

Aon Hewitt announces 2012 *Best Employers*

4 June 2012: Aon Hewitt announced its 2012 *Best Employers* in Australia and New Zealand (ANZ) survey, with Microsoft being named the *Best of the Best* for 2012.

Fourteen organisations received the Aon Hewitt *Best Employer* accreditation in 2012 including Chorus New Zealand Limited, Express Data, FedEx Express (Australia), FedEx Express (New Zealand), Frucor Beverages Australia, Hilti Australia, Janssen Australia and New Zealand, Microsoft Australia Pty Ltd, Peoplebank Australia Limited, SEEK Limited, Shire Australia Pty Ltd, Starlight's Children's Foundation, Trilby Misso Lawyers and Wood & Grieve Engineers Limited.

Now in its twelfth year, the study reflected the opinions of over 74,000 employees across 165 companies within Australia and New Zealand, from this, 102 companies participated in the 2012 *Best Employers* accreditation program.

"Aon Hewitt *Best Employers* have a fundamental belief that developing a highly engaged and productive workforce is a non-negotiable requirement" comments James Rutherford, *Best Employer* program lead, Aon Hewitt "*Best employers* do more than create a nice place to work. They create the conditions for people to excel and contribute discretionary effort."

The 2012 study identified five distinguishable characteristics of a *Best Employer*:

1. **unwavering commitment from senior leaders** to the importance of developing highly engaged and productive employees
2. **clear performance expectations** that align people to the organisation's goals and values, and bring meaning to their work
3. **people managers** who create the conditions for their people to excel
4. **reward and recognition practices** that encourage employees to contribute discretionary effort
5. **clear communication** on what employees can expect which in turn helps the organisation to be more competitive in attracting and retaining in a tight labour market.

Engagement linked to productivity and profitability

The links between engagement, discretionary effort and productivity are proven, with Aon Hewitt *Best Employers* delivering on average 9% more profit per employee and double the revenue growth of other organisations. Despite this, and the increasingly competitive global market, only 31% of Australian and New Zealand organisations are improving employee engagement levels.

"Many Australian and New Zealand organisations are currently facing substantial market challenges. Despite these challenges, boards, shareholder and other stakeholders expect most organisations to develop and deliver on growth targets." comments Stephen Hickey, employee engagement practice lead, Aon Hewitt. "In this environment, there is significant value in organisations using employee engagement and the discretionary effort of their people to drive performance outcomes" Hickey concludes.

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

Aon Hewitt's research covers those organisations participating in the 2012 **Best Employer** accreditation process, along with Aon Hewitt's Engagement clients that have also included the **Best Employers** items into their engagement survey. This group represents a data set of over 74,000 employees from over 165 organisations and remains the most extensive research study of its type in the region.

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