

YOUR HR NEWS

Qld HR Services Newsletter Keeping you up to date with all the latest Human Resources news and trends September 2015

What is the right way to respond to unsuccessful applicants?

In today's job market the sheer number of applicants can overwhelm the business owner or manager. But for many unsuccessful applicants the wait to hear from a job application can be a very tense and worrying time.

After all, they've put the effort into meeting the criteria and possibly even fronted for a face-to-face interview. Yet often they wait in vain for acknowledgement or, rarer still, some constructive criticism that might help them in their next attempt.

A recent survey of HR professionals found that the type of notification depends on the stage of the recruitment process the applicant reached. An email was considered appropriate for those who didn't progress to the interview stage, while a phone call was required for those who'd had face-to-face contact.

Others argued the merits of whether a simple notification should suffice at any stage of the application process or if it were necessary, indeed common courtesy, to provide additional tailored feedback, especially if requested by the applicant.

The group agreed that at times it is an operational challenge to respond to all applicants in an appropriate and timely manner. There was, however, general consensus that a lack of feedback was potentially damaging to the employer's image, raising questions about the role of corporate responsibility in the process. (cont. page 4)



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Coca-Cola CEO—Alison Watkins

The three questions Alison Watkins asks to ensure her CCA leadership strategy is staying on target:

1. Is the direction clear? Does everyone in the business know what we're trying to do?
2. Have we translated that direction into concrete, actionable plans so everyone knows, individually and in their team, through KPIs and job structure, what's expected of them this year?
3. What are we doing to create energy around that direction? "At CCA, our vision of creating 'millions of moments of happiness' is very uplifting," says Watkins. "We've put a lot of effort in, and will continue to create that energy and momentum, which can quickly become a self-fulfilling prophecy."

HR Vital to Coca-Cola's Growth

Coca-Cola Amatil (CCA) group managing director, Alison Watkins, talks about the inclusive, people-focused approach she has introduced to reinvigorate the company's performance.

At risk of sounding trite, it can be said that Alison Watkins is putting the fizz back into the beverage giant to turn around a serious decline in profits in the past two years. CCA will axe 260 jobs in 2015 as part of efforts to save \$100 million, and will funnel those savings into new products and marketing.

When Watkins was appointed to the role in March 2014 – becoming only the second female CEO of a top-30 Australian company, after former Westpac CEO Gail Kelly – it quickly became apparent that many people at CCA had previously been "deeply concerned" about how the company was travelling.

"They had a clear understanding of what the issues were and what we needed to do, and were probably experiencing frustration that it wasn't getting heard or cutting through to the leadership," she says. "I went out of my way to make it easy for people to tell me directly what they thought was going on so we could incorporate that into our strategy."

CCA has more than 15,000 employees in Australia, New Zealand, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Fiji and Samoa. Watkins backs up her respect for employees as the most important part of any organisation with the belief that straight talk – and listening – are needed to get their buy-in.

You can have impressive KPIs and plans, she says, but results suffer if you can't get your people acknowledging performance gaps and get them excited about turning problems into success.

HR is key to the strategy, which she envisages will get CCA back to earnings growth in Australia in the next two to three years. She holds her HR director in the same regard as her chief financial officer, considering them her right and left hands.

"The HR director is very much a thought partner in creating energy and momentum with our people," she says.

Biggest Earners:

- 1 in 4 roles offered on seek.com.au is an annual salary of over \$100,000
- Insurance and super-annuation salaries increased by 6% up to an average of \$81,049
- Farming, animals and conservation salaries increased by 5% up to an average of \$70,992
- Retail and consumer products salaries increased by 5% up to an average of \$58,397
- Growth in mining salaries has continued with average annual salaries in Mining, Engineering and Construction still in the top average annual salaries in Australia.



Who are the Biggest Earners?

As Australia's talent tussle heats up, annual salaries increased in most industries in most states last financial year, according to a recent survey. Competing for top candidates appears to be getting a whole lot tougher as salaries increase ahead of the consumer price index.

Insurance and superannuation recorded the biggest average increases in the year to June (up 6 per cent to \$81,049); following by farming, animals and conservation (up 5 per cent to \$70,992); and retail and consumer products (up 5 per cent to \$58,397), according to Seek's annual salary review.

NSW had the largest number of industries with increased annual salaries, at 64 per cent. It was followed by South Australia (61 per cent), Queensland (54 per cent), Victoria (54 per cent) and Western Australia (43 per cent). Figures for Tasmania, the ACT and Northern Territory were not available.

Growth in non-mining activity has been the winner for NSW, where there's been a steady improvement in new job ads over the past months, says Seek managing director, Joe Powell.

One in four roles on Seek offered annual salaries of more than \$100,000. The top average annual salaries were in mining, resources and energy (\$120,793); consulting and strategy (\$108,225); engineering (\$105,608); and construction (\$104,754). Australian Bureau of Statistics data released in March also identified these sectors as the top earners.

"The fact that the mining sector is still commanding the highest salaries in Australia isn't surprising, given the industry is a big contributor to GDP," says Powell. Although mining salaries are falling, down 10 per cent compared with the previous year. And that's led to drop in the overall average national salary of 3.2 per cent to \$79,767.



What is the best way to respond to unsuccessful applicants (cont. from pg 1)

The group held varying opinions in the overall benefit to applicants by receiving personalized notification that they were unsuccessful with their application.

Most agreed that for applicants that reach the interview stage of the recruiting process should be contacted in person to advise they are unsuccessful. Most agree that they offer feedback on the reasons for not being selected only if asked by the applicant.

In Summary

If you are concerned about the image of your business in the market place then you should respond to everyone that applies for a position with your business. It is generally considered fine to write or email to applicants that do not move to the interview stage of the recruitment process.

For those applicants who are interviewed they should be contacted personally by a person involved in the recruiting process and advised they are unsuccessful. The general opinion is that advising the reason for being unsuccessful has neither a positive or negative impact on the perception of your business or the possibility of unsuccessful applicants reapplying for further roles.

Contact Us

Give us a call for more information about our services and products.

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Qld HR Services philosophy is simple:

To streamline the processes necessary to allow businesses to succeed.

We were established for the purpose of increasing efficiency and minimising exposure to risk for our partners. Since inception, our service solutions have proven to be an invaluable asset, offering unmatched service, while enabling our clients to focus on revenue generating activities.

There is never a one size fits all approach to Human Resources as every business is different however it is most common for a business to engage Qld HR Services in the following way:

1. To conduct a Health Check of the current systems in place at the business plus check the current compliance with wage rates and conditions of employment.
2. To prepare an Employment System that has all of the hiring documentation, Employment Agreement, Policies & Procedures, Work Health and Safety Policies, and generally a system that is used by the business to minimise risk.
3. To provide ongoing information and support with calls, emails and updates through Qld HR Services 'Partner Package'. The 'Partner Package' also includes additional benefits above just compliance with an annual employee survey, quarterly HR practices discussion and much more.
4. To provide an annual or bi annual review of the Employment System with updated legislation, HR trends and business specific policies and procedures that need updating.

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