

**WHITE PAPER**

# **Recognising Great Workplaces**

Businesses Stand Out from the Crowd May 2008

## Business Number One Issue - Employees

Given Australia's ageing population and existing skills shortage, forecasters are suggesting the workforce shortfall will hover around 200,000 within three years. And it's set to worsen beyond that. Despite many larger corporations implementing strategies to soften the impact on their business, not all SMEs have the resources to prepare themselves.

Foreseeing the emergence of labor shortages, founder and CEO of the HR Coach Network (HR Coach) Louise Broekman has positioned her business to guide SMEs. "With the outlook for employers somewhat bleak, it's imperative companies implement employee retention strategies that address productivity and efficiency. Robust HR plans are necessary, and that is our charter."

A 5 year research project commenced in 2006 by the HR Coach Research Institute is identifying critical pressures on the business sector which employs between 2 and 200 employees. The war for talent is on. The number one issue published in all major labour indicators to date is staff. The critical questions are how do businesses improve the way they attract and keep their most important strategic asset – their people?



**Managing the labour shortage and implementing effective employee retention strategies is a real business issue, with real consequences to the survival of the business sector.**

## Different Times

The landscape was a little different back in 2000 when Broekman launched HR Coach “Several years ago businesses were focusing on IR compliance and tangled in red tape. It was a culture of risk and fear with union warnings, and under the awards system employers resorted to the lowest common denominator,” she said. “But all that has now taken a back seat. Today’s fear is: how do I retain people.”

Implementing effective employee retention strategies is paramount, she says. “The biggest cost for business – and its biggest asset – is its staff. Traditional HR Methods, Business coaches and accountants can only help SMEs to a certain degree, it needs to go a lot further if we are to make an impact.

## Measurement – the way of the Future

Businesses owners must carefully analyse their retention strategies. What people do in jobs and how they do it are more important than ever. Recent studies completed by the HR Coach Research Institute identified that monotonous work is a key contributor to employee turnover.

Meaningless and unproductive tasks require redesign.

Gaining employee contribution to the development and implementation of new solutions will assist in engaging individuals to work *with you* – not *for you*.

A HR Coach Research Institute study commenced in 2004 has identified that 48% of businesses have a high level of loss in productivity and profit. Businesses in this group are at the most risk when it comes to competing in the business environment of the future. The study found that only 22% of businesses are poised for growth<sup>1</sup>. But they must be vigilant to maintain this state.

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<sup>1</sup> HR Coach Strategic Action Model © 2004

## New Workplace Relationships

Businesses, however, cannot improve their businesses on their own. Businesses don't make decisions, people do. For businesses to survive, new workplace relationships must form to create new solutions to the new challenges in today's climate.

Research has identified that when employees contribute proactively to the strategy of a business, that the business is poised for growth and so too are the employees.

This is what is known as "Mutual Success". This means that traditional employee and employer relationships need an overhaul. An environment of mutual success requires an adult relationship of "My success is your success" in order to maximise growth opportunities.

The question is – how does a business get started?

## Recognising Great Workplaces

Finalist in the Telstra Business woman awards for innovation and recipient of several entrepreneurs awards Louise Broekman, founder and Managing Director of the HR Coach Research Institute has found a new path.

Based on research, the Strategic Action Model was developed to identify keys to creating Mutual Success within an organisation.

The difficulty is that most consulting and coaching methods are designed to audit and punish businesses for gaps in their strategy or implementation. Little is done to recognise the hard work and the great workplaces that exist in our Australian Business sector.

We have many unsung success stories where employers and employees are both happy with their environment and are proactive in the way they work together.

Launched in May 2008, HR Coach has developed a first in Australian Businesses. The STAR Workplace Program has been designed to create a new understanding of workplaces – not judgment.

With over 26 offices across Australia, HR Coach has certified Assessor organisations identifying STAR Workplaces and are rewarding them for it.

Measuring satisfaction in the workplace is the key. The measurements include:

- Strategy fulfillment of the employer
- Team satisfaction
- Actions and process to retain employees
- Results of employee performance

## Businesses Stand out from the Crowd

When you see this logo, it is a mark of a business that has Mutual Success in the making.

This distinctive reward indicates the commitment of employers and employees to creating a work environment where people are aligning themselves with the strategy of the business.

Participating organisations are enabled to be recognised by their peers, by the market as a leader in people management and by current and future employees as an employer that cares.



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