

Wooldumpers Australia Pty Ltd

Case Study

What did they analyse?

- Undertook survey of all employees.
- Reviewed workplace profile.
- Reviewed employee turnover.

What did their analysis show?

- Majority of workers are male.
- Females are employed in traditional administration areas.
- Salary paid to female employees is below that paid to male employees but female satisfaction with their pay was higher.
- Staff turnover is low and thereby limits the promotional opportunities for other employees.
- Employees wanted flexible work hours to attend to family responsibilities.

Work Organisation Issue

- How to increase flexible work hours to match times of high production with need for staff.
- How to offer staff a stable income throughout the year independent of production.

Actions taken

In their EBA, the company and staff agreed on a new system of working. The principal feature of this is that each permanent worker can work 1,976 hours per year, that is, number of working days x 7.6 hours per day. These hours can be utilised up to 10 hours per day on any day, Monday to Friday.

Once the employee uses their 1,976 hours prior to the end of the financial year, the employee can elect not to attend work for the remainder of the year but will still get their weekly wage, or they can work extra hours and be paid at the overtime rates for those additional hours.

Outcomes

This has worked well. Employees now have a regular weekly income, so they can get bank loans for example, and have stability of pay – even during times of low production. It has meant retaining workers with experience and skills in the industry. It was difficult during the introductory year ensuring managers understood this process and monitored working hours in order to keep their budget on track. It was also difficult for workers who at first felt that if they worked 50 hours a week in a high production period, they were not being paid for it. However, after a year of this system in operation, it has proved to be very successful.

Quick Facts File

Industry: Predominately Male
Wool Scouring

Number of employees: 554

Male/Female: 494/60

Status:
Compliant

Relevant Employment Matters:

✓ Work Organisation

✓ Conditions of Service

“The process brought to light some issues. We found the evaluation helpful as a chance to take stock of what we’ve been doing and where we are.”

**David Viney,
National Administration
Manager**