Payroll Professionals and administrators –
working together

Previous payroll experience is one of the main requirements for hiring a payroll professional. Generally the people who are short listed and eventually hired are those with relevant industry and system experience. On the other hand, site administrators who are usually expected to process timesheets for employees on a weekly, fortnightly or monthly basis are not necessarily required to have any previous payroll experience. This is usually due to the fact that processing payroll only forms part of their role.

Here are some helpful hints that payroll professionals can implement to assist the site administrators with reducing their input and interpretation errors;

- Limit payroll jargon or provide a cheat sheet for the payroll terms used – site administrators may not understand what you are referring to, which may cause a miscommunication or misunderstanding;

- Schedule a weekly/fortnightly/monthly meeting, depending on the main pay run cycle, between the payroll team and the site administrators. This will be a good platform to address any outstanding issues or errors that occurred within the previous pay run. It will also give the site administrators a chance to ask any pending questions they may have;

- Provide an Enterprise Agreement and Modern Award interpretation tip sheet for common codes used such as ordinary hours, leave, shift allowances and additional allowances that are usually entered into the time and attendance system – some site administrators may have little or no previous experience with interpreting Enterprise Agreements and Modern Awards therefore this would be a very useful tool for them to have access to;

- Provide additional checking of data input by the site administrators, such as reviewing significant variances and hours entered for new starters.

Nonetheless, site administrators are expected to input accurate timesheet data into the payroll system on behalf of employees. Site administrators with little or no previous payroll experience are likely to misinterpret how certain hours, leave, allowances etc. are paid to eligible employees. *I've experienced this first hand in my previous roles which is why I believe it's imperative that payroll professionals provide as much support as possible to site administrators before and also during the crucial days of processing payroll,* particularly in regard to interpreting the entitlements detailed in Enterprise Bargaining Agreements, and uploading timesheet data to the payroll system.

These can assist with reducing error rates within the payroll processing function. It can also boost the site administrator's confidence when processing timesheet data into the payroll system and interpreting Enterprise Agreements and Modern Awards. Over time, scheduled meetings can be less frequent as errors within the pay run decrease.

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