

Press release
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Melbourne Cup and workplace antics – you win some, you lose some

- 42% of Australian Human Resources managers say hosting company events to watch sporting events increases employee engagement and 40% say it improves employee motivation.
- 87% say it is likely that at least one of their employees will call in sick the day after a major sporting event.

Sydney, 27 October 2016 – As the “race that stops a nation” fast approaches, independent research by specialist recruitment company [Robert Half](#) shows that companies who host office functions to watch major sporting events, such as the Melbourne Cup, increase their employee’s productivity and motivation. This can offset the expectation of Australian businesses anticipating a potential increase in the number of workplace absences after the upcoming Melbourne Cup celebrations.

The overwhelming majority (87%) of HR managers say it is likely that at least one of their employees will call in sick the day after a major sporting event, with almost a quarter (22%) calling it “very likely”.

However, many Australian workplaces are starting to embrace the flipside of watching major sporting events in the office as they think it increases staff morale and will decrease the amount of workplace absences following the event. Almost half (42%) of HR managers say hosting company events to watch major sporting competitions increases employee engagement, while 40% deem it to have a positive effect on motivation levels. Almost a third (31%) believe company events will actually increase employee loyalty.

Andrew Brushfield, Director, Robert Half Victoria and Western Australia said: *“Australia is a proud sporting nation, and Melbourne Cup is especially close to the heart of many Australians. However, as the racing season is well underway, it’s important not to let the seasons’ festivities affect employee performance, as workplace absences can impact any business’s bottom line.”*

“For those workers outside of Victoria who are unlucky enough not to have a public holiday on the first Tuesday of November, companies can take this opportunity to boost team morale by opting to host a special office event and organise a sweepstake to watch race seven on the Flemington Card.”

“Being able to influence staff motivation and engagement through a shared sense of team spirit (and perhaps even a healthy gamble) can have a tremendous positive influence on a company’s success. National sporting events, such as the Melbourne Cup, are a great way for employers to reward their employees with some “off time”, a chance to relax, dress up and watch the race. This also allows companies to demonstrate their positive corporate culture, thereby positioning them as an employer of choice.”

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Notes to editors

About the research

The annual study is developed by Robert Half and conducted in April 2016 by an independent research firm, surveying 100 Human Resources managers 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.

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Motivate your team with the 10 Cs of employee engagement, which have been mapped out by Professor of Organisational Behaviour, Gerard Seijts, and Doctoral student, Dan Crim. According to research from Aon, only 62 per cent of Australian employees are currently engaged in the workplace.

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