

RecruitNews

News that matters for Australian employers

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Inside Australia's Gender Pay Gap

Researchers reveal a measurable link between board composition and gender pay gaps

**Position Descriptions, Policies
and Procedures**

**Four Industries to Drive half of
five-year Jobs Growth**

**The Potential of Mature Age
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Discipline: To Fire or Not to Fire**

Trojan Recruitment Group 



Comments from the CEO

Welcome to the 2016 Autumn Edition of Trojan RecruitNews, a free bi-annual publication providing insight and news for businesses in all industry sectors across Australia.

In this edition of RecruitNews, we take a close look at the latest report and findings into Australia's Gender Pay Gap. This new research has uncovered some of the strongest evidence to date that shows greater representation of women on boards is associated with a significant reduction in the gender pay gap, and by just increasing the share of women on boards to 50:50, it could reduce the pay gap by 6.3 per cent.

We also take a look at the Department of Employment's "Employment Outlook to November 2019" which provides an overview of the employment outlook across industries, occupations, and regions. The report

reveals that there are these four main industries that are projected to provide more than half of total employment growth over the five years to November 2020.

Whether it's a debate over the retirement age, or an exposé on age discrimination, Australia's aging population is often a topic of discussion in the media. We take a look at the potential of the mature age worker in the workplace and the reasons why businesses should make hiring mature aged workers a priority.

Finally we take a look at the recent findings of the Senate enquiry into the possibility of a portable Long Service Leave scheme, where employers carry their leave entitlements with them between employers. The findings, which were released in February, have sparked a new wave of debate among Australia's

business community with unions and industry groups remaining deeply divided on the issue.

Also included are our regular articles on Australian industry sectors – Manufacturing and Construction, business ethics, human resources, work health and safety, current news articles and updates from within Trojan.

I hope you enjoy our Autumn 2016 edition of RecruitNews and we look forward to being able to provide you with all the relevant and timely views from all perspectives of recruitment and workforce management across Australia.

Peter Melki,
Trojan Recruitment Group



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Inside Australia's Gender Pay Gap

Researchers reveal a measurable link between board composition and gender pay gaps

"The full-time gender pay gap currently stands at around 18%, with women earning on average only 82% of a man's pay" (ABS 2015)

The persistent gender pay gap is an economic, political and social issue. Gender pay gaps do not always signal direct discrimination, but remain problematic for a number of reasons. They represent poorer outcomes for women in terms of economic and personal freedoms; lost human capital potential and investment; and an impairment of economic growth for a nation looking to remain competitive on a global scale.

The existence of a gender pay gap is still surprising for many, given the achievements women have made over the last decade. Australian women have achieved parity with men in education and health according to the Global Gender Gap Index, currently outnumber men at universities and achieve higher marks across the board throughout their schooling years. Yet women do not fare as well in economic participation and opportunity or political empowerment, and continue to receive lower labour market despite the considerable investment in human capital.

Despite these major advances for women in both educational attainment and workforce participation, the gender pay gap remains a permanent fixture of the Australian labour market, with the full-time gender pay gap remaining at or around 20% for more than two decades. The full-time gender pay gap currently stands at around 18%, with women earning on average only 82% of a man's pay (ABS 2015).

For the first time, researchers have been able to draw a measurable link between board composition and gender pay gaps. The Gender Equity Insights 2016: Inside Australia's Gender Pay Gap report found that increasing the share of women on boards from zero to equal representation was associated with a 6.3 percentage point reduction in the pay gap for full-time, management-level staff.

Just by increasing the share of women on boards from zero to 50:50, this could reduce the gender pay gap by 6.3 percentage points

The report, a collaboration between the Bankwest Curtin Economics Centre and the government Workplace Gender Equality Agency, provided the first in-depth external analysis of the agency's most recent set of data, covering about 4 million employees (or approximately 40 per cent of all Australian workers) and 12,000 employers in the 2015 financial year. Bankwest Curtin Economics Centre associate professor Rebecca Cassells, who co-authored the report, said the findings provided the strongest evidence to date of the benefits of board diversity in reducing persistently large gender pay disparity in Australia, which proved most severe at senior occupational levels.

Full-time female key management personnel, such as chief financial and operating officers, earned an average \$100,000 a year less than their male counterparts, likely because of "biased organisational behaviours where men are given preferential recruitment and pay treatment over women".

The pay gap was exacerbated on a total remuneration basis due to a "male bonus premium", with men receiving a much larger portion of their salary in bonus payments and other discretionary pay than women.

The key findings of the report include:-

💰 \$100K annual pay gap for top tier managers

Women key management personnel (KMP) working full-time earn on average \$100,000 a year less than male KMPs, with women earning on average \$244,569 compared to \$343,296 for men. Gender pay gaps are significant across all management categories and grow in accordance with seniority.

👩 Female Board representation narrows the pay gap

Increasing the share of women on boards from zero to 50:50 is associated with a 6.3 percentage point reduction in the gender pay gap for full-time managers. Women remain under-represented on Boards, with the data showing just under one in five Board directors and one in eight Board chairs are women; and nearly four in ten organisations have no female representation on their Boards.

💰 Career-long penalty for women

Gender pay gaps lead to significant earnings shortfalls for women across their careers. If women and men move through managerial positions at the same pace, working full-time and reaching a KMP role in their tenth year, men can expect to earn \$2.3 million and women \$1.7 million in base salary over this period – a difference of \$600,000.

💰 The male 'bonus' premium

Both women and men can receive additional remuneration beyond their base salary, however men consistently earn more additional remuneration than women. Women working full-time are paid an average additional 18.1% of their base salary in extras and men an additional 25% of their base salary. That leads to an average male 'bonus' premium of almost 8 percentage points for full-time workers.

Professor Alan Duncan, from the Curtin University business school, said the research had "uncovered some of the strongest evidence to date that shows greater representation of women on boards is associated with a significant reduction in the gender pay gap."

These findings are important in the sense that they add strength to the business case for greater female Board representation. The stronger this evidence becomes, the more likely it is that organisations will make the business decision to increase female representation on Boards.

The new WGEA Gender Equality data creates an opportunity to provide valuable insights into gender pay gaps across Australian organisations, and to use this information to better target policy for governments and the business sector. The report looks in detail at how gender pay inequalities differ across industry sectors and occupational seniority and presents part-time and casual gender pay data for the first time. **For more information visit www.wgea.gov.au**

Position Descriptions, Policies and Procedures — a Matter of Importance

With the ever changing environment of a modern workplace, there is an increased need for clear and concise HR policies and procedures.



Employers need to ensure all employees are aware of their role and accompanying responsibilities in the workplace to facilitate a smooth running and productive environment.

A key factor to these procedures is ensuring that each employee has a clear position description and their tasks are clearly communicated to them from the commencement of their employment.

A position description is vital to the productivity of an employee as it ensures the employee knows what is expected of them and what their responsibilities are.

It is also important to remember that with the demands of a developing workplace, many positions are known to change to accommodate the growing needs of a business, therefore it is integral to ensure that should an employee's role or responsibilities change, their position description is amended as well.

HR policies and procedures are another important element, as they

allow companies to be consistent with their values whilst following their legal obligations as an employer.

Often, many workplaces encounter issues where staff were unaware of a particular policy that they have breached, with lack of communication being a common excuse.

It is therefore imperative that workplaces have accessible and well-communicated HR policies and procedures. These policies do not need to be particularly complex or numerous – merely effectively communicated and adhered to.

The following areas are most common for companies to focus on:

- ➔ Code of conduct;
- ➔ Confidentiality;
- ➔ Drug and Alcohol;
- ➔ Bullying and Harassment;
- ➔ Performance management;
- ➔ Grievance resolution;
- ➔ Working conditions and
- ➔ Leave requirements.

A comprehensive employee induction and regular training sessions on HR policies and procedures minimise potential misconduct within the workplace, as well as allowing management to facilitate a cohesive workplace.

“Often, many workplaces encounter issues where staff were unaware of a particular policy that they have breached, with lack of communication being a common excuse.”

If your company is needing to improve on your current policies and procedures or to implement new ones, Trojan Recruitment Groups Outsourcing and Consulting Services offers customised services to address your every HR need, including policy and procedures development. **If it's outside your scope, it's probably within ours.**

Four industries to drive half of Australia's five-year jobs growth



Over the next five years, four industries will provide more than half of Australia's total employment growth, the Department of Employment's annual employment projections report shows.

Employment growth in Australia has remained relatively subdued compared with the robust labour market conditions leading up to the onset of the Global Financial Crisis. Employment has increased by 780,500 (or 7.1 per cent) over the five years to June 2015, well below the growth of 1,098,900 (or 11.1 per cent) recorded over the five years to June 2010. However, more recently, employment growth has improved, rising by a solid 214,900 (or 1.9 per cent) over the year to June 2015.

Over the past five years, employment growth in the Australian economy has been spread across a number of industries and occupational groups, with a handful of services (particularly Health Care and Social Assistance and Professional Scientific and Technical Services) making particularly substantial contributions to employment growth. That said, employment growth has been offset by falls in employment in Manufacturing and in Mining.

Looking ahead, based on the employment forecasts, total employment is projected to increase by 1,166,400 (or 10.0 per cent) over the five years to November 2019 to reach 12,776,500. However, the distribution of this growth is projected to vary across industries, occupations, skill levels, states and territories, and regions.

Health Care and Social Assistance is projected to make the largest contribution to employment growth (up by 258,000 or 18.7 per cent), followed by Education and Training (142,700 or 15.6 per cent), Construction (137,900 or 13.0 per cent), and Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (136,600 or 14.4 per cent). Together, these four industries are projected to provide more than half of the employment growth to November 2019.

By contrast, employment in Mining is projected to decline by 40,700 (or 17.8 per cent) and Manufacturing is projected to decline by 26,200 (or 2.9 per cent) over this same period.

Over the five years to November 2019, employment is projected to increase in all states and territories.

New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland are also projected to make large contributions to employment growth with employment projected to increase by 358,800 (or 9.9 per cent) in New South Wales, by 308,700 (or 10.6 per cent) in Victoria and by 243,600 (or 10.4 per cent) in Queensland.

Against the backdrop of an expected decrease in Mining investment, employment growth in Western Australia and the Northern Territory is expected to slow, and with soft labour markets in South Australia and Tasmania, employment growth is also projected to be more subdued.

The report estimates that total employment in Australia will increase by 989,700 (8.3%) in the five years to November 2019.



Construction Sector Starts Year on Soft Footing

The national construction industry has remained in contraction for a second month, with the Australian Industry Group Performance of Construction Index (Australian PCI®) slipping marginally in January by 0.5 points to 46.3 (readings below 50 indicate contraction in activity, the distance from 50 indicating the strength of the decrease).

Apartment building returned to negative territory after six months of expansion (down 7.9 points to 46.4), while house building recorded a second month of growth (down 0.3 points to 52.3). Commercial construction was the weakest sub-sector in January, falling 3.5 points to 36.5, its sharpest rate of contraction since July 2013. Engineering construction also remained subdued (up 0.3 points to 41.5). Construction employment edged higher into expansion in January (up 1.3 points).

Ai Group Head of Policy, Peter Burn, said: "The further fall in construction in January is concerning both for the industry itself and for the broader economy. Over recent months the construction sector became increasingly dependent on the continuing strength of residential construction and particularly apartment building. While house building maintained momentum in January, the apartment sector dropped dramatically joining commercial and engineering construction in negative territory. The drop in apartment activity, together with the decline in new orders across all four construction sub-sectors, suggests that construction may not play the leading role in rebalancing the broader economy that it played in 2015. This emphasises once again the importance of developing new sources of growth across the economy."

Source: Australian Industry Group (AI Group)

Manufacturing Growth at its Strongest in Nearly Six Years

The Australian manufacturing sector expanded for an eighth straight month in February. The Australian Industry Group Australian Performance of Manufacturing Index (Australian PMI®) rose by 2.0 points to 53.5 – its highest level since July 2010 (readings above 50 indicate expansion in activity, the distance from 50 indicating the strength of the increase). Four of the eight manufacturing sub-sectors expanded (above 50 points in three-month moving averages), led by the food, beverages and tobacco sectors.

Ai Group Chief Executive, Innes Wilcox, said: "The manufacturing sector had a running start to 2016 with another month of expansion recorded for February. Production, sales, new orders and exports all lifted in February to consolidate the gains made by manufacturers over the second half of 2015."



"While the balance appears to be swinging to the positive, important challenges and fragilities remain and the sector is vulnerable to international volatility and adverse domestic policy changes," Mr Wilcox said.

There is little doubt that greater competitiveness in export markets and in the domestic market due to the lower dollar is central to the strong growth. With firmer expectations of the dollar remaining at or about its current level, it seems there is confidence building and businesses are readjusting their strategies, giving a higher priority to domestic activities both internally and along their supply chains.

Source: Australian Industry Group (AI Group)

Australian Economy Grows 0.6% in Q4

The latest figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) showed that Australia's economy grew 0.6 per cent in the final quarter last year, as household consumption and public sector investment offset a fall in company investment and profits and export prices.

The unemployment figure was in line with market forecasts, although once again job creation was a positive surprise.

For August, the ABS reported that 17,400 new jobs were created, while the number of unemployed fell by 14,400. Female part-time work increased, while part-time male work edged down.

Federal Treasurer Joe Hockey said he was very pleased with the slight decrease but admitted the rate was still too high.

Mr Hockey used Question Time to promote the number of jobs that have been created under the Coalition. "Even with the volatility that goes from month to month, the fact is, over the last three months since the 'have a go' budget, nearly 60,000 jobs have been created in Australia," he said.

However the Employment Minister Senator Eric Abetz said that more work needed to be done.

Unemployment Rate in Australia averaged 6.96 per cent from 1978 until 2010, reaching an all time high of 11.10 per cent in October of 1992 and a record low of 4 per cent in February of 2008. However, over the past 5 years our unemployment rate has averaged at 5.52 per cent, with a high of 6.3 and a low of 4.9 per cent (refer table).

Male full-time employment was up by 10,100 while female full-time employment rose by a more modest 1,400 jobs. Whereas as female part-time employment was up by 6,500, while male part-time employment decreased by 600 jobs.

Victoria and Western Australia both experienced sharp falls in unemployment from 6.4 per cent to 6.1 per cent, while South Australia's unemployment rate remained the highest among the states at 7.9 per cent. New South Wales enjoyed the lowest jobless rate at 6.0 per cent.

Australia's Employment Growth begins to Ease

Trend employment growth in Australia eased from the relatively strong growth seen in late 2015, according to figures released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) today.

The Bureau of Statistics estimated that only 300 jobs were added in February, but unemployment still fell because the participation rate dropped.

Australia's unemployment rate fell from 6 to 5.8 per cent in February because a large number of people gave up looking for work – the seasonally adjusted figures point to a 0.2-percentage-point fall in the proportion of the adult population in work or actively looking for it.

The largest increases in the seasonally adjusted unemployment rates were in South Australia (up 0.9 percentage points to 7.7 percent) and Tasmania (up 0.4 percentage points to 7.0 percent). The largest decrease was in Queensland (down 0.8 percentage points to 5.6 percent), with decreases also seen in New South Wales and Victoria (both down 0.2 percentage points to 5.3 per cent and 6.0 per cent respectively).

Overall, the jobs figures were seen as a positive, as the creation of 15,900 full-time positions offset a 15,600-strong fall in part-time jobs.

In more positive news, the quarterly figures show a slight improvement in underemployment.

The ABS said the underutilisation rate (which combines those who are unemployed with those who are working less hours than they would like) has edged 0.1 of a percentage point lower to 14.2 per cent. The underutilisation figures continue to show a deep divide between men and women, with the female underutilisation rate at 16.4 per cent compared to the male rate of 12.3 per cent.





The Potential of Mature Age Employment

Forget the myth that older workers are outdated and expensive. The best are loyal, competent and may even help a business's bottom line.

Whether it's a debate over the retirement age, or an exposé on age discrimination, Australia's aging population is often a topic of discussion in the media.

Figures show that when older Australians lose their jobs, they remain unemployed for longer than their younger counterparts. Often, there is a reluctance in the business world when it comes to hiring over 50s. This reluctance is so stark that the government has introduced the "restart wage subsidy" – a financial incentive for businesses who hire Australians aged 50+.

But as many businesses are beginning to realise, hiring people over the age of 50 brings many benefits in addition to government support. Here are five reasons job experts say employers should make hiring workers over age 50 a priority.

1. Experience

By far the number one reason to consider hiring people over the age of 50 is their experience – both workplace experience, and life experience.

While businesses may hire younger employees because they're "fresh" or mouldable, there are many benefits to hiring older employees with experience. (And let's not forget that just because they're older, doesn't mean they can't bring a "fresh" approach.)

Experience pays. If you hire someone with experience in your industry, they'll require less initial training and supervision. They'll know what they're doing, and how to do it. Chances are, they'll also do it well. This allows your business to save time, hassle, and money, as your experienced employee hits the ground running in their new job.

Life experience is also a valuable commodity. Mature age workers know that jobs, co-workers, customers, and managers are all imperfect. They don't have unrealistic expectations about their wage, holidays, or chances for promotion. And they're generally better able to form positive interpersonal relationships. As such, they're less likely than younger workers to quit due to disillusionment, unrealistic ambition, or interpersonal conflict.

2. Stability

Another great reason for hiring people over 50 is their stability. A clear employment trend among younger workers is their tendency to "job hop". This is disruptive to your business, as you're forced to advertise, hire, and train for positions more regularly.

Over 50s, on the other hand tend to stay in their jobs for longer, bringing greater stability to your business and team. One reason employees over 50 are more stable is that they're usually less interested in climbing the corporate ladder than younger employees. They also tend to value job security more highly.

3. Save Money

An experienced worker can hit the ground running and be effective immediately. They also may have advanced critical-thinking skills that can help them make good decisions quickly.

Older workers can also play a vital role in providing skills to younger people in the workplace. Rather than reinventing the wheel, business would be well advised to bring on people with experience who can share what has been tried in the past and how it can be improved.

4. Mentoring

With their life and industry experience, older employees are also great mentors to your less experienced and/or younger employees.

Once a new over-50 employee is established and trusted in your business, they can mentor those around them. Whether that means teaching others how to solve an unfamiliar problem which they've encountered before, modelling the best ways to deal with emotionally challenging aspects of the job, or something else entirely, there are lots of opportunities for mentoring from your mature age employees.

5. Government Subsidy

The Restart programme, an Australian Government wage subsidy, encourages businesses to employ mature workers. Restart can help employers to expand their business and employ workers who are aged 50 or older. The Restart wage subsidy is a payment of up to \$10,000 (GST inclusive). Employers can receive the Restart wage subsidy over two years if they employ an eligible mature job seeker. The full rate of the Restart wage subsidy is payable if the employment is for at least 30 hours per week. Employers will receive a pro-rata wage subsidy if they employ an eligible mature age worker between 15-29 hours per week.

6. Loyalty

Closely related to stability, another advantage of hiring older employees is their loyalty.

With less interest in promotions, and more investment in job security, employees aged over 50 tend to be more loyal to those who hire them than younger employees.

This loyalty will often benefit your business in several ways. Loyal workers are less likely to leave their roles, meaning they save you the expense and hassle of hiring and training their replacements in the near future. They're also more committed to you and your business's success, meaning that they may work harder and commit more time and energy to succeeding in their role.

For employers looking for the right combination of professionalism and vitality in their new hires there is a lot to like about 50-something job applicants. Hiring workers who've passed the half-century mark shouldn't be seen as an act of pity; it should be seen as a strategic move that's a win-win for employers and employees alike.

But whatever the factors that contribute to this trend may be, the trend itself is clear: employing mature age workers can lead to greater stability in your business.

National Portable Long Service Leave – Good or Bad for Business?

On the 25th February, 2016, The Senate released its findings on the enquiry into the possibility of a portable Long Service Leave (LSL) scheme where employees carry their leave entitlements with them between employers, sparking a new wave of debate among Australia's business community.



Traditionally LSL was designed to reward employees who stayed with the one employer for a period of service, many say LSL in its current form is no longer practical in today's modern workplace.

While the length of leave and qualification periods vary from State to State, the general entitlement a worker receives is two months leave after ten continuous years of service with the same employer.

However, due to the changing nature of employment, Australian workers are more frequently changing jobs and careers. With only one in four Australian employees staying with the same employer for 10 years, LSL has become inaccessible to majority of Australian workers.

This is not due to a change in the 'loyalty' of workers to one employer, but a simple reality of the changing dynamic of the Australian labour market.

Now more than ever before, Australian workers are struggling to balance their work commitments with their family and other life commitments. Australians work some of the longest hours in the world, and stay in the workforce for longer than previously.

The McKell Institute, an independent public policy institute, reported that well over 50% of Australian workers would rather have an extra two weeks annual leave than take the equivalent annual pay rise. In this context, the McKell Institute believes the time has come to again restructure Long Service Leave and create a 21st century entitlement by making Long Service Leave fully portable.

Unions and industry groups remain deeply divided on the issue of a portable LSL, with key issues including cost to employers, potential loss of entitlements by some workers and the challenge of the multi-jurisdictional nature of current LSL arrangements.

While the Senate's report falls short of any one solution, it recommends further investigation be done on the merit of a national scheme. A national portable LSL scheme may be of real cost benefit for employers with employees working across different jurisdictions.

It's been argued that a national model could reduce complexity and compliance costs and overcome unnecessary confusion and administrative costs, particularly for employers who have employees across state borders.

LSL has a long history in Australia. The origins can be traced back to the 19th century as an entitlement referred to as a furlough given to civil servants which enabled those who had served for a long period of time to travel 'home' to Britain, confident that they could return to Australia and return to their previous job. The entitlement was transformed from leave provided to visit Britain, to leave provided after a long period of employment for workers to have a break and return to work fresh and renewed.

Evidence received by the senate committee suggests almost universal acceptance that current LSL arrangements are unduly complex and that strong support exists for a national approach to be adopted.

However, a number of submitters, point out that achieving a nationalised standard will not be easy at a practical level



because of a range of significant challenges, including the multi-jurisdictional nature of the current LSL arrangements, cost to employers and potential loss of entitlements by some workers.

"Some firmly believe that LSL should be portable for all workers, whilst others are of the view that portability should not be extended under any circumstances," the Report stated.

For those opposed, one of the most significant disadvantages of establishing the portable LSL scheme is it makes what is currently a contingent or conditional liability (extended service being required for LSL) into an absolute liability (LSL is payable on all hours worked, from day one of employment).

Another highlighted disadvantage comes in the form of additional administration costs for some employers. These may be pronounced during transition periods for new schemes, the cost of providing benefits for employees who leave after a short period of service, and prefunding impact on business cash flows.

These additional costs may then have an impact on Australia's competitiveness, given the country's relatively high labour market costs, and therefore have a knock-on effect to the community by affecting employment. The potential cost for employers is vital as the question remains: who will pay for these entitlements?

The Senate committee acknowledges that nationalising the LSL standard is not a simple matter, and that states, territories and the commonwealth would need to work together to reach an agreement that should not impose a prohibitive cost burden on employers or result in any workers being worse off under a new scheme.

One of the Report's key recommendations is for the government to undertake detailed modelling to determine the potential cost to employers of extending portable LSL entitlements to all workers.

This should involve consideration of the cost of staff turnover including rehiring, training and loss of corporate knowledge, against the cost of establishing a portable LSL scheme.

Source: The Senate Report – "Feasibility of, and options for, creating a national long service standard, and the portability of long service and other entitlements", February 2016, Commonwealth of Australia.

WHS Breaches and Employee Discipline: To Fire or Not to Fire

Sacking an employee for a breach of workplace safety may backfire on employers, as the onus is on organisations to provide safe working environments.

Before disciplining an employee for breaches of workplace safety, it is important that employers consider whether they have done everything reasonably practicable to ensure their employees can do their work safely.

This was the message from Lander & Rogers Work Health & Safety partner Leveasque Peterson at a briefing for safety professionals and employers.

Peterson said work health and safety laws around Australia are recognised by Australia's legal system as deserving the broadest possible interpretation to ensure a safe workplace for employees and to achieve maximum accountability for those who are best placed to control workplace risks.

"Safety-related offences are strict liability and the duty to ensure a safe work environment is held by both employers and employees," Peterson said.

"However, it starts with you as an employer and unless you can demonstrate that you have done everything practicable to ensure your workplace is safe, you are likely to fall foul of the regulator."

"Only once the work environment is safe does it then fall to employees to ensure that they take reasonable care for themselves and others," she says.

Various forms of employee



misconduct such as being drunk on the job or engaging in serious neglect or incompetence can find employees in breach of work health and safety procedures.

While serious breaches can give grounds for instant dismissal, employers should ensure that they are not acting in a knee-jerk reaction that would be frowned upon by the safety regulator.

"Employers also need to be able to demonstrate that the punishment fits the crime," Peterson says.

Dismissing employees for breaches of safety duties could backfire on an employer and damage workforce perceptions.

Consultation and then discipline supported by further training for non-serious breaches is likely to send a better message to your workforce than instant dismissal.

"Safety-related offences are strict liability and the duty to ensure a safe work environment is held by both employers and employees"

It is critical employees understand the hazards and safety systems at their employer's workplace. Providing (and documenting) regular training of employees on these matters is essential. Employers should also ensure their employees know that a breach of safety rules will lead to disciplinary consequences. After all, breaking safety rules can have terrible consequences.

Source: HCMag Online

A Happy Return to Work



What started out as a usual work day for one of Trojan's employees, Georgia Cerbasi, ended as day she will never forget.

On the 30th July 2015, just after leaving Schneider Electric in Dandenong, Georgia, (pictured left with her parents) aged 23 years, was involved in a serious car accident. She was airlifted to hospital, where she was in a critical condition with life-threatening injuries.

Georgia, who had been working for Schneider Electric Dandenong for just over 2 years, was a popular and highly regarded employee, and when the news of her accident reached her work colleagues it sent shock waves through the organisation.

Over the coming months, Georgia endured multiple surgeries and a very long rehabilitation process to heal her injuries. Then at the end of January, along with her Occupational Therapist and Damien Hibbert - Trojan Recruitment Group Melbourne Branch Manager, Georgia returned to Schneider to start the process of establishing a return to work plan. All her work colleagues were excited for her return and to see her starting to heal from her injuries.

Georgia officially returned to work on 22nd Feb, working 2 hours a day 2 days a week (fully funded by TAC for the first 6 weeks), and has received tremendous support from Schneider, Trojan and TAC, as she works up to a full return to work.

Milestone for Trojan Employee



Paul Robert Sanders (pictured left with Gianni Rigutto, Trojan NSW State Manager) was recently recognised for his dedication, hard work and commitment spanning a 14 year period working as a casual Construction Labourer with Trojan Recruitment Group.

Paul commenced work for Trojan in 2002 where he worked as a casual construction labourer with Barkers Construction. After an impressive 8 year commitment to Barkers, Paul

commenced work with Western Earth Moving, where he has remained for the past 4 years. "Working for just two clients as a casual employee over an eleven year period is extremely rare" says Gianni Rigutto, NSW State Manager.

Gianni recently paid a visit to Paul's home to present him with a gift to celebrate his 14 year working milestone with Trojan. "The watch engraved 14 years tenure - Trojan was a small way for Trojan to thank Paul for his contribution to the businesses for which he worked and for his dedication as an ambassador for the Trojan business," Mr Rigutto said.

Paul has recently decided to hang up his steel cap boots and retire at the age of 65 years, which in his eyes is way too young. "I have been very lucky to work with such a great company like Trojan and for the comradery of my workmates," said Mr Sanders.

Employee Spotlight



Sandi Higgins

Operations Manager SA / WA

Years at Trojan? 11 years

What do you like most about your role with Trojan?

The team I have the opportunity to support, guide and work alongside every day, the interaction with our Trojan employees and clients, and the genuine friendships and lifelong relationships are some of the things I cherish most about my role at Trojan.

How does your role contribute to Trojan's goals?

I contribute to Trojans goals, by leading by example, ensuring I uphold the company's values, and always making myself available to guide and support the team. I have recently also taken on the role as Return to Work Coordinator in South Australia, so I'm hopeful my efforts and focus on safety will have a positive outcome within our business.

What is your greatest challenge?

The greatest challenge in my role is ensuring we always not only meet our clients' expectations but to continually exceed them. Another challenge is to be agile and able to adapt to client's needs at a moment's notice. Challenges are what makes life interesting, overcoming them is what makes them meaningful

How do I obtain work life balance?

I am an early bird, so getting an early start to the day helps me achieve a work life balance. Trojan definitely promotes a work life balance and although a challenge at times it is very important to me to be able to achieve this. Trojan has been a great support to me and my family in ensuring I am always able to participate in my son's very active sporting commitments.

Emma works like a Trojan.

At Trojan, we go the extra yard to find the right person for the right job. For over 20 years, we've continued to build close relationships with our clients and candidates ensuring we have an intimate understanding of their needs. We're proactive, determined and ready to work hard for you.

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