

## The nature of incentives

While salary is important, employees and prospective candidates are motivated by more than cash incentives, according to Velma Roberts, HR service senior manager with PricewaterhouseCoopers.

“Obviously, some people are extremely motivated by salaries and bonuses, but for a lot of people, once you feel that you are being paid fairly for the work that you are doing, then it is other things that differentiate – career progression, learning, opportunities for expansion, a sense that you are a key member of the team,” said Roberts.

For many people, those non-financial benefits are what really matters when it comes to accepting a job offer or deciding whether to move on.

“In a lot of people’s minds



**Velma Roberts**

that is a very key part of their reward because ultimately it is setting you up for future success,” Roberts said. “You see people who are faced with two jobs and one might have a higher salary and package, but if they feel that the other job will offer them much more in terms of personal and career development, they make the decision to go for

that other job.

“One of the things chief executives and general managers would be quite nervous of is that their key talent would go to competitors, so they need to create an environment where the key performers and, indeed, all of their employees can stay and progress.”

Non-cash benefits are becoming increasingly important to employees, especially in an environment where things like bonuses may not be forthcoming.

Career progression and development and the opportunity for upskilling are chief among these, but flexibility in working hours and the ability to work from home can also be a key attraction for new candidates and, indeed, a tool with which to ensure that you retain high quality staff.

“Flexible working arrangements for a lot of people are extremely important. A lot of our client companies would be seriously looking into that.

Years ago there might have been a sense that job-sharing was for certain repetitive jobs, but that has very much changed,” Roberts said.

“The whole profile of people with flexible working arrangements has changed completely – some very senior people are doing it and it works the whole way down through an organisation.”

Something as simple as recognising the contribution of employees through a personal management programme can also be seen as a non-cash benefit.

“It is important that employees know they are heading in the right direction and most like that sort of feedback,” Roberts said. “For a lot of people, if they are respected and they feel like they are a genuinely contributing member of the team, there is a much better feel-good factor and they are more likely to really appreciate their job and find it more interesting.”