



Welcome to the June edition of RossNews. This edition of RossNews has a particular focus on the new WorkChoices legislation and how it will assist your organisation when using Temporary Employees or Contractors. I welcome your feedback and the comments I receive are actioned to ensure that RossNews provides you with the information you need.

Please feel free to email your comments to us at marketing@rosshumandirections.com.

Julia Ross

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If you require any further information on the articles in this issue, please email the Marketing Department, marketing@rosshumandirections.com

economic update

by Chris McFadden, CFO

The 2006/07 Commonwealth Budget represents a significant fiscal stimulus to the economy with additional spending/revenue measures of approximately \$11 billion in 2006/07 increasing to \$16 billion on an ongoing basis. As a result, it is not surprising that the business community sees the Budget as adding significantly to expected business conditions, with business confidence measures registering their highest levels of the past decade, building on constant rises seen since March 2005. Retail, Wholesale and Business Services are the sectors exhibiting the most significant lift in confidence.

The budget measures will see a boost to household spending, but on their own this is unlikely to fuel fears of a further interest rate increase (following the Reserve Bank of Australia's 0.25% increase pre-budget). That prospect may loom larger however should inflation expectations or labour costs accelerate over the remainder of 2006.

Australia is currently experiencing its longest run of continuous economic growth, which is now into its 15th year, with economic growth lifting from 2.5% in 2005/06 to 3.25% in 2006/07. The economy is now operating at close to full employment of labour and capital with businesses reporting labour shortages as a constraint on output. Business investment is expected to continue to drive the economy in 2006/07, growing by 8%, following growth of around 14% in the prior year.

training tips

by Ric Wilson, Business Development Manager

Workplace training is beneficial to an organisation for many reasons. In our Training Tips section, we provide you with an array of ways to ensure your training is effective and appropriate for the audience.

“Talks Too Much?”

When one team member dominates a discussion, all other participants hold back their ideas, which ultimately leads to team members becoming bored. Instead of coming up with solutions that incorporate a wealth of diverse opinions, the team ends up with a mediocre decision influenced by one member. Here are some suggestions for dealing with participants who talk too much:

- avoid discouraging the excessive talker. Instead, encourage other team members to participate more;
- go around the group, giving each participant an opportunity to speak;
- divide the group into pairs for preliminary sharing of ideas. Then ask each pair to give a summary report of their discussion;
- impose air time limits on participants;
- interrupt the excessive speaker with a question directed to someone else;
- acknowledge the comment and involve others: “Al, that was an interesting insight. Barbara, what are your views on this issue?”;
- before the meeting or during a break, enlist the help of the excessive talker in encouraging the silent participants to open up, and
- at the start of the meeting, establish equal participation by all members as a team goal. Encourage the participants to help monitor and manage personal participation.

For more information on how training can be beneficial to your organisation, please email us at marketing@rosshumandirections.com.

legal briefs

by Greg Coolahan,
Commercial & Legal Director and
Michele Jones, IR Manager

Question

How can the new WorkChoices legislation assist my organisation when I use Temporary Employees or Contractors?

Response

Under the new federal industrial relations framework “WorkChoices”, businesses will need to ensure their recruitment company has the capacity to supply a potentially wide variety of work arrangements to suit your operational needs. Over time it can be expected that state and federal awards will no longer be the predominant form of workplace regulation and will be replaced by individual and collective agreements. This is due to factors such as:

- agreements completely replacing awards;
- there is no longer a “no-disadvantage” test against the relevant award, meaning more flexibility for everyone in the employment conditions offered, and
- quicker agreement approval process.

A related consequence is that different employment models can be more easily offered, such as those providing holiday entitlements and greater job security, which will assist clients who require longer term placements but are concerned about turnover.

In addition, legislation is expected to be passed shortly that will make it easier to be an independent contractor and supply only labour services, which will particularly assist our IT clients.

Ross Human Directions is happy to discuss further the full range of options that may suit you and are now available under the WorkChoices environment. Please feel free to email michele.jones@rosshumandirections.com.

The information discussed here is a general explanation of the law, and is not intended to serve as legal advice. Readers requiring specific legal advice regarding a particular situation should consult an appropriately qualified lawyer.

It is often said that change is the one constant, along with taxes. As organisations evaluate how to improve business performance by utilising the increased flexibility available under the new WorkChoices legislation, it is also a good time to review the importance of managing the change process. Team members who experience poorly managed change often end up pessimistic and angry, and perhaps more importantly are overly negative and suspicious of future change attempts.

There have been many books and full day seminars on how to manage change successfully, however I have listed below what I have found to be key consistent components of a successful change program:

- sense of urgency or removal of complacency - this may require the presence or creation of a crisis which could be financial or competitive;
- a well articulated vision with milestones of the journey ahead;
- an empowered team to champion and drive the process;
- regular clear communication that recognises progress; and arguably the most important,
- walking the talk.

While rigorous attention to each of these steps will not guarantee successful change programs, neglecting any one of them will almost certainly increase the chances of failure.

To paraphrase and buttress the notions put forward by Jim Collins in his books "Built to Last" and "Good to Great" successful companies not only get the bus going in the right direction with everybody onboard, they also have the right people in the right seats.

→ thriving (and surviving) with Gen Y

Ross surveyed senior HR and operational executives to provide insight into how organisations are acknowledging, understanding and managing the expectations of the youngest generation in the workforce. Over 58 per cent of organisations in Australia have experienced a shift in employer/employee expectations amongst its younger workforce. However, of those organisations that identified a shift in the expectations of employers and their Generation Y employees, only 21 per cent believe they are managing this shift successfully. Generation Y is the 4.5 million Australians born between 1978 and 1994.

The survey, which was completed by senior HR and operational executives from some 65 organisations across a range of industries, also found that a third (32 per cent) of organisations believe there is tension between managers and Generation Y employees. Of the organisations surveyed some 12 per cent of respondents claim their leaders just can't understand the work ethic of the younger generation while another 20 per cent believe the expectations of managers and younger employees do not reconcile, leading to frustration for both groups.

Julia Ross, Group Managing Director, Ross Human Directions said, "This survey demonstrates that organisations are beginning to acknowledge the values, beliefs and expectations of Generation Y employees. However, it also brings to light the fact that many organisations are not quite sure how to attract, retain and manage Generation Y or what the impact might be on their business.

"With a large number of Generation Y yet to enter the workforce, organisations need to address how they manage Generation Y while harnessing the potential of this creative, innovative and inspired generation," concluded Ross.

Peter Sheahan, a talent specialist and Generation Y expert said, "Generation Y employees are fast becoming the ambassadors of organisations' brands and reputation. With soaring attrition rates, and Australia's aging workforce, there has never been a more crucial time to engage this generation. 'Thriving (and surviving) with Generation Y in the workforce' reveals that while some organisations are beginning to adapt to meet the needs of Generation Y, many have a long way to go."

→ snapshot of Gen Y results

- Of the 58 per cent of respondents who acknowledged a shift in employer/employee expectations amongst its younger workforce, 50 per cent said that they had noticed a shift, which may be affecting them but are yet to understand its impact. Another 29 per cent felt that there has been a significant shift in people's expectations which needed to be seriously addressed.
- Generation Y employees rate personal development (80 per cent), career progression (79 per cent) and remuneration and benefits (81 per cent) above things such as stability and security (49 per cent) in their jobs, according to the survey's respondents. This is in stark contrast to baby boomers (born between 1950-1964) who rank stability and security at 87 per cent in importance, while career progression and personal development flounder at 36 and 37 per cent respectively.
- More than 50 per cent of respondents said they had modified their recruitment and selection processes (51 per cent) as well as their reward and recognition programs (51 per cent) to better cater for Generation Y, while 49 per cent of respondents stated they had made changes in employee training.

Ross Navigate - our Human Capital Consulting, Training and People, Performance and Development division - can assist your organisation with Gen Y planning and management strategies. If you would like more information, please contact marketing@rosshumandirections.com.

Christine Shewry

Global MD, Julia Ross hot!

I joined Ross Human Directions early this year to take on the role of Global Managing Director, Julia Ross hot! with the intention of growing the Julia Ross hot! brand globally. Bringing a wealth of knowledge through industry experience, it is my aim to position the company as the recruitment industry market leader.

Born in London, my education and early career were based in the UK. My 30+ years in recruitment began as a consultant with Alfred Marks Bureau (AMB). Following the acquisition of AMB by Adia (Adecco) I opened Adia's Head Office Branch in Regent St London. On leaving Adia, in partnership with a colleague, I opened an independent recruitment company, which over 10 years, grew to 7 branches across London. This company was later sold to Corporate Services Group, the UK's largest independent recruitment company, where I accepted the role of Divisional Managing Director.

I held this position for 4 years before being head hunted by Morgan & Banks and invited to Australia to take up the role of CEO of two newly created divisions. In 2000, following the merger of Morgan & Banks with TMP (Hudson) I was posted to New York as Senior Vice President Global Operations. During the last 2 years I fulfilled the role of CEO with Adecco Australia before joining Ross Human Directions.

As Global Managing Director, Julia Ross hot! my role encompasses all aspects of the brand internationally. My aim is that Ross Human Directions, through exhaustive personal service, 'above and beyond' total solutions delivery, market leader product development and world-class account management will position itself as the Recruitment Industry market leader. Clients and candidates will experience constant and ongoing improvement in every aspect of their interaction with Ross Human Directions.

I am committed to achieving this with a team that is the best trained, most fulfilled, career supported and committed of any recruitment industry group... be it Australia, New Zealand, U.K, Ireland, Singapore, China, or any other location Ross Human Directions chooses to conquer!