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event STAFF ISSUES AND SALARY SURVEY

THE LATEST STUDY FROM Event Recruitment has found some worrying trends emerging.

In 2008 we published our inaugural Event Staff Issues and Salary Survey and two years on we are now close to finalising our second edition. Of course, in the ensuing period between surveys we have all endured a severe global economic downturn (thankfully, less pronounced in Australia), and are now experiencing the recovery (thankfully again, at an accelerated rate in Australia compared with the rest of the developed world).

The results of this new survey (from a sample surveyed prior to this financial year end) should therefore be very interesting reading and will provide some commentary on what impact the recent economic roller coaster ride has had on employees in the events industry – their working hours, roles and responsibilities, salaries and benefits, redundancies, team morale and productivity, attitudes to management, etcetera. But I hope it also provides some insight for management in how they might better respond to future economic downturns and subsequent recoveries.

As we analyse and compile the current survey results I thought I would provide a preview of some of the findings that have come to light thus far.

The Economic Downturn

- 60 per cent of respondents confirmed that their workplace was restructured as a result of the economic downturn.
- A similar proportion (60 per cent) of respondents experienced an increase in their workload and responsibilities.
- We can surmise from this that a reduction in team numbers led to this increase in workload and this is backed up by 45 per cent of respondents claiming that they experienced a loss of team member(s) due to redundancy during the downturn. In fact, 15 per cent of respondents had themselves been made redundant and a further 15 per cent had been required to take a compulsory leave break during the downturn, with 25 per cent of these having to take unpaid leave.
- Not surprisingly, 55 per cent of respondents stated that the economic downturn had had a negative impact on team morale but only 25 per cent felt it impacted negatively on team productivity.

Salaries & Benefits

- 55 per cent of respondents stated that they had experienced a salary freeze during the economic downturn and the same proportion (55 per cent) said they had not received a salary review (i.e. increase) in the past 12 months.
- Not surprisingly, 60 per cent stated that their current salary was below the market for their level of experience.

Job Hunting

- Following on from the above findings it was not unexpected to learn that 60 per cent of respondents stated that they are not satisfied in their present role, and the same proportion of respondents (60 per cent) don't feel their career goals are being met, post downturn.
- The upshot of all of this is that 70 per cent have reported that they will be considering a job move over the next six months – a worrying statistic indeed!
- When asked what the prime motivator was for any intended move, 25 per cent chose a lack of career prospects whilst an equal number (25 per cent) cited that they were seeking a higher salary. Interestingly 20 per cent stated that they sought a better work life balance, perhaps prompted by the increases in work responsibilities, workload (and therefore working hours) that many had been experiencing as a result of workplace restructuring during the downturn.

If the results of the survey do play out in the market as we have reported then there will be a large number of event staff testing the market in the short term. But interestingly, respondents recognise that their quest for a new position will provide its challenges, the most significant being a lack of available opportunities (40 per cent), salary expectations not being met (30 per cent) and competition from others in the market (30 per cent).

I do hope this information at least provides some food for thought and perhaps a reason to assess how your team is travelling across the areas I have outlined.

If you are a business owner or in a staff management position in the events industry and would like to pre-order a copy of this free publication when it is finalised please contact Event Recruitment at mail@eventrecruitment.com.au.