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Flexible workplace keeps chiefs happy

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WORKERS have many ways in which they obtain a pay rise from their employer, such as agreements and awards, but all staff still can negotiate for more money for themselves. CareerOne this week reveals how to ask for a salary review and the methods which can lead to an increased chance of success. Researching market rates, being polite to the manager and understanding who holds the purse strings at an organisation can all help workers receive more money.

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The extras employers can offer are key to keeping top-performing executives, **Cara Jenkin** reports.



Riding for the Disabled Association state manager Kay Milton with staff Theresa Moore and Ella Kos.

Picture: Mark Brake

EXECUTIVES holding down the top job at not-for-profit organisations are lured to stay by flexibility and family-friendly workplaces offered by their employer, rather than the cash, new research reveals. The salary packaging benefits and lifestyle support staff can access also are major factors in why chief execu-

tives are lured to remain with a not-for-profit organisation that can rarely pay as much as public and private sector employers. The research, by community enterprise Community Business Bureau, has provided a new insight into what will keep a top-performing executive happy at a company and challenges the stereotype that top

executives seek multimillion-dollar salaries and bonuses if they are to remain with an organisation. The CBB Executive Salary Survey 2011 finds that despite being less confident of receiving a pay rise this year, 80 per cent of executives believe remuneration is "very important" or "important" for them to be retained by the organisation.

Yet 80 per cent of executives also rate flexibility and family-friendly workplaces as being of key importance for their retention. CBB Consulting senior consultant Elizabeth Tyson says a challenge for the sector is wanting to offer top executives more for their skills.

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But she says other investments will keep executives just as happy.

"The time to train people, developing high performers and being able to offer remuneration packages that are competitive are the other benefits employers can put in place to retain their staff," she says. "They like the positive return-to-work policies for people from illness and maternity leave, etc, and the development of strong workplace wellness programs."

Employers struggling with tightening budgets and an urge to keep key workers in the skills shortage can learn from the results.

They find that although the percentage of chief executives earning less than \$80,000 a year has increased from 30 per cent to 33.7 per cent in the past year, half have stayed in the job for more than five years.

Half of the survey's respondents expect a pay increase this year, down from 63 per cent recorded in last year's survey.

More than two-thirds of those who are expecting a pay increase believe it will reflect CPI.

One in five chief executives at not-for-profit organisations are earning less than \$50,000 a year.

"People are motivated to belong in the sector for reasons other than remuneration gain," Ms Tyson says.

"(In our experience) on more than one occasion, we've had CEOs sacrifice their own salary increases so they can give salary increases to other staff members."

Riding for the Disabled Association state manager Kay Milton has worked in the position for nine years and takes advantage of salary packaging towards her mortgage and other fringe benefits.

She says it is the ideal job for her to combine her personal interest in horses with her professional skills in administration and public relations.

She says she took a salary cut to be in the position.

Employers will benefit by creating opportunities that advantage their employees, she says.

"If you work in a job that you hate, nothing is going to make it attractive," she says.

"I think everyone can think about how they can make their working set-up better for their staff."