

Press release
7 January 2016

Summer slowdown, a reality according to Australian finance leaders

- Only 13% of Australian finance leaders say they don't experience a negative impact on their business during summer months
- 34% experience slowed commercial activities in summer and 21 % say productivity loss due to annual leave is a concern
- The summer months offer vital employee benefits to relax and recharge the batteries

Sydney, 7 January 2016 – While summer break is beneficial for employees and offers the perfect opportunity to recharge the batteries, summer months bring along certain challenges for companies according to a global survey commissioned by specialised recruitment company [Robert Half](#).

The independent survey reveals that 87% of Australian CFOs and finance directors experience a negative impact on their business during summer months. Only 13% say that the summer would not have any negative impact on their business.

More than one third (34%) of Australian finance leaders say that slowed commercial activities are the biggest challenge for their business during summer months, followed by 30% who indicate that there is less managerial guidance due to annual leave. Another 21% state that the company - because of annual leave – is less productive. Merely 2% say that staff are less motivated.

David Jones, Senior Managing Director Asia Pacific said the following: *“Getting away from work, having a holiday and recharging the batteries is vital for every employee and critical to the success of every business. Employees who take regular breaks are generally more satisfied with their job, more motivated and more productive upon their return.”*

David Jones continued: *“The reality is that many companies cannot afford to put ongoing projects and tasks on hold during the summer months. To keep productivity levels up while employees enjoy their well-deserved holiday, companies regularly call on temporary and interim workers to alleviate workload for employees who are in the office and to continue to meet the demands of their customers.”*

Summer slowdown is a reality across the globe. While Australia is just slightly higher in its results around commercial activity, managerial direction and lost productivity, when compared to the rest of the world, the trends are closely mirrored in other countries.

Over the summer months, which of the following will have the greatest impact on your business?

	Australia	All Countries*
Slowed commercial activity	34%	33%
Less managerial direction due to annual leave	30%	29%
Lost productivity due to annual leave	21%	18%
Less motivated workforce	2%	9%
No negative impact	13%	11%

**Source: independent survey commissioned by Robert Half among 2,425 CFOs and finance directors in Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, China, Dubai, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Singapore, the UK, Switzerland and Australia.*

Robert Half offers five recommendations for companies to ensure their teams can enjoy stress-free holidays:

1. **Set up a team planning day:** this means tasks can be divided between the team when employees are on holiday. It enables every employee to know his or her responsibilities and schedule them in advance.
2. **Be prepared:** it is important to clarify expectations and deadlines. Clear agreements with respect to all tasks are needed to better manage the additional workload.
3. **Provide support:** by relying on temporary and interim workers during the summer months organisations can meet deadlines for the most urgent projects and daily tasks, but also ensure that permanent employees are not overloaded.
4. **Allow some flexibility:** employees who are given additional flexibility in the period just before their holiday will be more inclined to make additional efforts to complete their tasks on time.
5. **Encourage employees to take all their entitled holidays:** every team member has the right to a minimum number of holidays and it is important to encourage employees to take them. Employees who take all of their holidays are generally more satisfied with their jobs and are more productive throughout the year.

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Notes to editors

About the research

The annual study is developed by Robert Half and was conducted in June 2015 by an independent research firm, surveying more than 2,400 Chief Financial Officers (CFO) and finance directors in 16 countries, amongst which 300 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 340 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.

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[How to switch to holiday mode from work mode in a day](#)

So many of us yearn for time off work to spend with family and friends, but when it comes to being away from the office, switching off is hard to do. Let's look at how to move to holiday mode from work mode in no time at all.

For more information

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