



APRIL 2015

USEFUL SNIPPETS

THE ADULT MINIMUM WAGE LIFTED BY 50 CENTS PER HOUR ON 1 APRIL

The adult minimum wage increased by 50 cents per hour on 1 April to increase from \$14.25 to \$14.75 per hour for workers employed on a permanent basis accruing an annual leave entitlement.

For employees on an 'as required' casual contract, this increase equates to \$15.93 per hour (\$14.75 per hour plus 8% holiday pay of \$1.18 per hour).

The starting-out and training hourly minimum wage has also increased by 40 cents per hour to \$11.80 per hour.

THE TRANSFER OF ANZAC DAY 2015

The Holidays Act 2003 recognises 11 public holidays including ANZAC Day, which is observed on 25 April each year. Prior to 2013, if ANZAC Day fell on a Saturday or Sunday, it was observed on that day. In 2013 an amendment was made with the effect that where ANZAC Day falls on a Saturday or Sunday, and that day is not an 'otherwise working day' for an employee, the public holiday will instead transfer to the following Monday.

This year marks the first time that the ANZAC Day public holiday, which falls on Saturday 25 April, will transfer to another day. The 'Mondayisation' of ANZAC day will occur infrequently as the day will only fall on a weekend about twice every seven years.

Therefore, because ANZAC Day falls on Saturday this year, if an employee would not otherwise work on that Saturday, the holiday is transferred to the following Monday (27 April) so that the employee still gets a paid day off.

For employees who would otherwise work on that Saturday, the holiday will remain on the traditional day and therefore will be observed on 25 April.

Regardless of whether an employee is entitled to observe ANZAC Day on the Saturday or the Monday, they are entitled to only one paid day off. If your employee works on a day that is designated as a public holiday for them (either the weekend day or the Monday, depending on their normal working days) they will receive time and a half for the hours worked and become entitled to an alternative holiday.

Comment:

For employees who would normally otherwise work on that Saturday, the public holiday must still be treated as falling on that day. If you close for the holiday, you must pay these Saturday workers their regular pay. If your business remains open for the holiday, your employees who work this day are entitled to time and half pay and a whole day's alternative holiday (day in lieu) at a later agreed date.

Determining what constitutes a 'working day' can be difficult for employees who often work on rosters. The question of what would otherwise be a working day is a question of fact – the following factors will be relevant:

- The Employment Agreement
- The employee's work patterns
- What the roster says, and
- Whether, but for the day being a public holiday, the employee would have worked on the day concerned.

You are still able to agree to transfer the public holiday to either a different 24 hour period which starts or finishes on 25 April or to a completely different day, provided the Holidays Act requirements are met. An employee's public holiday entitlements are regarded as minimum entitlement under the Holidays Act 2003 therefore they must be respected and cannot be contracted out of.

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CUSTOMERS WANT HELP FIRST, SELLING LAST

Shamed former MP Aaron Gilmore was back in the news recently for dipping his toe into the political waters again. In 2013 he resigned after an incident where it was claimed he said to a barman "Do you know who I am"? and then threatened to have John Key sack the barman for perceived poor service.

Why this news reflects the 'gravity' of his behaviour in a New Zealand context, according to Greg Williamson, Director Concentrate Ltd. Greg believes it is an admirable part of the Kiwi character that we don't approve of this kind of behaviour.

However, according to Greg, this unfortunately does not carry over enough to the way we market products, especially in the hi-tech sector, where self aggrandisement is the norm. Seemingly, every product is "market leading", a "game change" or "revolutionary".

Increasingly prospective customers want information that helps them evaluate and purchase products that meet a specific need. This is because the traditional customer has changed, particularly involving purchases of large, complex products. Customers have a lot more power because they can access all kinds of information about you and your product. This makes them more sophisticated in their buying and also less patient. They do not want to be "marketed at", they will do research on their own terms.

What the annual Market Measures Study of Sales and Marketing by hi-tech New Zealand companies shows is that reducing marketing "fluff" and producing useful, customer-focused information pays dividends. Companies in the survey growing the fastest were more likely to be producing marketing content such as infographics, white papers, case studies, checklists and opinion articles.

They were not producing the traditional marketing collateral of brochures, product flyers and fancy corporate videos. Think the Edmonds cookbook instead of a glossy brochure extolling the virtues of "game changing" baking powder. A jargon word for this kind of marketing information is "thought leadership" – giving customers useful insights or information. In the Edmonds context, this would be how to bake a scone!



On average, Kiwi firms are a long way behind their international counterparts in producing thought leadership, with less than 30% of the firms in the Market Measures study producing this kind of customer-focused content. This hurts us because thought leadership drives online marketing, especially through social media channels.

Can you move away from bragging about your product

to giving prospective customers genuinely useful information?

Firstly, clarify who buys your product or influences that decision? Then find out what information they need to complete their product research, evaluation and final decision.

Secondly, sprinkle lighter contact that is used to attract people to your website between "thought leadership" items which is used to convert people into sales leads.

Focus on helping first, selling last.



MEETINGS MATTER

'A meeting is an event at which the minutes are kept and the hours are lost' - Anonymous

Is it possible to turn meetings into a top way to make things happen? Yes, if you stick to basics such as:

- Focus – invite the participants by circulating an agenda complete with this sentence 'by the end of this meeting I want us to have.....'
- Who needs to be there ...really? Schedule topics so you can deal with what involves everyone first. Then retain a core group and let everyone else go.
- Timing – Work to an 'end stop' event like lunch so there is natural finish or try to call a meeting in the last hour of the day when you risk energy being low but you increase your chances of everyone being committed to achieving outcomes in the fastest, smoothest way possible!
- The 'chair' should be a facilitator who is clear on purpose, keeps the group on task, summarises the outcomes and outlines who is accountable for them. Find someone with the reputation of starting on time, keeping to time and ending on time.
- Agenda and minutes attract flak as being the hallmarks of the typical boring meeting. Use an agenda to plan how much time to allocate to each agenda item to keep you on track. Pare back the minutes to what decisions were taken, what action is required, who is responsible and by when. Next meeting use these minutes to check actions which were required and if not done what is the next best course of action.

EMPLOYEE START AND FINISH DATES

Employee start and finish dates when completed on your Employer Monthly Schedule (EMS/IR348) are important because it is from this information that the IRD calculates social entitlements, tax credits and whether the employee has multiple jobs or is moving from one employer to another.

GOOD RECORD KEEPING

Keeping good business records pays dividends. There are legal reasons for keeping accurate records, as well as good business reasons, such as supporting the expenses you have claimed against your business income.

To prove your deductions are legitimate you must keep all relevant records for seven years and these records must be in English.

Comment:

The following records must be kept, either in a manual system or on a computer based programme, where they can be easily retrieved:

- All income received (copies of invoices issued etc)
- All tax invoices and receipts for purchases, insurance, power, phone and all other costs incurred
- Hire Purchase/lease agreements
- Solicitors' settlement statements
- Credit and debit notes
- Bank statements
- Term Loan Statements
- GST returns and workpapers
- FBT return copies
- Cash books or computerised accounting records
- Wage records for any employees
- Interest and dividend payments
- A list of business assets and liabilities
- Statement of year end trading stock and stocktake records
- Motor vehicle log books
- Details of entertainment expenses for clients, staff or suppliers
- Final profit and loss statements and balance sheets

SOCIAL MEDIA AND EMPLOYMENT

A number of recent cases highlight that employers can call errant social media users to account.

Depending on the circumstances, social medial posts may substantiate a dismissal or disciplinary action, vitiate a claim of constructive dismissal, or assist employers with proceedings against employees for acting in breach of a settlement agreement or term of their employment.

It is well established that conduct occurring outside the workplace, like social posts, can justify disciplinary action by an employer. There must be a sufficient nexus between the employee's conduct and their employment. It is also a question of the impact or potential impact that conduct has on the employer's business.

However, it is apparent that the increased use of social networking sites by individuals to express dissatisfaction with their employers is becoming more prevalent. This carries risk as social media is not strictly a private forum

and Facebook posts, even those ostensibly protected by a privacy setting, may not be regarded as protected communications beyond the reach of employment processes. After all, how private is a written conversation initiated over the internet with 200 'friends', who can pass the information on to a limitless audience?

The reality is that comments made on virtual social networks can readily permeate into real-life networks. Facebook posts have a permanence and a potential audience that casual conversations around the water cooler at work do not. Social medial use may also come under scrutiny where an employee has:

- Shared confidential information
- Added customers/clients as friends on Facebook
- Posted derogatory or offensive comments about other employees
- Engaged in misconduct such as bullying or sexual harassment.

FARM EXPENSES INCREASE

Farm expenses were up 3.7 per cent for the year ended December 2014 according to Statistics NZ's Price Index.

The main drivers of higher farm expenses were livestock purchases (up 14.4%), followed by interest (up 9.8%), grazing, cultivation, harvest and purchase of animal feed (up 3.6%), electricity (up 3.2%) and animal health (up 3.1%). Partially offsetting these increases were decreases for fuel (down 9.2%), fertilizer & seeds (down 4.6%), weed and pest control (down 1.4%) and dairy shed expenses (down 1.0%).

FARMING WOMEN TAIRAWHITI

Newly formed Farming Women Tairawhiti is a proactive group of women looking to improve regional contact in the Tairawhiti area through regular events, personal development and rural based education. Their focus is on enjoyment and fun while improving women's lives both on farm and off. Their aim is to attract membership from across all sectors of the farming community, bringing together women of all ages and stages who have an interest in rural life, live a rural lifestyle or are involved in the business of farming, including women working in rural service industries.

Their first event featured Wendy Avery. She spoke about her life as a farming woman and how she coped when her husband suffered from



depression as a result of years of drought. Wendy and her husband Doug have developed a programme called "Resilient Farmer" to help others going through hard times. They have a website of the same name.

Contact with the Farming Women Tairawhiti can be made through: Facebook - Farming Women Tairawhiti; farmingwomen@yahoo.co.nz; or by phoning Marie Burke 027 484 5262 or Sandra Mathews 027 496 6336.



That's Cricket!

With the success of the Black Caps in the series leading up to the Cricket World Cup final still fresh in the minds of fans, here is an explanation of what cricket is about for those who still have not grasped the essentials of the game!

You have two sides, one out in the field and one in.

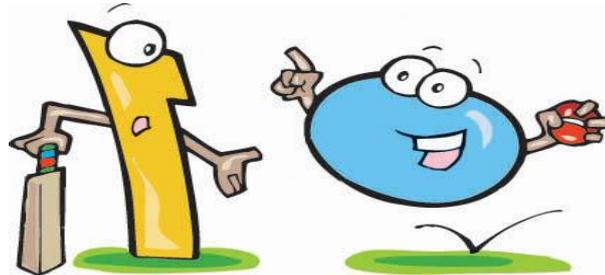
Each man that is in the side that is in goes out, and when he's out he comes in and the next man goes in until he's out.

When they are all out, the side that's out comes in and the side that's been in goes out and tries to get those coming in, out.

Sometimes you get men still in and not out. When a man goes out to go in, the men who are out try to get him out, and when he is out he goes in and the next man in goes out and goes in.

Further, there are two men called umpires who stay all out all the time and they decide when the men who are in are out.

When both sides have been in and all the men have been out, and both sides have been out twice after all the men have been in, including those who are not out, that is the end of the game!



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