

1 in 3 part-time workers feel discriminated against

Recent SEEK research found that many part-time workers feel discriminated against by their full-time colleagues, and that 58% of Kiwis believed that working part-time was career limiting. We've delved deeper into the research, to explain the findings, and to insist that part-time can be both fulfilling, and push your career forward.

- **Who's working casually or part-time?** Firstly, it's worth examining who's most likely to work part-time and the most common reasons for doing so. At 70%, women make up the majority of part-time employees, and they largely fall into the bracket of low-income earners (78% earn less than \$30K annually).
- **Why are people choosing part-time work?** The most common reason people gave for choosing to work part-time was to look after their young family (26%) or, more broadly, for a better work-life balance (24%), totalling half of all Kiwis surveyed. When asked what they meant by this people primarily mentioned flexible working hours and ensuring they had time to perform additional duties at home. Other reasons mentioned included: study (21%) and being unable to work full-time because of illness or disability (12%).

Significantly, 8% of people said they were working part-time because they couldn't find full-time employment and had accepted a role in the hope of earning some money while they found something more permanent.

- **What's the problem?** One of the most striking findings was that one in three (33%) part-time workers stated that they've felt discriminated against.

When full-time workers were asked whether they thought part-time workers were discriminated against, the perception was a lot higher, with one in two (53%) saying they thought they were.

- **And this is because?** When part-time workers were asked why they thought they were discriminated against, 30% stated it was because they weren't perceived to be as readily available as their full-time colleagues. Another 25% stated that it was because of a perceived disconnect to the rest of the team, for example, they didn't fit in as well as full-time employees with the workplace culture.
- **How to combat this feeling?** Kristine Tuazon, Principle Consultant at Good People HR, offers some advice if you feel you're being discriminated against as a part-time worker, or are worried about entering a new work place on a part-time basis:

- *Be proactive with reporting.* Your team wants to know what you're doing, do a dot point summary, weekly or daily to keep them informed

- *Be visible on emails on your days off.* Invest 15 to 30 mins in forwarding, quickly responding or advising when you will get back to people – they just want to know when you're on to it so they can plan

- *Have goals that you can handle, and express them.* This shows you're in it for the long haul, and that you're contributing

- *Go to the social stuff.* Be disciplined at investing time to network internally, the quality of your work and results combined with being well networked internally can pay off

While it's possible you might not progress as fast as your full-time colleagues, part-time work can still help you transition through various roles and experiences, provide the means of learning new skills, and present manifold networking opportunities. The ability to raise a family, study, or pursue passion projects, for example, are additional and important benefits of this kind of work that should be embraced by those that undertake it.