Up to 10 Million Americans Turn to Freelancing Amid The Great Resignation, Upwork Report Finds

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Many Americans are leaving their jobs and considering freelancing to work remotely and gain more flexibility

SAN FRANCISCO,--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Aug. 3, 2021-- Upwork Inc. (Nasdaq: UPWK), the world's work marketplace, today released a new research report, "The Great Resignation: From Full-time to Freelance," which explores why American professionals are leaving their current full-time roles. Utilizing survey data from 4,000 Americans, the report finds that 20%, or 10 million Americans, are considering freelancing to work remotely and gain more flexibility.

As some businesses return to the office, the report finds that many professionals are not willing to sacrifice the ability to work remotely. 17% of professionals -- or approximately 9 million workers -- working remotely during the pandemic would consider looking for another job if they have to go back to the office. With this rising interest in a more flexible work arrangement outside the office, professionals are not only considering other full-time jobs to stay remote, but freelancing as well. Among those who are definitely planning on quitting, 52% are considering freelancing.

"Many professionals are not happy about the prospects of returning to the office after the pandemic, and are looking for more remote and flexible options," says Upwork Chief Economist, Adam Ozimek. "Freelancing has always been a career path that provides these benefits more than traditional full-time jobs. Our report indicates that this heightened interest in freelancing is likely to expand the size of the freelance workforce."

Key findings from the report include:

- **Offices are reopening**: Of those who were mostly remote during the pandemic, 25% are already back at the office and another 38% will return at some point.
- **Professionals are not excited to go back:** 34% of workers who were remote are not excited about returning to the office, compared to 24% who are.
- **Remote work has become highly valued for some**: Among those who are not excited about returning to the office, 24% would be willing to take a pay cut to work remotely, and 35% would consider it.
- **The return to the office is fueling some of The Great Resignation:** 17% of professionals working remotely during the pandemic would probably or definitely consider looking for another job if they have to go back to the office. This represents 9 million workers.
- **Many are turning to freelancing**: The Great Resignation isn't just about workers moving from one full-time job to another; 20%, or 10 million Americans, are considering freelancing. Among those, 73% cite the ability to work remote and gain more flexibility as a reason why.
- **Growth in the freelance workforce**: The 10 million people considering freelancing would represent a significant percentage increase -- 17% -- in the total freelance workforce, which had 57 million freelancers total, and 16 million full-time freelancers in 2019.

To read the full research report, visit www.upwork.com/research/the-great-resignation.

About Upwork

Upwork is the world's work marketplace that connects businesses with independent talent. We serve everyone from one-person startups to 30% of the Fortune 100 with a powerful, trust-driven platform that enables companies and freelancers to work together in new ways that unlock their potential. Our talent community earned over $2.3 billion on Upwork in 2020 across more than 10,000 skills, including website & app development, creative & design, customer support, finance & accounting, consulting, and operations. Learn more at www.upwork.com and join us on LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram.

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