

# 2 strategies to deal with today's worker shortage

As labor markets continue to tighten, employers are pursuing additional strategies for recruiting untapped talent and retaining workers, says a new report by The Conference Board. They're lowering educational requirements for some jobs and increasing the use of teleworking.

The Conference Board's new Global Labor Market Outlook report notes that in 2017 labor markets tightened in almost every country, spurred by two main factors: the acceleration in global economic activity, which led to strong hiring, and slow-to-negative growth in the labor supply.

In the U.S., a third additional factor exacerbate tightness: Low labor force participation, a problem the Conference Board attributes, in part, to the nation's ongoing opioid epidemic and a rising number of people not in the labor force due to disability.

By 2019, the report projects the lowest U.S. unemployment rate since the 1960s, with many industries and locations experiencing acute labor shortages. It says employers are responding by:

**Hiring workers with less education.** As the pool of available workers has dwindled, employers have begun hiring less qualified workers.

**Building flexibility with telecommuting.** It's a way to attract employees who live far from an employer's physical premises. In 2016, the U.S. labor market reached unprecedented growth in the share of people that work remotely full-time, with teleworking reaching 3.1% percent of full-time employees, up from 1.2% in 2001.