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**WITH DATA FROM**  
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# **2020 CYBER JOB REPORT**

AUGUST 2020





## WHERE WE ARE NOW

# RETENTION RISK IN CYBER REMAINS HIGH

The data on job seekers tells a mixed story and suggest just a short term change in behaviour. Companies should not be complacent about retaining their cyber staff.

The number of people who said they would consider a move is largely the same from the start of 2020. Only 19% said they were not considering changing jobs. That over 80% of a cyber team may be considering changing jobs, should be seen as a real risk to companies concerned about retention.

Whether job seekers would be higher or lower, was uncertain from the anecdotal evidence. BeecherMadden have seen an increase in visitors to their website. Visitors were up 130% from July 2019 compared to July 2020. This can be attributed to three factors. Some cyber professionals have lost their jobs and the unemployment rate in cyber is now above zero. There is a level of panic about finding a new job, driven by the state of the wider economy. Finally, recruiters are less active in pursuing candidates, so those looking need to rely on their own applications more than before.

We expected those in jobs, to be staying put. This comes through in the data when looking at active job seekers. The number who identified as passive, rather than active, had increased. 35% reported they would only move if approached. At the start of the year this number was 16%. This is in line with our expectation but it could be problematic for companies. If talent is waiting to be approached, relying on people applying to your adverts will not yield success. **Moving jobs right now may seem risky.** If your job is secure, actively looking to leave may seem unnecessary. People may also have less time to job hunt as the work day becomes longer or they juggle childcare. If people aren't actively looking, companies will have to work harder to reach them. The increase in job applications will likely just be temporary and companies need to continue to build their talent pipelines.

# 50% SAY DEMAND TO HIRE IS UP

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Cybersecurity hiring seems unaffected by the pandemic. While some companies paused hiring decisions, this appears to have been temporary and the industry may rebound even stronger.

50% of those who responded felt that demand for cybersecurity professionals has been higher this year. 19% felt it was lower with 31% saying that demand was about the same. We have heard even more about the security challenges of remote working, likely contributing to this demand.

This question may benefit from some further qualification on the seniority of those who felt demand was lower. We have seen a decrease in the number of CISO jobs and a decrease in CISO salaries, that pre-dates 2020. Those looking for their first role in cybersecurity also report finding it hard to get a job at the moment. This mismatch also seems to have been occurring for some time with true entry level roles in cybersecurity being hard to find. Demand for those with specific skills, especially in incident response, cloud security and application security, has remained high this year. These roles at a mid or senior level, are fuelling the demand.

62% said their company was currently hiring in cybersecurity. Some had paused recruitment and had now started again but many said they did not stop. Only 19% reported needing to hire but not being able to. Not being able to hire is a common complaint at most times from teams that feel they are overworked. We do not routinely survey how many companies are actively recruiting to be able to say conclusively if this is a higher or lower number than normal. That cybersecurity hiring is back to normal, would fit with data from our own clients. In March 80% put in recruitment freezes. Just 5% still have recruitment freezes in place.

Very few working in cyber have received a permanent pay cut. 11% have taken a pay cut with 78% taking no pay cut at all. This seems to be in line with overall [data](#) on national pay cuts and is not indicative of a long-term decrease in cybersecurity salaries.

Of those who had changed jobs this year, 42% said they did so within 4 weeks. This is down slightly from the start of the year (59%) but still a high number. This contributes to the view that the cybersecurity job market is robust.



## WELLBEING

# STRESS LEVELS INCREASE FOR 70%

The wellbeing of cybersecurity staff is suffering. How companies react, will have a direct impact to their retention and hiring success.

We asked if people felt their company had treated their employees above average, average or below average during 2020. We expected to see a correlation between how well employees had been treated and how likely they were to move jobs. The majority (81%) felt they had been treated average, or above average. There was no obvious correlation between how likely these people were to be looking to move jobs. Some of these were still looking to move and there was no clear trend on whether this was more or less seriously. Of those that felt they had been treated below average, 73% were looking to change jobs and 90% of these said that they were looking more seriously than at the start of the year. It seems that treating people well did not buy loyalty. However, **treating them badly helped to ensure that they would look to leave**

Perhaps the most concerning result in our survey relates to stress. **70% said they felt that their level of stress or burnout was worse than last year.** Just 5% reported their stress levels are lower. With 73% saying at the start of this year they had some or frequent burnout, this is a worrying increase. Burnout is often suggested as a reason why people are leaving the industry, a trend we can ill-afford.

We would suggest the following resources for anyone who is concerned about their levels of work-related stress.

[Why cyber burnout is real and what to do about it.](#)

[American Psychological Association](#)

[Headspace for Work](#)

[Samaritans](#)

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# DIVERSITY REMAINS IMPORTANT

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Black Lives Matter had a big impact on the world this year. We expected that companies would react but worried that the economic backdrop may hamper these efforts.

We asked if diversity was a higher or lower priority this year. Thankfully, we had zero responses reporting diversity as a lower priority. This was a concern as there is [evidence](#) that women, especially mothers, are more likely to become unemployed in a recession. There is also evidence that Black and Hispanic men are more affected than white men. With the efforts to increase the number of women in cybersecurity, it would be concerning that these efforts could be undone. [While the \(ISC\)<sup>2</sup>](#), report that minority representation in cybersecurity is slightly higher than the US workforce average, the cybersecurity profession still has work to do. Representation is important but addressing systemic racism in technology will help to [make us more secure](#). While 20% unfortunately reported that diversity had never been a priority in their organization, 40% reported it as a higher priority this year. We see this as positive news, when the pandemic and economy may have created a different result.

One of the key steps that companies can take to assist in recruiting more diverse candidates, is withdrawing the requirement for a college degree when the role does not require it. Karla's recent [Forbes article](#) address the reasons for this in more detail.

## CONCLUSION

Cybersecurity has not been immune to the events of 2020. What is clear, is that the industry has proved more robust than almost all other sectors. For job seekers this is positive news. Those looking to hire may have experienced a boost in their ability to do so but this does appear to be temporary. If this has made them complacent on their retention efforts, they should start to address this. Companies should be considering the wellbeing of their employees, especially as the ethics of a company come under the spotlight.

*We would like to thank all those that completed our survey. This is a smaller data set than our annual reports but the results provide some interesting insight into the state of the cybersecurity job market.*

