



THE GREAT  
NEW ZEALAND  
EMPLOYMENT  
SURVEY <sup>INTERIM</sup>  
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## INTRODUCTION

The Great New Zealand Employment Survey<sup>®</sup> was first the first of its kind in New Zealand employee/employer survey launched in October 2009 by Clarian Human Resources.

The survey provides valuable information on current and emerging trends. It benchmarks against prior information collected, exploring people related activities as well as insights to organisational trends of today.

The interim survey was conducted in May 2010 to establish the current level of activity in organisations, and gain a greater understanding of employer and employee confidence six months on.

The 2010 interim Great New Zealand Employment Survey information has been gathered from 249 Employers/People managers and 138 Employees from all sizes of businesses, across many industries throughout New Zealand.

- Fifty-five percent of respondents came from the Auckland area. Wellington and Christchurch accounted for twelve and nine percent respectively. The remainder of the respondents are from Blenheim, Dunedin, Gisborne, Hamilton, Invercargill, Napier-Hastings, Nelson, New Plymouth, Palmerston North, Queenstown/Wanake, Rotorua, Tauranga, Thames Valley/Coromandel, Timaru, Waikato Regions, Whanganui and Whakatane.
- Information relating to businesses with fewer than twenty employees to those with more than one thousand was received.
- Manufacturing provided twelve percent of the respondents, followed by Banking & Finance and Government/Defence at six percent.
- Fifty-nine percent of respondents were male, 41% female. 67.7% were between the ages of 35-54.
- Twenty-three percent responded to the October 2009 survey.

Clarian Human Resources is pleased to provide this data to offer you the opportunity to consider the potential implications for your own business.

Should you have any questions relating to the data presented contact Michelle Marsden, Thought Leadership Consultant at Clarian Human Resources at [michelle@clarian.co.nz](mailto:michelle@clarian.co.nz)

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Co-operation, Positivity, Commitment. Words we all love to hear.

The 2010 interim Great New Zealand Employment Survey says just that. The predominant reaction to change from both employers and employees has been that of co-operation, positivity and commitment.

The survey results show that overall there is a greater level of confidence from both employers and employees since the survey conducted in October 2009. Confidence is explained by:

- More than three-quarters of employers are in the process of recruiting.
- Organisational change has been in the form of improving process efficiencies and increasing productivity levels.
- Employees feel change has been well-communicated.
- The reaction to change is co-operation, positivity and commitment.
- Fewer employees are looking at job vacancies.
- Employees want to stay with their organisation as it is stable and successful.
- More hands-on leadership and working closer with staff.
- Recognition that managing poor performance promptly and efficiently is what's required.

Overall, there is a very upbeat message from respondents.

Key areas of focus for employers over the coming 12 months are performance management, leadership development and management capability. This is similar to the key areas of focus in the October 2009 survey.

Sixty-two percent of employers indicate the skill requirement within their organisation has remained unchanged. Of those looking for specific skills, managers/professionals and technical people are the hardest to find. The answer could lie in the fact that the majority of managers/professionals and technical people who responded to the survey indicated they are not interested in moving from their current job.

An attractive organisation to the vast majority is one that is stable and successful. 96% of employers and 50% of employees believe their current organisation is of value to them as it is stable and successful.

Sixty percent of employers believe the expectation of leadership has changed over the past 12 months, which coincides with the key focus from October 2009 survey which were changes to leadership structures.

Seventy-six percent of employers say the expectation of staff performance has changed. There is now more than ever a requirement for more emphasis on performance due to new processes and procedures in place, increased productivity level and the need to work smarter, not harder.

There has been a distinct improvement in communication since the October 2009 Survey. Previously we reported that only 40% of employees noticed an increase in communication. May 2010 survey results show 67.3% of employees have been either fully or fairly well-communicated with.

Managing performance is recognised as something that is of value and is what makes a good leader. However, this appears in practice an area that still requires a vast improvement. New statistics show there are likely to be formal performance structures in place but, given that 49% of employees only sometimes receive feedback on their performance from management and 21% either rarely or never do, the actual maintenance of performance management is still poor.

Employees indicate their development needs are not being met as 70% say career development meetings either rarely or never happen. However, providing a career progression plan and learning/development tools is high on the priority list for employers as they recognise it as a means to fully engage employees in their job. It would be prudent for employers to provide clearer avenues for career development, or communicate clearly on existing plans.

Since the October 2009 Survey, there has been a 12% dip in the number of employees looking or soon to be looking for another job. It could be suggested there is greater level of complacency amongst employees and the organisations they are currently working for. However, it could also signify renewed confidence in their current employment and the hope for personal growth opportunities. Some of the feedback received from employees for employers is to “increase career management”, “increase communication”, and “increase resources focusing on training and development”.

One thing is clear – the employment landscape of New Zealand is rapidly changing, and this provides the perfect opportunity for employers to bridge expectation, communication, and leadership gaps perceived by employees. While the general sentiment for both employees and employers is that of cautious change, employers must not mistake an increase in confidence for an ideal employment environment. Whilst becoming more receptive of change, employees are also becoming more critical and tangible measures for bridging expectation gaps are highly recommended.

Michelle Marsden  
**Thought Leadership Consultant**



## SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

### PEOPLE STRATEGY

- 89% of employers & 77% of employees have gone through some form of change due to the recession, 27% of employers being 'extensive'
- Key drivers of change are reduction in demand for product/service, improvement in process efficiencies
- More than 60% of employer respondents are in the process of making these changes with a result of 58% reducing costs & 43% increasing productivity levels
- The greatest impact of change for employees has been less staff, increased expectations and a change in processes
- The reaction to change has been that of co-operation, positivity & commitment
- Key areas of focus in coming 12 months are performance management, leadership development and management capability

### ATTRACTION & SELECTION

- 75% of employers are currently recruiting the main reasons due to replacing voluntary leavers, fill newly identified roles and because the business is growing
- 38% of employer organisations have increased their headcount over the prior 12 months, over 50% expect it to increase over the coming 12 months
- Just over 52% of employees say they are happy with their current job and are not looking to move
- Majority of employers & employees use the internet to look for jobs or advertise jobs (Seek, Trade Me etc)
- The least popular method for both are social networking sites e.g. Facebook & LinkedIn
- 65% of employers say their skill requirement has remained unchanged.
- The skills that are the hardest to find are managers/professionals & technical experts
- Over 50% of employees would stay with their existing organisation because it is stable & successful

### LEADERSHIP & PERFORMANCE

- 60% of employers have said the expectation of leaders has changed over the past 12 months
- More hands on leadership and working closer with staff are cited as some of the reasons
- 50% of employees say the greatest operational impact from change has been less staffing numbers, increased expectations, change in processes
- 76% of employers say their expectation of staff performance has changed in past 12 months
- Overall communication from employers to employees has not worsened over past 12 months
- Templates for managing performance are in place, follow-through is poor with 70% of employees stating only sometimes, rarely or never do they receive feedback on their performance
- 70% of employees say career development meeting rarely or never happen, 61% of employers say they assess employee development needs.
- Ineffective leadership & internal conflict two of the main barriers to greater performance
- 57% of employers have not experienced any personal grievance. 43% have

### ENGAGEMENT & RETENTION

- 66% of employers were not expecting an attrition rate of less than 10% in the next 12 months
- 62% of employees would leave their current role for a promotion outside the company or a change in career
- 28% of employees would leave because of the lack of development or career opportunities
- There is a 12% reduction from the October 2009 survey to the May 2010 survey, in the number of employees currently in the process of trying to leave their job. 37% are now looking.
- Only 2% of employers would offer retention bonuses
- Employers are focusing on leadership development & performance management to drive greater levels of engagement
- Only 28% of employers are focusing on work-life balance
- Employees want employers to have more focus on dealing with office politics as they believe this is a way of increasing engagement & retaining key employees
- 70% of employees are interested & involved in helping their organisation achieve its aims and objectives

**FOR A COPY OF THE FULL SURVEY REPORT,  
CONTACT THE CLARIAN HR TEAM ON**

**09 414 3843 OR [michelle@clarian.co.nz](mailto:michelle@clarian.co.nz)**

The team at Clarian Human Resources works with leaders and human resource professionals to maximise their people resources through challenge, development and change.

CLARIAN THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

Clarian Thought Leadership explores people management and development issues through extensive research. Our aim is to share knowledge, increase learning and understanding, and help HR practitioners and business leaders make informed decisions about improving people practices in their organisation.

VISIT [WWW.CLARIAN.CO.NZ](http://WWW.CLARIAN.CO.NZ) TO FIND OUT MORE

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