

Press release
30 May 2016

Australian companies embracing innovation initiatives

- 97% of Australian CIOs are implementing measures to boost innovation in their company.
- Australian companies rate themselves in the upper mid-table of the innovation scale with an average score of 3.9 out of 5.
- 51% will employ IT talent with unique skills to build a more innovative business over the next 12 months.

Sydney, 30 May 2016 – With new tax breaks and the government funding a marketing campaign to promote Australia as an innovative technology destination, there has never been a more opportune time to harness innovation. According to an independent survey from specialist recruiter [Robert Half](#), chief information officers (CIOs) are embracing the innovation trend, with 97% implementing measures to boost innovation in their company.

Even though nearly one fifth (19%) of Australian CIOs believe their company is highly innovative and give themselves a score of 5 out of 5 when it comes to their level of innovation in the organisation, the majority still believe there is room for improvement as the average score given by CIO's was 3.9 out of 5

David Jones, Senior Managing Director of Robert Half Asia Pacific said: *“All companies thrive on innovation, whether they're a start-up or an established business. Business success is governed by a future focus, new ideas, and creativity. Incorporating innovation throughout the organisation will help companies gain a competitive edge.”*

“Technology is without a doubt a driver of innovation. Digital technologies like mobile, cloud, and big data have created massive opportunities for IT innovation to deliver company progression. Leveraging new technologies to optimise customer experience, automate processes and enhance employee efficiency are examples of how technology can be the catalyst for innovation.”

How Australian companies are boosting innovation

The overall majority of Australian companies are taking measures to boost innovation with an approach that consists of a combination of both technology and people. Human capital tops the list with more than half (51%) planning to employ IT talent with unique skills over the next 12 months for the purpose of building a more innovative business. Almost half (49%) will reshape network infrastructure to improve operational processes, followed by 48% who point towards building data centres to leverage big data more efficiently.

“In order to maximise the return on investment in technology, companies need to make sure they have the best human resources to develop and support IT initiatives. Investing in and continuously optimising the technological infrastructure as well as recruiting talented IT staff are both crucial elements in establishing an innovative culture,” **David Jones** added.

With 91% of Australian CIOs saying that it is challenging to find skilled IT staff, having an innovative corporate culture can serve as a point of difference to attract and retain top IT talent.

“Top tech talent are looking for professional opportunities where they can have a meaningful impact by developing and driving innovation. This is why companies with a visibly innovative culture have an advantage in attracting and retaining the best IT professionals. The better a company communicates its focus on innovation, the more attractive it will be to the top IT professionals,” **David Jones** added.

Measures CIOs will take to build a more innovative business over the next 12 months

Employing IT talent with in-demand/unique skills	51%
Reshaping network infrastructure to improve operational processes	49%
Building data centres to leverage data more efficiently	48%
Developing/enhancing software	46%
Focusing on a more collaborative work environment	33%
Developing new technology tools to improve customer experience (eg. App development)	29%

Source: independent survey commissioned by Robert Half among 160 Australian CIOs – multiple answers allowed.

Robert Half suggests the following tips for encouraging innovation:

1. **Capture ideas:** By failing to note creative ideas as they are formed, businesses could miss out on valuable innovative solutions. Developing a well-defined strategy to gather and capture these ideas as well as making the strategy accessible to employees will lead to more innovation in the long term.
2. **Create a culture of innovation:** Leaders must foster a culture that supports new ideas. This includes developing clear structures and processes to identify and implement innovation.
3. **Develop the talent in your organisation:** Staff development is integral to innovation. It promotes innovation skills like personal responsibility, understanding of errors and visionary thinking.
4. **Remove the barriers:** Innovation relies on both financial and technological possibilities. IT must support innovation with modern technologies – like data analytics and cloud technology – and remain attractive to IT professionals at the same time.

##

Notes for the editor

About the research

The annual study is developed by Robert Half and conducted in April 2016 by an independent research company, surveying 160 Australian CIOs/CTOs in Australia. This survey is part of the international workplace survey, a questionnaire about job trends, talent management and trends in the workplace.

About Robert Half

Robert Half is the world's first and largest specialised recruitment consultancy and member of the S&P 500. Founded in 1948, the company has over 325 offices worldwide providing temporary, interim and permanent recruitment solutions for accounting and finance, financial services, technology, and administrative professionals. Robert Half Australia has offices in Brisbane, Melbourne, Mount Waverley, Perth and Sydney. More information on roberthalf.com.au.

Follow Robert Half Australia



Read related articles on our [Robert Half's work life blog](#)





[5 ways managers kill innovation – and what to do instead](#)

Innovation is a popular topic in practically every industry, with workers in pretty much all fields generally expected to be creative and “think outside the box.” Ironically it’s often the managers who stifle the creativity that they crave. Here are five signs that you might be snuffing out your team’s innovation at work without realising it.



[Top 5 most innovative companies](#)

They start when others close. They grow when others collapse. They believe when others doubt. They are the innovators – the entrepreneurial companies that inspire us all to believe that dreams can come true. Here’s our list of five outstanding examples of innovative companies.

For more information

Lynn Reviere
PR & Communications Manager Robert Half ANZ
Lynn.reviere@roberthalf.com.au
0280 287 752

Citadel Magnus
Ellisa Bennett
ebennett@citadelmagnus.com
02 8234 0112