

PEAK PERSPECTIVE

HR Updates, Expert Advice, and Industry Trends at a Glance

OCTOBER 2025



PEAK VIEW - Director's Reflection

Last week, I attended an economic update from HSBC's chief economist Paul Bloxham. His message was clear, Australia's productivity growth has stalled, and this matters to every business and every team member.

Why does this matter to you? Because productivity and profitability are joined at the hip, and the fastest way to boost outcomes is by unlocking more from your people. (cont...page 2)



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Productivity in Australia has barely budged in seven years, and much of the problem comes down to how engaged and supported employees feel at work. When teams are engaged, well-equipped, and energised, businesses get better results. But low engagement and rising workplace stress mean it's tougher to move the needle.

Here's the actionable part, improving employee engagement isn't a "nice to have", it's the biggest lever for productivity and profits. Companies that invest in people strategies recognising effort, building strong cultures, and making sure everyone's contribution links to business goals outperform the rest in both earnings and innovation.

This is exactly where Peak Coaching and Advisory Group comes in.

"Better productivity starts with your people"

We help businesses turn the productivity challenge into an opportunity by focusing on three key areas:

- Creating a clear link between your business strategy and individual deliverables, so every team member knows how they contribute to the bigger picture to drive success.
- Investing in leadership development, to ensure leaders create environments where people feel supported, want to do their best work and thrive.
- Understanding people's natural preferences and strengths to strategically place them in teams and roles where they can maximise their impact.

By aligning strategy, leadership, and leveraging strengths, Peak helps organisations unlock employee potential, boost engagement, and drive results.

If you're ready to tackle productivity head on, let's talk.

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Compliance Corner

The HR compliance landscape isn't just about ticking boxes, it's about fostering trust, protecting your workforce's wellbeing, and safeguarding the sustainability of your business in a changing environment.

Recent changes to Australian and Queensland workplace laws mean increased responsibility and clearer expectations for SMEs, particularly around protecting employee rights and upholding fair workplace standards.

Every business owner, regardless of team size, is now accountable to higher standards and greater clarity in how they support staff and operational integrity. Let's explore some key requirements and what they mean for your business:

Right to Disconnect

Gives employees the right to refuse to monitor, read or respond to contact outside their working hours unless that refusal is unreasonable

What are the rules/changes?

From 26 August 2025, right to disconnect laws were extended to now apply to employees in small businesses i.e. with fewer than 20 employees.

What action should employers take?

Review and update policies around after-hours contact. Clearly communicate expectations, document necessary exceptions for critical roles, and minimise unnecessary contact.

Respect@Work

What are the rules/changes?

A new "positive duty" requires all employers to actively prevent:

- Sexual harassment (unwelcome sexual conduct)
- Sex-based discrimination (unfair treatment based on sex)
- Victimisation (unfavourable treatment for making or supporting complaints)

This applies to employees, contractors, and others (customers, clients) at work

What action should employers take?

Develop clear, accessible policies. Create a written sexual harassment prevention plan. Train staff on expectations and reporting procedures. Respond swiftly to concerns, review practices regularly, and apply standards to anyone interacting with employees.

Casual Employment & Fixed Term Contracts

What are the rules/changes?

Provide every **casual** with a Casual Employment Information Statement. After 12 months, casual employees may request permanent employment. Employers must respond within 21 days and can only refuse on valid operational/legal grounds.

Fixed-term contracts are limited to two years (including extensions, except exemptions), with no more than two consecutive contracts for the same role.

What action should employers take?

Give required information statements to relevant staff. Respond to conversion requests promptly and fairly. Monitor contract lengths and renewals and comply with Fixed Term Contract Information Statement (FTCIS) requirements.

Requests for Flexible Working

What are the rules/changes?

Expanded options for who can request flexible work. Employees can request flexible working arrangements after 12 months' service if they are:

- Parents or carers of school-aged children
- Employees living with disability
- Employees aged 55 or older
- Carers (as recognised under the Carer Recognition Act)
- Pregnant
- Victims of family or domestic violence or caring for an immediate family member who is
- Regular casuals may also apply if they meet the above criteria and have worked 12 months systematically with ongoing expectation of work.

What action should employers take?

Set out a fair, documented process for handling requests. Consult with staff, try to reach alternatives if needed, and communicate outcomes and reasons. Ensure staff know how to challenge refusals.

Psychosocial Safety

What are the rules/changes?

Psychosocial safety is about ensuring the workplace is mentally healthy, not just physically safe. Employers have a “positive duty” to proactively manage workplace risks to mental health, not just respond after harm occurs.

What action should employers take?

Identify and assess psychosocial hazards, involve staff in solutions (consult), create action plans, and regularly review and improve practices to build a mentally healthy workplace.

HR compliance is more than ticking boxes, it's a legal safeguard and the foundation of a high-performing, sustainable business. When business owners invest in proactive, clear, and fair HR practices, they not only protect themselves from penalties, claims, and reputational risk, they build organisations where people genuinely thrive.

Compliance is far more than risk management - it's a strategic opportunity. Ensuring legal standards are met and supporting people effectively creates happier, more innovative employees and loyal customers. Staff who feel psychologically safe, respected, and purposeful, bring commitment, innovation, and discretionary effort energy that drives exceptional customer experiences, higher productivity, and stronger business outcomes.

By getting the “people stuff” right, owners unlock lasting results and real growth. Embracing compliance enables business success that is both ethical and enduring. Compliance protects and empowers businesses to deliver performance and results that truly stand out.

Download a copy of our Free
HR COMPLIANCE MATURITY LEVEL DIAGNOSTIC TOOL
at: www.executiveresources.com.au or scan the QR code:



Peak Picks

This section is a collection of tools, websites and apps that you might find useful:

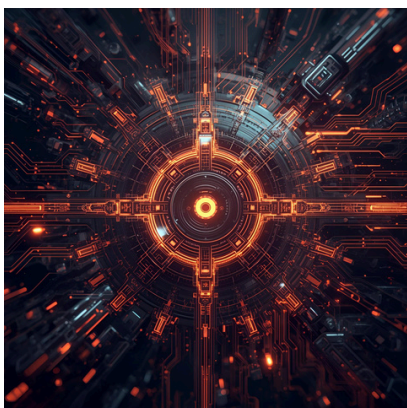


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**“Creating Workplace Environments
Where People Thrive and Results Follow”**



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