

Ideal job works for you

HIGH VACANCIES ARE GIVING WORKERS MORE OPTIONS WHEN IT COMES TO CHANGING JOBS



Ben Fraser says skills learnt in the catering industry have transferred well to his retail role.

CAREERS
MELANIE BURGESS

Australian employers are continuing their hiring spree, with job vacancies above pre- Covid levels in every state and territory.

It is creating lots of new opportunities for workers but there are other factors to consider before deciding to change jobs.

The latest National Skills Commission data reveals 229,000 roles were being advertised in September – 37 per cent more than the same month in 2019, before the pandemic.

Job vacancies were up 77 per cent in Tasmania (3200 roles available in September), 74 per cent in South Australia (12,900), 73 per cent in Western Australia (27,500), 72 per cent in the Northern Territory (2700) and 52 per cent in Queensland.

Despite lockdowns and restrictions, even NSW increased 27 per cent on two years earlier (72,600 roles) and Victoria was up 20 per cent (57,100).

OPPORTUNITIES GALORE

Career Confident director Helen Green says now is a good time to look for work as the economy opens up, the festive season is weeks away and many companies are hiring.

“There is also likely to be a backlog of work to get through with projects put on hold during lockdown or businesses closed, so in many ways jobseekers can take advantage of this,” she says.

“Many people look to start a new year with a change and I am seeing more people exploring their opportunities and assessing their work situations than ever.

“The best time to apply for work is always ‘now’. Be open to opportunity, but be realistic about your skills and experience.”

One employer contributing to the huge number of available positions is Coles, which is looking to fill about 7000 roles across its supermarkets, liquor and Coles Express stores.

They range from Coles Online personal shoppers and delivery drivers to managers and bakers.

Engadine team member Ben Fraser, 23, has been with Coles for two months after working as a catering supervisor at a club and says the transition was easy.

“I’ve always enjoyed a job that allows you to communicate with others – be it team members or customers – on a frequent basis, and I feel like these skills have transferred well from catering to Coles,” he says.

CONSIDER JOB SECURITY

The latest Employee Sentiment Index by HR software company ELMO Software reveals feelings of security among Australian workers dropped to their lowest levels of the year in the September quarter.

Almost a third (30 per cent) perceived broad economic insecurity – up from 19 per cent just three months earlier.

There were also increasing perceptions of insecurity in workers' own jobs (15 per cent rate this as "not secure"), own industries (13 per cent) and own organisations (13 per cent).

So if you are feeling safe in your job, it may be worth staying.

But if there is uncertainty, it could be time to look elsewhere.

ELMO Software chief executive Danny Lessem says people must ask themselves tough questions before making a decision to change jobs.

"Is your low job security due to the company's performance, the state of the economy, or your relationship with your employer?" he says.

"Understanding (this) can help guide you to deciding what to do next. If you are jumping ship because your job security concerns stem from business performance woes, don't jump to another ship riding out the same storm."

Lessem recommends researching potential employers to determine the organisation's performance and what the future looks like for their industry.

CONSIDER MENTAL HEALTH

If your job is making you unhappy, now could be an opportunity to see if the grass is greener with another organisation.

A survey by employee wellbeing company Limeade of 500 full-time employees who changed employer this year found that 29 per cent did so because of burnout – feelings of exhaustion, cynicism or being unable to do high-quality work.

Three in five respondents (60 per cent) believe their current job is better for their mental health than their previous job. Two-thirds (67 per cent) say they would have felt comfortable disclosing a mental health condition with their previous employer, but this jumps to 95 per cent with their current employer.

Jessi Crast, PhD researcher at Limeade's research arm Limeade Institute, says the number of workers leaving their jobs to seek a better employee experience is unprecedented.

"Aussie job searchers should prioritise potential employers that show they listen and consider the needs of their employees and how it measures up against personal needs," she says. "Do you need more flexibility? More autonomy? More trust from your future employer? How will they provide this to you? "It's time for job hunters to make their work work for them, and employers should be accepting of this if they want to attract, and retain, the best people."

Show off your skills

Highlight these in a job application:

- Effective communication
- Problem solving

- Creative thinking
- Digital literacy
- Self management
- Resilience
- Initiative

SOURCE: Career Confident director Helen Green