

employer of choice

Better Workplaces

*Assisting Tasmanian small businesses
to attract and retain employees*



Tips from WHK:

- Look at how you can modify roles to enthuse and retain key staff.
- Personalise your ads to appeal to diverse groups (for example university graduates, mature-aged women).
- Encourage employees to refer potential new staff by offering a recruitment bonus.
- Make work fun!

Flexibility returns dividends for WHK Group Tasmania

WHK in Tasmania began in 2000 with accounting firm WHK Garrotts and Investor Financial Planning in Launceston which then subsequently merged with WHK Pinnacle and WHK Denison to form a significant financial services and accounting business in Tasmania. It now employs 260 staff in accounting, financial planning, audit, finance broking and related specialist services. The firm offers a Total Financial Solutions service. Chief Executive Rodney Loone, believes WHK genuinely thinks of its people first. Rodney believes that the significant amount of firm growth has created a lot of opportunities for the staff to develop professionally. The staff in turn have been willing to respond and this support from the staff has been the key to the firm's success.

Modify roles – even senior roles – to be flexible

Ros is one of the firm's long term and valued employees. She has been with WHK Garrotts for over 30 years. As well as providing flexible maternity leave long before it became the norm so Ros could raise a family, various roles in the administrative, financial planning and superannuation divisions were modified to enable Ros to return to work on a part-time, flexible basis. This meant that Ros could be committed to her work but also attend to her family responsibilities.

Several years ago, Michael was finding it difficult to cope with commuting more than 75 kilometres to and from work each day. To help cut down the amount of time that Michael was spending on the road, the firm made it possible for him to work from home on a regular basis. By providing remote access and effective IT support, Michael is able to perform his regular duties from his home office, as though he is in the office. And although he still needs to spend sufficient time in town each week to service the needs of his clients, this arrangement has given Michael the flexibility he needed to achieve work/life balance.

Attracting graduates to the workplace

While Rodney sees the value in employing people from diverse groups, one of the main groups WHK recruits from are students who are being employed for their first position. Despite being one of the largest employers of university graduates in Tasmania, WHK has competition from the 'big four' accounting firms which often entice graduates to work interstate. The firm is able to respond by offering incentives that other organisations may not be able to provide, such as experience in diverse service areas, good work-life balance and rapid career progression for star performers.

Prospective employees are often attracted by WHK's bright, catchy ads which feature images of happy staff and slogans such as "From Undergraduate to Principal in only 10 years" and "Working at WHK can be a barrel of laughs". But probably just as many job seekers are recruited through word-of-mouth, because WHK encourages its employees to spread the word when jobs become available by offering a recruitment bonus.

Rodney has seen that work-life balance is important to all employees, not just those with families. Many younger employees want to travel and WHK does commonly provide special leave which enables staff to resume their role after a period of travel.