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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Study: Flexible Workforces on the Rise as Employees Look for New Jobs

Spherion Study Finds 41 Percent Will Only Work for Companies that Offer Flexible Environments

ATLANTA – September 4, 2018 — Flexible or contingent workforces (those that include contractors, freelancers and/or temporary workers) are on the rise and here to stay. According to the 2018 Emerging Workforce® Study commissioned by Spherion Staffing Services, companies surveyed report that the average percentage of contingent workers in their workforces has increased from 15 percent in 2017 to 29 percent in 2018. In fact, 41 percent of employees say they will only work for a company that offers agile employment opportunities.

Understanding what drives employment decisions is especially important, given rising rates of job mobility: Almost a quarter of employees (23 percent) surveyed by Spherion say they will likely look for a new job in the next three months and 33 percent say they will likely look for a new job in the next 12 months.

“In the current job market, with the unemployment rate the lowest the U.S. has seen in nearly two decades, finding the right mix of talent – and then retaining that talent – is crucial for a company,” said Spherion Division President Sandy Mazur. “What employees are looking for and what employers need from their employees continue to evolve in the age of increased digitization and cultural and generational shifts. We have conducted the Emerging Workforce Study for more than 20 years to help companies stay ahead of these trends.”

Companies see many benefits of a contingent workforce, such as the ability to remain nimble during economic ups and downs (85 percent), the ability to protect their full-time workforce (79 percent) and a higher-quality workforce (72 percent). Top challenges relating to an agile workforce include the complexity of managing a contingent workforce (44 percent). For example, 51 percent of companies struggle to find ways to engage contingent workers because compliance and regulatory requirements hinder companies from effectively integrating these workers.

Employers and employees largely agree on the benefits of an agile workforce. However, the Emerging Workforce Study found several areas where the two groups were less aligned, such as salary satisfaction and retention drivers. The study also uncovered data on several other key workplace trends. Among the findings:

- **Workers are looking for new jobs – soon!**: The number of employees looking to leave their current jobs is even higher among Millennials, with 48 percent saying they will likely look for a new job in the next three months and 56 percent in the next 12 months. The top reasons for moving on for all generations are unhappiness with their current salaries, growth opportunities

and office culture. Overall, workers don't feel that their employers are putting in the effort to retain them, with 20 percent saying their employers are making less effort.

- **Salary satisfaction is an area of major disconnect:** The study shows that 40 percent of employees are not happy with their current salary, and 83 percent believe they should be paid more in today's market. Meanwhile, 61 percent of employers believe their employees are happy with their current salaries. Also, 68 percent of employers say they know they have to increase wages in order to compete for talent but are financially unable to do so at this time.
- **Recruitment efforts must evolve:** When looking for new jobs, employees consider the following: the experience they have during the hiring process (86 percent), the number of programs/benefits a company offers to help maintain work-life balance (85 percent) and connection with a company's culture and values (78 percent). In addition, 65 percent say that a company's online reputation is equally important as the offer in determining whether they will accept a job. While work-life balance ranks high on the list, only 45 percent of employees are very or extremely satisfied with their ability to maintain work-life balance.
- **Diversity is still a goal versus a reality for most companies:** Less than half (49 percent) of companies and employees (45 percent) describe their workforce as extremely or very diverse. In addition, equal pay continues to be problematic with 63 percent of male employees saying they believe employees at their company earn equal pay for a job, regardless of gender, versus only 49 percent of female employees who share that perception of equality.

The 2018 Emerging Workforce Study was conducted online by Research Now. For more than two decades, the study has tracked changing trends and attitudes of both workers and their employers. Other topics in this year's study include: technology and automation, the talent shortage, the digital workplace, employee engagement and top HR concerns.

Methodology

The 2018 Emerging Workforce Study was conducted online within the United States between February and March 2018 by Research Now Group, Inc., on behalf of Spherion, in two phases. First, among 704 human resource managers, with results weighted as needed to reflect the composition of U.S. companies, based on company revenue. Secondly, among 2,007 employed adults, with results weighted as needed for age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region and household income to represent the target population. No estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated. A full methodology is available.

About Spherion

Spherion (spherion.com) is a leading recruiting and staffing provider, specializing in temporary and direct hire placement of administrative, clerical, customer service, light industrial and professional job candidates. To help clients attract, engage and retain a high-performance workforce, Spherion offers in-depth market knowledge, outstanding customer service, a strong network of talent and unique insights from its groundbreaking Emerging Workforce® Study, now in its 21st year. As an industry pioneer, Spherion has, for more than 70 years, matched candidates to clients in virtually every industry across the U.S. Today, each Spherion office is independently owned and operated by a team of local specialists, dedicated to delivering great experiences, powered by technology but always with a personal touch. To learn more about one of the nation's fastest-growing industries, visit spherion.com/franchise and explore how Spherion is actively expanding into new territories, with more than 75 franchise markets available.

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