



Q + A

## WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF THE EMPLOYMENT SECTOR IN AUSTRALIA?



### Deborah Homewood

*Managing director of MAXNetwork. For over 15 years MAXNetwork has been committed to improving the lives of Australians through practical and innovative outsource solutions.*

The current economic climate and demographic changes are certainly placing increasing pressure on employers and job seekers alike.

As the face of Australia's workplaces continue to change into the future, the employment sector will be called upon more than ever to break down barriers to employment and meet the diversified and changing needs of employers within this challenging marketplace.

Service providers within this sector, such as MAX Employment, will assist by preparing job seekers through barrier interventions, skills development and supporting longer term training and support needs to meet the demands of employers.

These services have a critical role to play in increasing the economic participation of all job seekers – including those

traditionally disadvantaged cohorts of job seekers who are young or old, those from indigenous and culturally diverse backgrounds, as well as those who have a disability. There needs to be opportunities for all those wishing to work to have opportunities in the future.

Providers within this sector need to be able to utilise all of the services provided by governments and community organisations to prepare and assist job seekers into employment. At the same time it is incumbent on employers to have human resource policies, which accommodate a productive and much more diversified workforce into the future.

The employment sector and employers will need to work together to avoid serious skills shortages with an ageing workforce.

The ability of the sector to prepare and support job seekers will need to be matched by an employer market eager to accommodate increased participation and flexibility in their workforce, while supporting lifelong learning and skills.

The employment sector, employers and the community services sector need to be up for these challenges.



### Mellissah Smith

Founder and managing director of Marketing Eye, Australia's leading marketing consultancy firm for small to medium sized businesses.

The future of the employment industry in Australia is outsourced and offshore. As companies reinstate measures to reduce overheads and develop a single, simple and unified vision for employing people, the compelling argument to outsource key roles and deliver a more measurable, high performance outcome is at the forefront of business decisions.

Employment structures within organisations have, in the past, lacked elasticity and with the emergence of low-cost labour offshore, particularly in areas such as technology and call centres, the use of offshore labour forces is now well received and commonplace.

### Morris Miselowski

Business futurist, keynote presenter and strategic advisor. Morris is a successful entrepreneur who provides prescient, practical advice to CEOs and decision-makers at organisations around Australia and the world.

The good news is that there will be employment way into the future; there has to be. Things will always need to be done, built, sold, fixed, transported and accounted for.

Secondly, for the foreseeable future Australia's employment rate will be high and in the mid 90%.

The other wonderful, or perhaps disconcerting news, depending on whether you're a half full or half empty kind of person, is that we're not going to need furriers, blacksmiths or elevator operators much anymore.

Now I know that's kind of obvious, but these professions were great, honourable and inspiring jobs in their day, using cutting edge technology and machinery to fulfil a society's dreams and demands.

Tomorrow's employment space, made up of a dwindling baby boomer cohort and increasing X, Y, Z and A generations, will have six careers and 14 jobs. They will work towards the completion of tasks and projects, not time allocation; in industries we cannot yet name, nor fathom, using skills that today are unimaginable.

By 2025, 60% of us will be working digitally and remotely, not tethered to a fixed workspace, but rather in a time and place that best suits the work and the people involved.

Some of us will work as intrapreneurs, inspiring our host companies internally. Others will work as solopreneurs shaping their own destiny and pioneering new paths forward.

Marketing Eye is invested in Australia and employing Australians, however, through our expansion into the US market, it has been identified that there are significant cost-savings and productivity level increases through employing people in the US market, in comparison to the high costs and generous remunerations structures that exist in Australia today.

Businesses need to be sustainable and profitable. Outsourcing and offshoring has never been more prevalent than it is today and a more 'hungry' employee that is low cost, high in productivity and committed to excellence is a business decision that CEOs and entrepreneurs cannot ignore.

The Australian Government has a role to play in ensuring that Australian companies employ locally and foster growth in Australia – yet, as a small business owner, it appears that this is not on the agenda nor is it encouraged through employment laws and lack of incentivised remuneration structures.

Many of us will be working collaboratively co-creating locally, nationally and globally in virtual tribes, connected by a trillion digital things that bestow on us constant contact with, insight to and manipulation of, our physical and digital worlds.

Global unemployment will remain high as over the next three decades we add two billion people to our planet and 18 million to Australia.

Despite this, it will remain difficult for employers to find talented employees, as we move through a tectonic shift of inventing and reskilling ourselves to reshape and repurpose existing businesses and professions, as well as forging new horizon industries, practices, business paradigms, ethics and professions.

Education and training will remain a constant to grease this transformation of knowledge and the internet will continue to help spread this information, but with the overwhelming mountains of data we're drowning in, businesses and individuals will soon value 'wisdom' more highly than gold and oil and professions and industries will rise to mine these riches.

Our most prized vocational possession will be our ability to span the duality of working simultaneously in a physical and digital world.

Tomorrow's work landscape will also see the increasing use of robots, virtualisation, telecommuting and 3D printing, further blurring the intersection of human and machine and igniting the question of whether human or machine is best-fit for the task at hand and does it matter?

Standing still is no longer a viable option.

Every job, every profession, every human activity is currently being redefined. Those who are destined to succeed are now standing firm-footed on the precipice of change, eagerly scanning their horizon, searching for tomorrow's possibilities and necessities. →