at the same level.



FORT LAUDERDALE, FL – April 30, 2019 - They were drawn to big cities by the bright lights and career prospects. Now, beset by a housing crunch and high cost of living, more than half of professionals living in U.S. cities are ready to leave. According to a [new study](#) commissioned by [Citrix Systems, Inc.](#) (NASDAQ:CTXS), 70 percent of knowledge workers living in urban locales say they would move to outlying areas if they could perform their jobs at the same level. And as the battle for talent heats up around the globe, companies need to follow them and enable remote work.

“Traditional work models, where work is organized around a hub like a call center or office building, are fundamentally broken, creating a frustrating employee experience and exacerbating the war for talent,” said Tim Minahan, Executive Vice President of Strategy and Chief Marketing Officer, Citrix. “People today want to work where they want to work. And to attract them, companies need to rethink what the workplace means and create a more flexible way to work that enables them to get the right people in the right places to unlock innovation, engage customers and move their business forward.”

Conducted by [OnePoll](#), the Citrix study sought to understand how location impacts job satisfaction and success and the role that flexible and remote work can play in enhancing both. Among the key findings:

Of the 5,000 knowledge workers across the U.S. surveyed a majority see major cities as a key catalyst for their careers due to the large number of employers operating within them, the availability of more highly skilled job opportunities and higher salaries.

But the price of these opportunities is becoming too high to pay. More than half of those polled (58 percent) cited the costs of city living as “crippling.” And as a result, they’re ready to move.

- 70 percent of workers currently living in cities stated they would be very likely/fairly likely to consider relocating to suburban or rural areas if they knew their professional life wouldn’t suffer and they could still perform their role to the same level

And it’s among the biggest pain points companies currently face. Of those who participated in the OnePoll survey, 31 percent indicated that sourcing talent for skilled positions is an issue in their organization and 18 percent suggested it’s likely to become one in the next five years. Many are taking steps to try to attract a broader range of talent including:

- Increasing wages for skilled roles (36 percent)
- Actively promoting diversity initiatives to encourage applications from a range of backgrounds (28 percent)
- Investing in education and training programs, outside of city locations (20 percent)

But the real ticket to finding and keeping people lies in enabling flexible and remote work.

- 85 percent of respondents believe they could do their job just as effectively from anywhere
- 62 percent of those not already working remotely believe that they could work away from the office at least one day per week

And they see a number of positives in doing so:

- 69 percent say working remote would enable them to be more productive and focused
- 83 percent think it would enable them to strike a healthier work-life balance
- 77 percent indicated they could save money by reducing commuting costs

Companies are beginning to embrace the notion that to get the people they want and need to make their business go, they’ll need to rethink the traditional workplace and employee experience. To this end:

- 35 percent of respondents say they are introducing better flex/remote work policies, to widen the talent pool, and
- 31 percent are searching for talent nationwide, including in rural areas

But to bridge the talent gap and drive competitive advantage, they need to pick up the pace. Only 33 percent of workers polled currently work remotely at least one day per. What’s holding them back?

- Connectivity was cited as a key challenge by 58 percent of respondents who said the current quality of broadband negatively impacts their ability to reliably work from home

“Technology can be a great equalizer. Unfortunately, in many areas there remains a clear divide,” Minahan said. “It’s time for companies to reimagine the way work gets done and leverage tools that are readily available to them to create [digital workspaces](#) that give people the flexibility to work when, where and how they want and be their most productive. In doing so, they can not only narrow the technical divide, but create a world-class experience that enables their employees and business to thrive.”

Citrix commissioned a survey of 5,000 U.S. office workers that hold positions which could be carried out remotely. These are most likely to be knowledge workers who effectively think for a living. The research was conducted online by polling company OnePoll (www.onepoll.com) in March 2019.