



How do the new WorkChoices industrial relations changes affect individuals? This edition of RossNews showcases some fresh research results regarding how comfortable members of the workforce feel about the federal government's WorkChoices legislation, along with a recruitment market update, which explores the variety of Service Delivery Models from which to choose the optimal solution to your particular business's needs.

I hope that you enjoy the articles and welcome any feedback you may have about Ross at marketing@rosshumandirections.com.

Julia Ross

→ economic update

by Chris McFadden, CFO

The consensus view for Australia is that the current situation may be about as good as it gets. As is well documented, in recent years the commodity boom has been the driving force behind Australia's economic activity, driving strong business investment and large increases in domestic income. This may be at its peak, with 2006-07 growth likely to be impacted by four key developments.

Firstly, a decrease in business spending from recent extreme highs, in part caused by capacity constraints, is expected to limit further upside potential. Secondly, key commodity prices have retraced from their highs in recent months, suggesting the commodity cycle may well be turning. Thirdly, it is anticipated that there will be a further decline in dwelling construction due to higher interest rates. Finally, and perhaps most critically, will be the RBA's desire to contain medium term inflationary pressures which are already at the upper end of their comfort level.

All of these factors would suggest that growth is unlikely to exceed the potential growth rate of the economy, which is sitting between 3-3.25%.

In terms of business conditions, there was a slight upward move in June but these may well be plateauing in trend terms. Business confidence remains unchanged although NSW is weakening whilst the commodity driven WA and QLD remain strongest. Sector wise, Mining remains upbeat, whilst the Construction & Transport sectors were both unexpectedly strong. The trend on cyclical sensitive sectors such as Retail and Manufacturing is weaker, suggesting the first impact of the RBA's recent rate rise and expectation of more to come.

→ legal briefs

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

Workplace Harassment

This unwelcome type of activity is also known as "bullying" and can cause significant problems for those who witness, or are involved in it at the worksite. Many may not be aware that such harassment can include the following behaviour:

- deliberately withholding information or deliberately supplying incorrect information
- maliciously excluding and isolating a person from workplace activities
- spreading malicious gossip or rumours about a person

as well as the more obvious examples of raising your voice or humiliating someone, especially in the presence of others. Furthermore, sexual or racial harassment may be a cause of such behaviour, leading to equal opportunity matters being raised.

When workplace harassment involves agency employees, recruitment companies have a duty of care to work with the client and the employees concerned to resolve the issue. The consequences of ignoring signs of harassment include:

- lost productivity;
- low morale;
- legal claims such as discrimination, constructive dismissal and common law damages, and
- workers compensation claims for stress and associated health problems.

Ross Human Directions has comprehensive policies on all types of harassment to cover its staff located at client sites, in addition to ongoing training and temp/contractor care programs that minimise any potential disruption and legal risk to the client.

For further information on this issue, please contact 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.

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

→ training tips

by Mary Strain,
National Training 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.

"Planning Your Topic"

Planning your topic involves gathering a range of supporting material that is relevant. You will want to get all sorts of information and your audience must be kept awake and interested, so dig out a lot of facts, in a variety of forms. Consider the possibilities!

- Facts to support the point.
- Statistics to prove the point.
- Quotations that back your viewpoint.
- Comparisons that relate the topic to the audience's background.
- Narratives (funny or serious) about people and events.
- Questions that the audience will answer or you will answer for them – and the answer.

As you select a method of presentation, keep these four points in mind:

1. main points should include all material needed to reach the objective;
2. main points should be numbered in the order in which they will be presented;
3. each point must be in the form of a sentence, and the sentences must be of the same type – statements, commands, or questions, and
4. the best lectures have no more than four main points.

Source: "Delivering Effective Training Sessions" McArdel, Geri

by Diane Armstrong, People & Performance

The "Human Culture" - The Power of Intelligence (EQ)

How Hot Is Yours?

Most organisations today are seeking to maximise the return on their investment in human capital. And yet, as the inevitable waves of change continue to occur, organisations recognise that in order to achieve their strategic objectives, employee skills, attributes, knowledge and attitudes must align with, reflect and enhance corporate values and mission.

Why do some service delivery and sales teams deliver exceptional results and some deliver to the minimum requirements to get over the line?

New results suggest, that overall, the climate - how people feel about working at a company - can account for 20 to 30 percent of business performance. Historically, data connecting the 2 has been sparse and so, in practice, leaders/managers could easily ignore their personal style and its effects on the people they lead, focusing instead on "harder" business objectives.

If climate drives business results what drives climate? Leadership.

Daniel Goleman is the foremost researcher into the field of what's become known as Emotional Intelligence - put simply, the ability to manage your own emotions and perceive those of others. In his book "The New Leaders" Goleman found that roughly 50 - 70 percent of how employees perceive their organisations climate can be traced to the actions of one person: their leader/manager.

More than anyone else the leader(s)/managers and boss create the conditions that directly determine people's ability to work well.

→ workchoices

"Nearly 70% feel more vulnerable"

Ross Human Directions recently released fresh research results regarding how comfortable members of the workforce feel about the federal government's WorkChoices legislation.

In response to direct questioning, hundreds of workforce participants said that they have concerns that they are or may be more vulnerable due to the new WorkChoices industrial relations changes. Of the individuals surveyed, more than 68.5% indicated potential concern that as an employee they maybe more vulnerable than previously.

Whether these concerns are well-founded or not, it is critical to the successful roll out of the benefits of WorkChoices that the community feel confident with the legislation.

Group Managing Director, Julia Ross, said "WorkChoices offers both employees and employers significant advantages but we're concerned that the positive messages about it don't seem to be reaching the workforce. The fact that RossResearch shows that the majority still do not feel confident is a significant concern to employers and should also be to the government. WorkChoices does offer a number of benefits but if the community lacks confidence in it, those benefits will be difficult for business and employees to realise."

→ recruitment market update

Today's recruitment services environment offers client organisations a wide variety of Service Delivery Models from which to choose the optimal solution to your particular business's needs. Whilst there are many variations, the most popular models include: ad hoc relationship, preferred supplier panel, managing vendor, managing agent, master vendor, HR outsource, and sole supplier.

The ad hoc relationship offers maximum flexibility to the client in terms of access to any number of recruitment providers at any time. This can have candidate-access benefits in a high employment market cycle such as that which is evident in many countries around the world presently because it can sometimes be the case that having more recruiters working for you on a brief may mean that a wider selection of candidates is identified. The ad-hoc model also means that each individual hiring manager in your organisation can choose to work with the recruiters in whom he or she has the greatest confidence. However on the downside, it reduces the price and service negotiating power of the client because their buying power is split across so many providers. It also means that service delivery is difficult to monitor and can be very inconsistent across different providers.

Preferred Supplier Panels are popular because they retain a sound element of choice in suppliers for hiring managers, whilst gaining pricing advantages for client organisations due to volume guarantees for recruitment providers. They also offer the opportunity to implement quality controls and service level agreements. Models such as Managing Vendor, Managing Agent, Master Vendor and HR outsource are all Vendor-on-Premises models that are appropriate to large organisations with high workforce numbers and extensive recruitment needs. We will discuss these models in more detail in future editions. The Sole Supplier model can offer considerable advantages to organisations who wish to achieve optimal price benefits and service outcomes at whatever your volume of usage may be. If a client organisation is prepared to commit to an exclusive arrangement with one provider, the client will always be able to negotiate price and service outcomes that are superior to those available without that commitment.

→ spotlight on ralph shreeve



Ralph Shreeve is the Global MD, Verossity, Ross Calibre, Ross Logic, Ross Navigate and Firstwater.

I joined Ross Human Directions earlier this year to take on the role of Global Managing Director for Verossity, Ross Calibre, Ross Logic, Ross Navigate and Firstwater.

I aim to see Ross Human Directions recognised as the market leader in every market it serves. We will achieve this by having the best people, providing the best solutions and placements whilst delivering the highest standard of customer service. Financial success will follow and benefit all of our stakeholders.

Born in Germany, of a German mother and English father, I spent my early childhood on a variety of army bases scattered across the world, before finally moving to England as a 9 year old.

I started my career by following my father into the British Army. My commercial career began in leadership development running a series of action-oriented development programs based on Outward Bound experiences. From there I progressed through corporate advisory and line management roles in the energy industry. I came to Australia in 1994 and worked for Morgan & Banks where I was responsible for a number of major profit centres and geographic regions before becoming the Managing Partner of the Asia Pacific operation of Sibson & Company, a leading strategy, corporate advisory and human capital consulting firm.

Between 2001 and 2005, I was the CEO/Managing Director of IPN Ltd, Australia's largest primary healthcare company, and led this listed company through a high profile turnaround.

Immediately before joining Ross Human Directions, I was a partner with the world's leading executive search firm where I headed up the Healthcare, Energy, Infrastructure and Asia Pacific Leadership Consulting practices.

As a former Rugby Union forward, I now live up to the old adage "those who can do, those who can't teach" and I'm actively involved in youth rugby in NSW as a coach of the Mosman Whales Junior Rugby Club.

I am enjoying working across diverse areas of the company and look forward to the coming years.