

HRM AT WORK EXERCISE

A rise in casual employment

REFERENCE: 'There's a serious side to casual relationships', Helen Meredith. *Australian Financial Review*, 3 February 2005, 'Recruitment' (Special Report) p.12.

CHAPTERS RELEVANT TO THIS EXERCISE: 2, 4, 6, 19

Summary

The rise of casual (i.e. non-permanent) employment has been one of the most marked trends in the Australian workforce in recent decades. Workforce casualisation reflects a major shift in attitudes to work which, in turn, arises from changes in economic and social structure and in economic thinking. From the employer's perspective, casualisation widens considerably the scope for flexibility in meeting fluctuating labour requirements. Casualisation has also been driven by the growth in the services sector, by increased workforce participation by women, and by a younger workers' abandonment of the 'job for life' outlook of earlier generations. The rise in casual employment has also been paralleled by a boom in recruitment outsourcing.

Questions

1. What are the advantages to employers of employing casuals?
2. What are the drawbacks of casual employment from the employee's perspective?
3. Why has casualisation stimulated recruitment outsourcing?
4. How should HR managers seek to strike a balance between the employment of casuals and permanents?