

State of Play Report  
2013–14

newport consulting

# Managing on the edge

*Special 5th Year Edition*

A study of Australian and  
New Zealand Business Confidence



# Insights

## Productivity gains traction

Across both sides of the Tasman, awareness around productivity metrics was significantly higher than in previous years, when a surprising percentage of managers reported having no measurements in place. Factors cited as being instrumental to productivity improvements included identifying inefficiencies (17 per cent), and improving service (13 per cent).

## Kiwis more confident

Optimism about business prospects is on the rise in New Zealand, with 38 per cent describing themselves as 'very optimistic' about their prospects this financial year, compared with 29 per cent last year. More than half of Kiwi leaders expect growth of more than 10 per cent, compared to only 28 per cent of Aussies.

## Economy has leaders on edge

Pessimism around the state of the economy continues this year, with 91 per cent of Australian business leaders viewing the economy as slowing, stagnant or declining. Just 9 per cent felt the economy was growing. By contrast, a respectable 62 per cent of New Zealand respondents said the economy was growing.

## SMEs feel the pinch

Small to medium enterprises are struggling to remain profitable. Only 41 per cent of SMEs are predicting earnings growth in excess of 10 per cent over the coming year, compared with 76 per cent in 2009.

## Confidence plummeting

Among Australian companies, an overwhelming 91 per cent of surveyed leaders viewed the economy as slowing, stagnant or declining. This is a sharp increase from only 37 per cent of leaders holding this view in 2010–11. Only 15 per cent of Australian companies expressed optimism regarding their business prospects.

## Employment stalls

In Australia, a growing number of companies are cutting jobs — 26 per cent of businesses, compared with 14 per cent just a year ago. Fewer New Zealand companies are reducing staff compared to last year.

## Leaders disgruntled with government

Dissatisfaction with the government was at an all-time high among Australian business leaders, with 57 per cent saying they felt the government was working against business, compared with 46 per cent last year. By contrast, just 13 per cent of New Zealand companies feel their government is working against them.

# Managing on the edge

Introduction	4
Annual Update	5
Outlook	6
Challenges, opportunities and priorities	14
Flying the productivity flag	17
Business on government	20
Research	24



# Introduction

Newport Consulting is pleased to present its fifth annual *State of Play* report, *Managing on the Edge*. This year's report is released at a time of heightened instability, particularly in Australia, where market confidence has been impacted by a difficult political and economic landscape for the last three years.

Australia faces a time of record-low interest rates, major slowdowns in the mining sector, creeping unemployment figures and all-time low consumer and investor confidence levels. By contrast, New Zealand is seeing export growth surge to 30 per cent of GDP and forecasting modest yet stable economic growth of 2–3 per cent for the period to 2016. New Zealand is also increasingly attractive to Aussie producers, who are attracted by its supportive industrial relations and tax system, and are shifting jobs in droves across the Tasman.

In the five years since its inception, *State of Play* has observed a significant swing in the business community's mood, from upbeat in 2009 to uneasy in 2013. Post-GFC, we noted an optimistic outlook among leaders, particularly Australian SMEs, which all displayed bullish growth expectations despite the global recession. The buoyant spirit has dissipated with each subsequent report and this year's study reports the lowest levels of confidence to date.

The 2013 report indicates marked apprehension within the business community, with more companies expecting zero growth and even more companies either reducing or not replacing staff.

The report also highlights the differences in outlook between Australian and New Zealand companies over the last 12 months. While Australia and New Zealand business leaders shared a similar outlook as recently as last year, Australian leaders are far more pessimistic than their Kiwi peers this year.

*State of Play* aims to accurately gauge business confidence and in doing so, drive business thinking towards organisational excellence in a time when many are managing on the edge. How can they step back from this precarious position without tumbling over? Low consumer and business confidence has a deadening effect on companies' willingness to invest and innovate. The burden of stimulation and leadership has shifted onto the government, and continuing deficits are the result.

The only realistic way for the government to return to surplus is for the tax base to increase through economic growth. Economic growth will only return in a sustained way through a resurgence of confidence in the economy. This year's report clearly identifies this as the challenge for the incoming federal government in Australia.



We believe now is also the time to embrace innovation and new business practices, and build organisations that can last the future. I'm confident this year's report will ignite progressive discussion on the key business issues occupying the minds of organisational leaders and business owners in both Australia and New Zealand.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Hand".

David Hand, Managing Director

# Annual Update

## Report on confidence, challenges and drivers

*State of Play* is an annual analysis measuring business confidence, trends and management behaviour at large companies and small to medium enterprises (SMEs) in Australia and New Zealand. The study was conceived in 2008, during the height of the global financial crisis, and is designed primarily to assess the business state of play of companies as companies emerged from the credit crisis and subsequent economic downturn.

The report builds a portrait of Australia and New Zealand's economic and business environment, and ability to achieve sustained levels of business growth and performance. It remains one of the most respected assessments of business sentiment in the region.

Newport Consulting has conducted this annual report for five consecutive years, modifying it over time to capture new data points essential to the mood of the business and economy at the time release. This year's report, *Managing on the Edge (2013–14)* follows *Managing in Uncharted Waters (2012–13)*, *Managing in a Multi-speed Economy (2011–12)*, *Managing in Uncertain Times (2010–11)* and *Managing through a Downturn (2009–10)*.

The report examines corporate confidence amid ongoing challenging conditions and asks a series of pertinent questions. Is the business outlook different to last year's? What key strategies are companies adopting to remain competitive? What different approaches do Australian and New Zealand business leaders exhibit in managing growth? Is productivity currently a critical business issue?

The report's primary objectives are to:

- ▲ Track business confidence and expectations over the next 12–36 months
- ▲ Report on management behaviour and identify trends between SMEs and large companies
- ▲ Report on management behaviour and identify trends between Australian and New Zealand companies
- ▲ Assess business sentiment towards government policies and reform.

# Outlook

## State of economy has leaders on the edge

Pessimism around the state of the economy continues, especially for Australian companies, with 91 percent of surveyed leaders viewing the economy as slowing, stagnant or declining. This is a sharp increase from only 37 per cent of leaders holding this view in 2010–11.

An increasing number of Australian leaders (16 per cent) further viewed the economy as declining, suggesting a growing lack of confidence in Australia's economic performance.

By contrast, only 37 per cent of Kiwi leaders said that the economy is stagnant or slowing and no leaders reported the economy to be in decline. Two-thirds (62 per cent) believe the economy is currently growing.

Meanwhile, leaders in both countries reported a more positive outlook for the economy over the longer term — 12 months to 3 years. This observation is notable in Australia, where 25 per cent of leaders believe the economy will grow in the next 12 months, and 74 per cent of leaders cited growth expectations for their three-year outlook.

This shift in prognosis suggests that Australian leaders are looking to the incoming federal government to restore confidence in the country's economic future and are hopeful this will occur. New Zealand leaders, on the other hand, are fairly consistent with their current views and their three-year predictions.

## future outlook

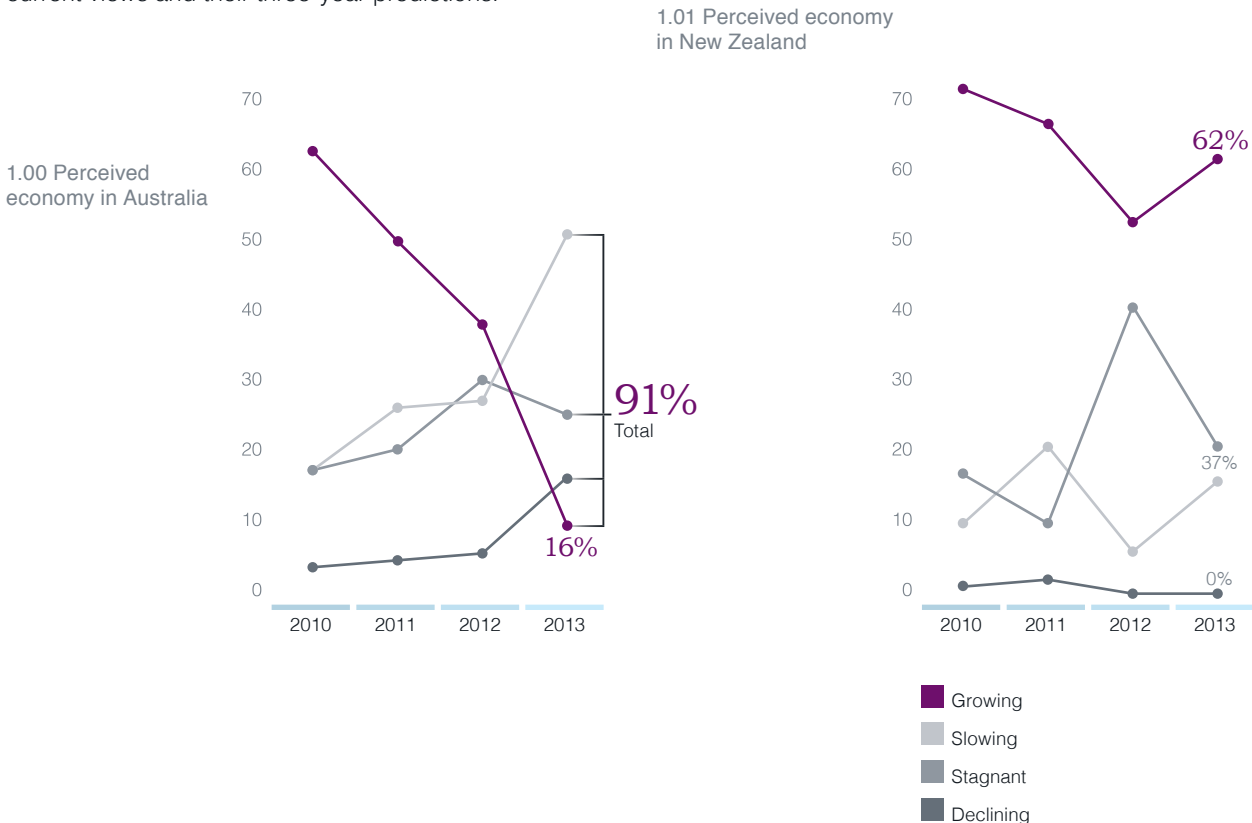
3 year economic forecast for Australia

74%  
Growing

12%  
Slowing

12%  
Stagnant

1%  
Declining



## Business confidence plummeting

Apart from the economy, business leaders are beleaguered by concern about their future prospects.

In the five years since inception, *State of Play* has observed a steady decline in business confidence. Only 7 per cent of Australian businesses reported facing difficult conditions in 2009, in the wake of the global financial crisis, but in 2013 that figure has soared to 35 per cent.

Meanwhile, the number of Australian companies expressing optimism about business conditions has plummeted by more than 50 percent. In 2009–10, an overwhelmingly majority of surveyed leaders (78 per cent) were optimistic about their future prospects. This year, only 15 per cent of surveyed companies take this stance.

### Aussies veer closer to the brink than Kiwis

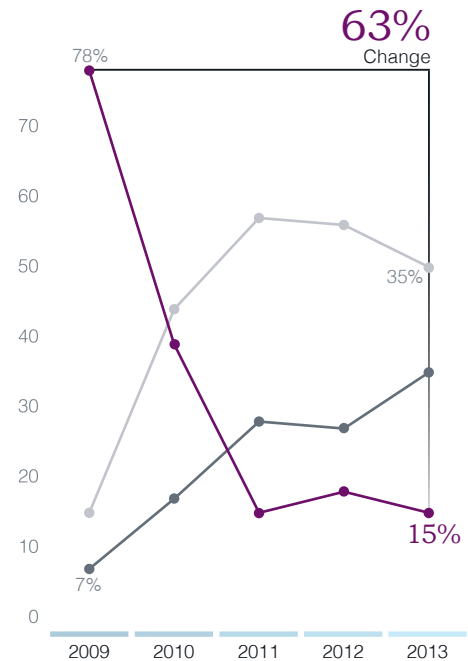
An emerging trend over the last five years has been the growth in Kiwi business confidence regarding their future prospects, as Australian confidence has soured.

Of surveyed Kiwi leaders, 38 per cent are very optimistic about their prospects this financial year, an increase from 29 per cent last year. This compares to only 15 per cent of Australian companies. Meanwhile, the number of Australian companies reporting difficult conditions stands at 35 per cent, compared to 17 per cent of New Zealand companies.

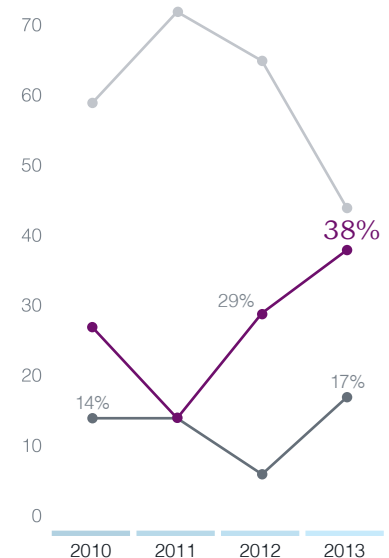
In fact, the percentage of Australian companies worried about tough business conditions has more than tripled over the past five years, rising from 7 per cent to 35 per cent, where this concern has only marginally increased in New Zealand, from 14 per cent to 17 per cent over the same period.

Similarly, the percentage of Australian companies who express optimism has tumbled from 78 per cent down to 15 per cent, while the incline of Kiwi companies feeling more confident has been steadier. Our responses from across the Tasman indicate that, not having been cushioned by a resources boom, New Zealand has made the necessary adjustments to get its economy moving. Australian responses, however, indicate a nation about to face the challenge of optimising the economy for growth.

1.02 Growth confidence in Australia



1.03 Growth confidence in New Zealand



- Very optimistic
- Cautiously optimistic
- Face difficult conditions

# Outlook

## Kiwis anticipate ongoing growth

Kiwi leaders appear to be more confident about their growth opportunities, with more than half expecting growth of more than 10 per cent, compared to only 28 per cent of Aussie leaders.

The last five years of data also reveals a steady increase in the growth expectation of Kiwi companies, and a corresponding decline in predictions for non-growth. In Australia, the opposite applies: we have observed an increase in companies that don't expect growth, and only a sluggish rise in the number of companies expecting more than 10 per cent.

## SME growth reveals a darkened outlook for 2013

**47%**

Less than 10%  
down from 76% in 2009

**41%**

Greater than 10%

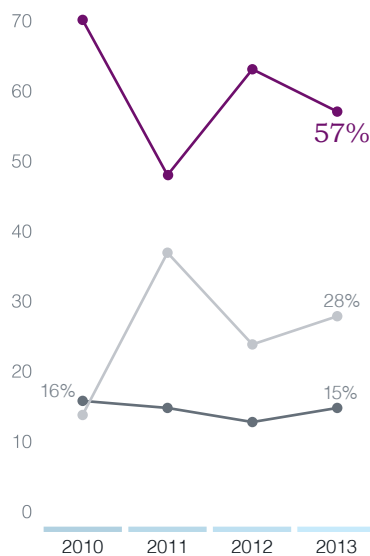
**12%**

Don't expect growth

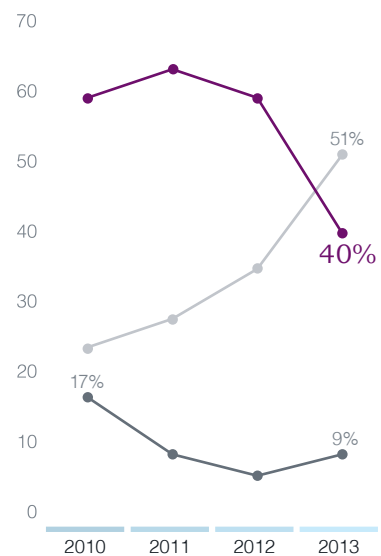
## SMEs brace for the fall

Our *State of Play* report also compares the sentiment between SMEs and large organisations. Over the last five years, business sentiment among SMEs has darkened in outlook. This year, only 41 per cent of businesses predict earnings growth in excess of 10 per cent, compared with 76 per cent in 2009 (a time when large organisations, by contrast, were more conservative). Clearly, the SME sector expects the coming difficulties to directly impact their ability to stay profitable and employ more people.

1.04 Sales revenue growth in Australia



1.05 Sales revenue growth in New Zealand



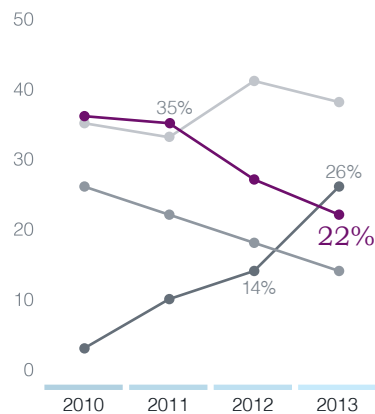
■ Less than 10%  
■ Greater than 10%  
■ Don't expect growth

## Employment takes a dive

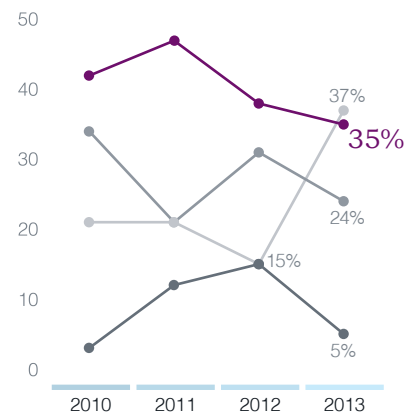
Aligned with their increasingly negative business outlook, a growing number of companies are cutting jobs in Australia — 26 per cent of businesses, compared with 14 per cent just a year ago. Less than one-quarter of all surveyed companies in Australia are hiring full-time staff, down from 35 per cent two years earlier.

Again there is a divide in activity across the Tasman, with fewer New Zealand companies reducing staff. Whereas the number of Australian companies reducing staff has almost doubled over the last 12 months, the percentage of New Zealand companies reducing staff has decreased. While New Zealand companies are either not hiring or are hiring part-time instead of full-time staff, the Australian scene shows a higher incidence of staff reductions compared to part-time hires or non-hires.

1.06 Employment outlook in Australia



1.07 Employment outlook in New Zealand



- Hiring full-time staff
- Not hiring
- Hiring part-time staff
- Reducing staff

# Outlook

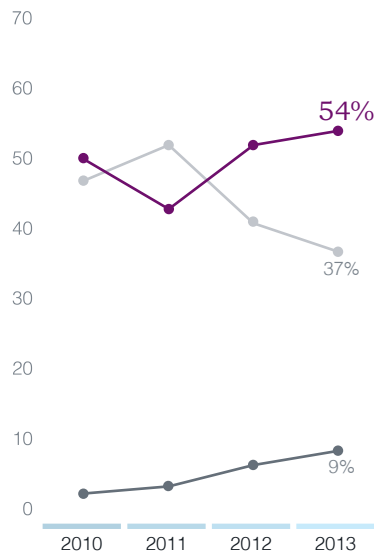
## Low inflation with prices steady

Despite increasing business costs and ongoing pressure on margins, an overall picture is emerging of companies continuing to absorb higher costs and not passing these on.

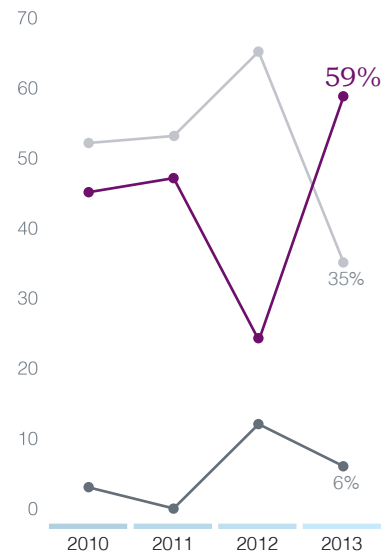
However, closer examination of SMEs reveals a different story, with an increasing proportion of smaller businesses planning to increase prices compared to larger organisations. When *State of Play* was first released, the reverse was true: corporates were passing on price increases to customers while SMEs were absorbing higher business costs without passing these on to their customers.

Evidently, the tables have clearly turned and SMEs can no longer absorb the costs. They are indicating less ability to respond to difficult trading conditions, lacking the flexibility that larger businesses have to discontinue unprofitable lines, go offshore, invest in technology or make demands of their suppliers. They also remain unresponsive to the RBA's record-low interest rates.

1.08 Price outlook in Australia



1.09 Price outlook in New Zealand



### Mixed view on salaries

Wage growth appears to be moderate across the region, with just over half the survey respondents planning to increase wages over the next 12 months and 41 per cent freezing wages. Arguably, some companies are focusing on staff retention instead of new recruitment, and are retaining their staff through reward and remuneration initiatives.

From closely analysing the data, this seems to be the case in New Zealand and Australia as well as across companies of all sizes.

## Salaries

1.9 Wages outlook across the region

**52%**

Increasing wages

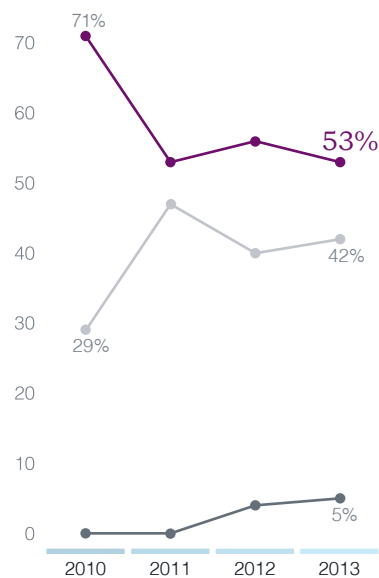
**41%**

No change in wages

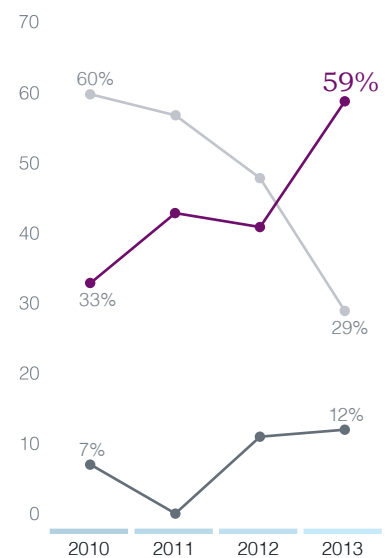
**6%**

Decreasing wages

1.10 Price outlook for SMEs



1.11 Price outlook for large companies



■ No change  
 ■ Increase  
 ■ Decrease

# Outlook

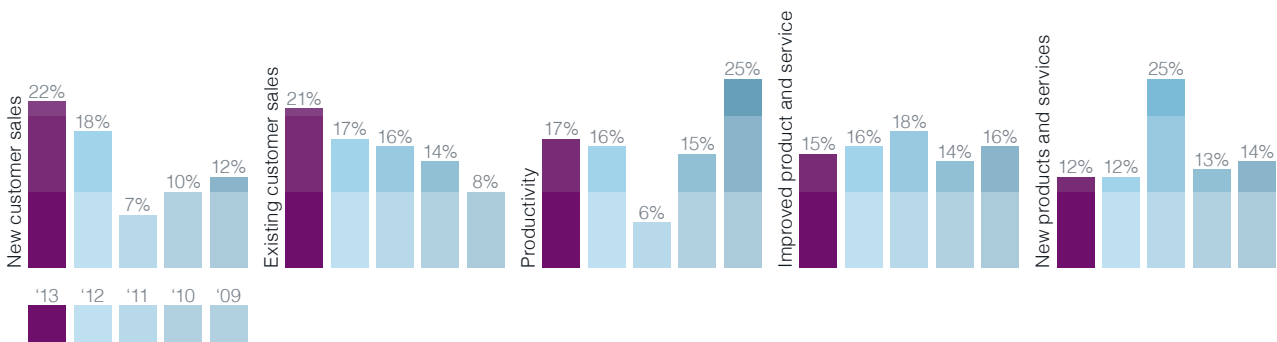
## Companies focused on more sales

For those companies anticipating growth in the year ahead, our data suggests that increased sales from both new and existing customers is the key priority for close to half of the leaders surveyed for the year ahead.

Increased productivity was the third greatest source of growth identified, reinforcing the views of leaders that productivity is no longer a challenge and instead represents an opportunity for companies to get ahead.

Growth from innovation and R&D is not viewed as key for most of the leaders surveyed, with only 12 per cent expecting growth from improved products and services, and 9 per cent from new markets.

1.12 Top 5 sources of growth across the region



## Stalled sources

for leaders in 2013

9%

New markets

4%

Mergers, acquisitions and JVs

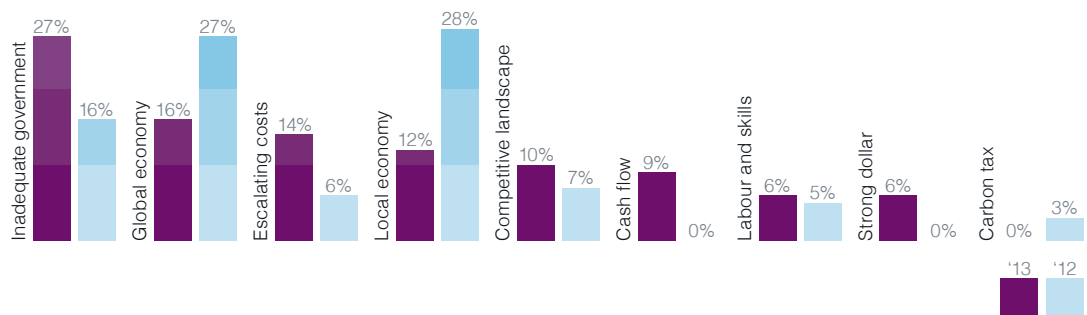
## Government hurting confidence

In Australia, government inadequacy was named the number one factor impacting the outlook for all businesses in 2013, compared with last year's overriding concern around global economic conditions, which ranked second this year. This suggests that respondents believe government policy must transform, enabling Australian businesses to protect and enhance the prosperity of organisations and their employees.

Escalating business costs (14 per cent) were named the third-most important factor affecting business outlook, and was a key driver of a more negative sentiment.

Local business conditions were lower down the list of concerns, with the government increasingly being held accountable for such conditions. Businesses are calling for changes in government policy to drive business confidence.

### 1.13 Factors driving outlook across the region



# Challenges and opportunities

## Economy haunts leaders

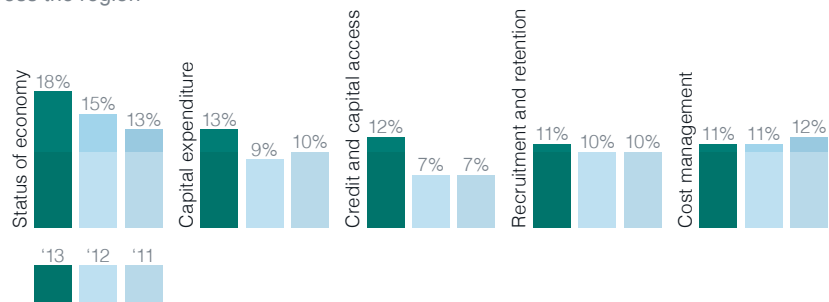
The number one challenge for all business leaders in the year ahead is the state of the economy, which corresponds closely to our finding of declining confidence in the Australian economy.

## CAPEX projects on hold

Other key challenges included capital expenditure (13 per cent), and access to capital (12 per cent). The report's data suggests that companies are hindered by a lack of funds to invest in new CAPEX projects, forcing a renewed focus on productivity and operational improvements to drive growth, profitability and stronger business performance.

Environmental credibility and an aging workforce did not rate as challenges for business leaders in 2013, despite making the list for the last two years. Instead, business leaders are focusing on day-to-day concerns such as business operations and immediate critical priorities.

2.00 Top 5 Challenges across the region



## Off the radar

for leaders in 2013

4%

Customer satisfaction

0%

Environmental credentials  
down 4% from last year

0%

Aging workforce  
down 7% from last year

## Productivity rated an opportunity

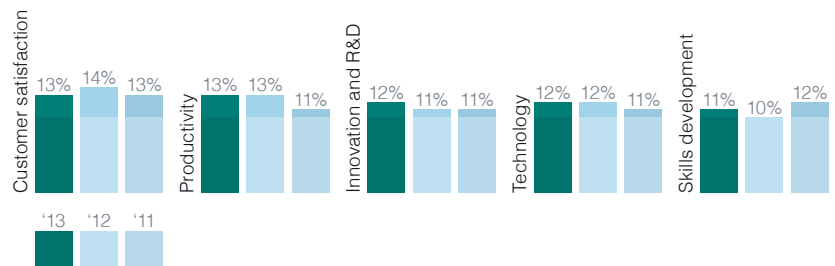
Productivity wasn't identified as a top challenge this year, with more leaders viewing it instead as an opportunity — an encouraging development, given the recent news profile of this topic.

Customer satisfaction was a top opportunity for 13 per cent of leaders, followed by innovation and R&D (12 per cent).

The findings reinforce business concern around the state of the economy, with only 2 per cent of leaders citing economic conditions as a source of opportunity. Environmental credibility and the aging workforce rated zero as a business opportunity, as leaders turn their attention to immediate priorities.

Business investment also rated low on the radar as an opportunity, reflecting the present difficulty in securing funds to expand business.

2.01 Top 5 Opportunities across the region



## Lost opportunities

for leaders in 2013

2%

Status of economy

0%

Environmental credentials  
down 8% from last year

0%

Aging workforce  
down 2% from last year

# Priorities

## Leaders focused on the here and now

Leaders are focused on short-term and immediate goals. They're failing to demonstrate a longer term vision or business plan in the current environment.

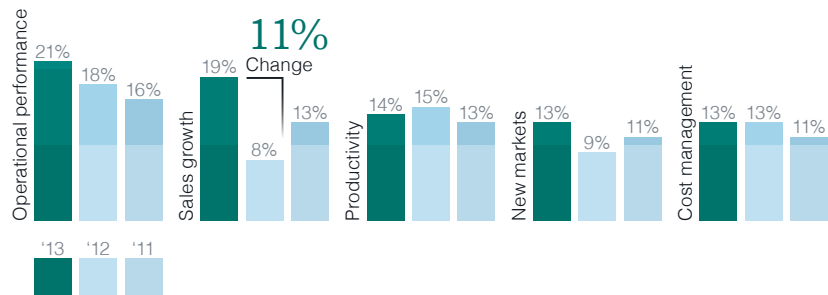
Leaders are in survival mode, with their key business priority centring on improving operational performance. Given the present difficulties in raising capital, leaders are eschewing expansion in favour of leveraging their existing operations, and are examining ways of becoming more efficient.

The number of leaders planning to prioritise growth via sales in 2013 has more than doubled since last year, suggesting that organic growth is crucial in an environment where cash is limited and M&A remains an unattractive option for growth.

Improving productivity is the third core priority for business leaders; other priorities include developing new markets and products, and reducing costs.

Lower on the list of business priorities this year were recruitment and retention, and training and development, reflecting reduced intentions to employ staff in the year ahead.

2.02 Top 5 Priorities across the region



## Scratch list

for leaders in 2013

3%

Mergers and acquisitions

2%

Capital raising

0%

Aging workforce  
down 3% from last year

# Flying the productivity flag

## Mixed approach to improved productivity

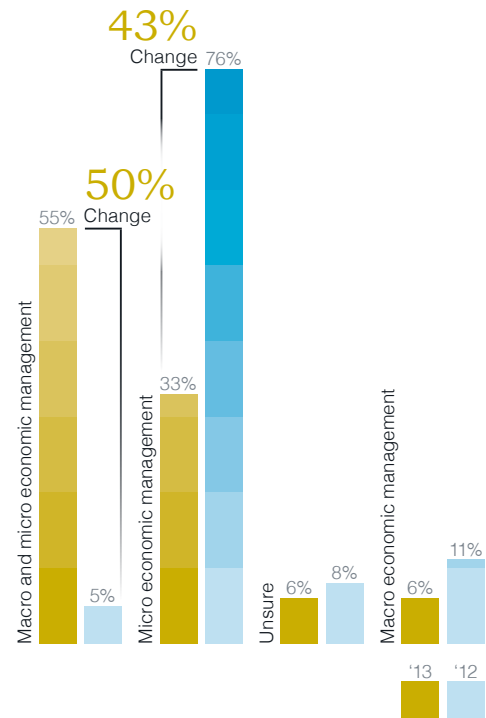
Productivity continues to make media headlines and feature extensively in government rhetoric. When we first launched *State of Play*, companies were struggling with productivity at an organisational level. To ascertain a clearer and more relevant picture of productivity in the current environment, we asked business leaders about productivity.

When asked how best to address the productivity challenge, more than half of the leaders said that productivity is best managed via a combination of sound government policy and frameworks, and best management practice at an organisational level. In comparison, last year a majority of companies said that responsibility for productivity lies within the organisation. This dramatic about-face indicates a more mature awareness around productivity and what is required to address the productivity challenge.

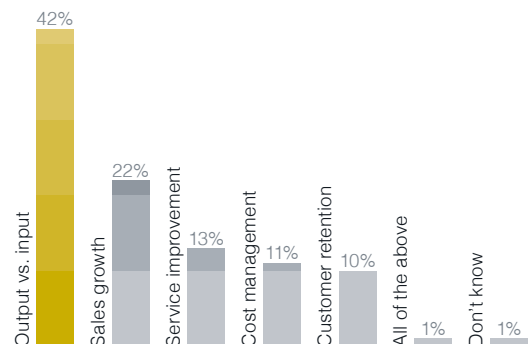
## Leaders committed to measuring productivity

In the past, we have found companies struggling to define productivity, let alone knowing how to improve or measure it. But in this year's report, most leaders revealed knowledge of how to measure productivity in their organisation, with 42 per cent measuring it as output over input. Also encouragingly, only 11 per cent of leaders said they equated productivity improvements with reduced costs, preferring sales growth and service improvements as ways of measuring productivity.

3.00 How the productivity challenge is addressed across the region



3.01 How productivity is measured across the region



# Flying the productivity flag

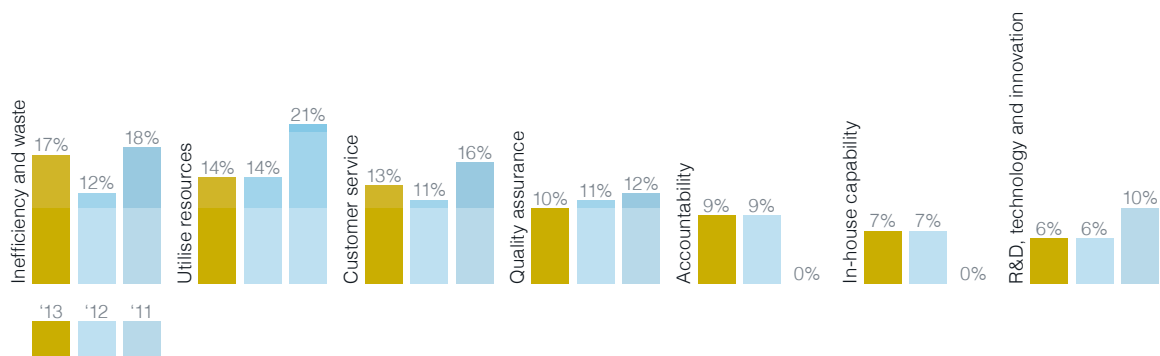
## Internal focus key to improving productivity

The top three strategies being undertaken by companies to improve productivity for the year ahead are identifying inefficiencies (17 per cent), maximising business resources (14 per cent) and improving service (13 per cent).

Strategies previously associated with improved productivity appear to be on their way out, two examples being outsourcing and use of lean six sigma.

Despite this increasingly sound grasp of productivity, businesses were not planning to create a more flexible workplace culture or align organisational structure with productivity for the year ahead.

### 3.02 Productivity improvement strategies across the region



## On the way out

for leaders in 2013

5%

Skills development

3%

Management operating system

3%

Lean and Six Sigma

2%

Outsourcing

### Employee Engagement makes Top 5

Employee engagement did make it on to the top five strategies to improve productivity in the year ahead. Further probing revealed that clarifying an organisation's vision and purpose and communicating targets and KPIs were seen as critical to lifting productivity.

### Call for workplace regulations to change

Compared with their Kiwi peers, nearly double the Australian leaders interviewed view workplace regulations as inflexible and in need of change. Greater flexibility in industrial relations would likely lead to more job hires, according to these companies, but they are currently planning not to employ in the year ahead.

## Engagement stats

for leaders in 2013

10%

Engagement makes the Top 5

31%

Clear purpose and vision critical

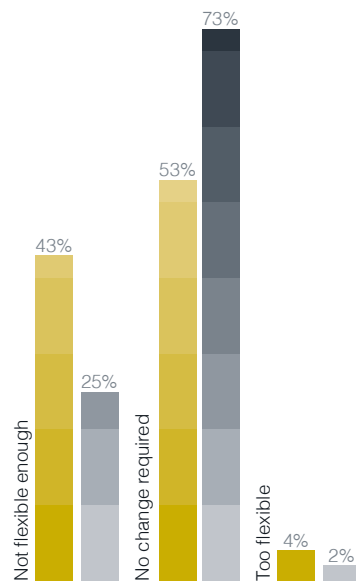
17%

Targets and KPIs key

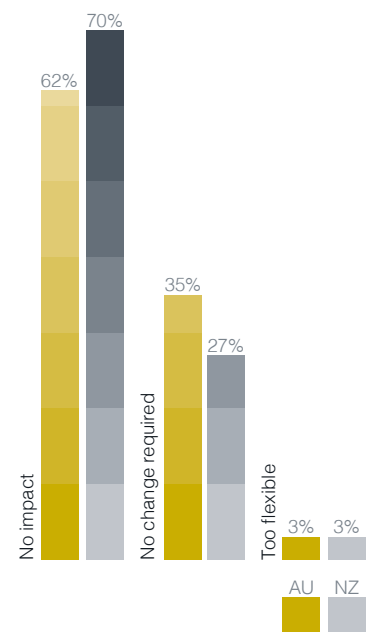
13%

Strong culture a must

3.03 Workforce regulations across the region



3.04 Effects of flexible workforce regulations across the region



# Business on government

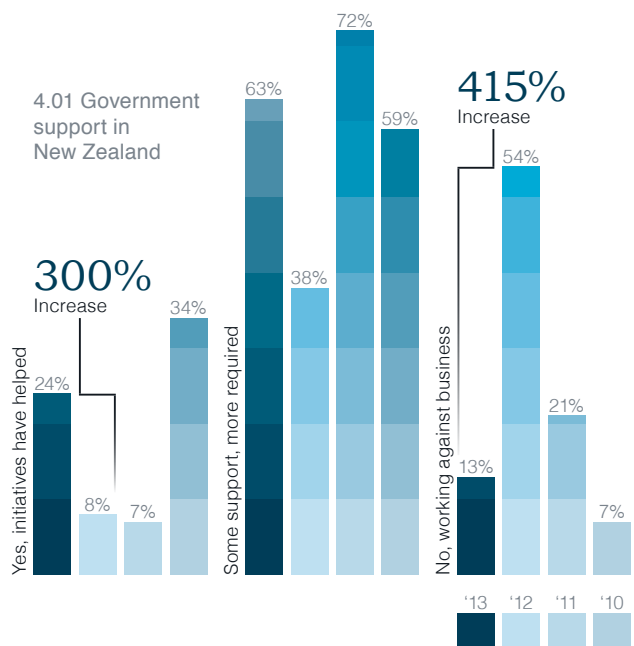
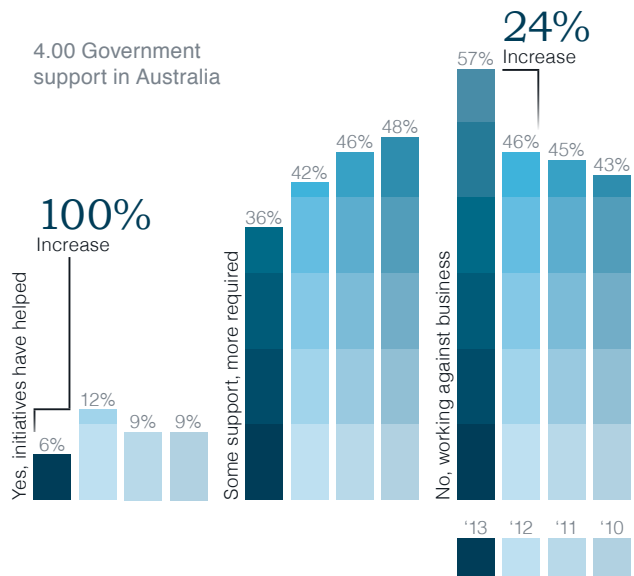
## Polar attitudes across the region

Throughout this year's study, we have observed two crucial emerging trends — Australian business confidence falling away as government dissatisfaction climbs, contrasted against the optimistic and supportive environment in New Zealand.

The number of Australian leaders satisfied with government support for business has halved over the past 12 months. Some 57 per cent of leaders feel the government working against business.

The reverse is true of New Zealand. A rising number of leaders surveyed agree that the government has implemented initiatives that help businesses, while just 13 per cent of companies feel the government is working against business.

The increasingly polar attitudes towards government across either side of the Tasman further confirm our observations so far of a lagging confidence in Australian business circles in 2013, and increasing buoyancy in New Zealand.



### Economic management top policy priority

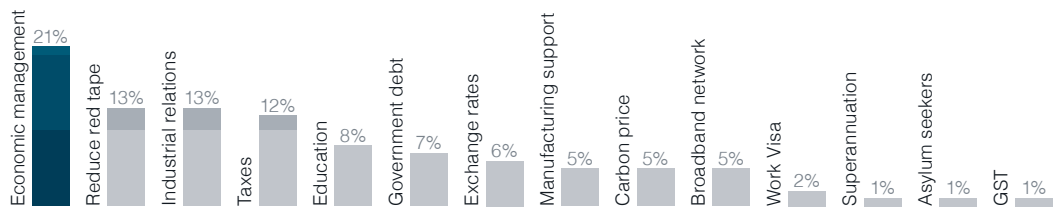
The top three policies that all leaders would like to see from government are: more sound economic management (21 per cent), less red tape (13 per cent) and more supportive industrial workplace regulations (13 per cent). Leaders are calling for a more secure economic landscape that stimulates optimal business performance.

“New Zealand government should keep doing what they’re doing as our economy is out performing Australia”

“Canberra should take note from John Keys and he has worked with other parties rather than against”

“Keep going the way you are... John Keys. You are handling things very well”

### 4.02 Key policy focus across the region



# Advice to government

This year we asked business leaders to give their governments some words of advice. Looking at the responses of Australian leaders, an image emerges of rising dissatisfaction with party politics and election-winning antics taking precedence over policy planning and quality, with 21 per cent of leaders calling for a genuine focus on sound policy and an end to internal party politics.

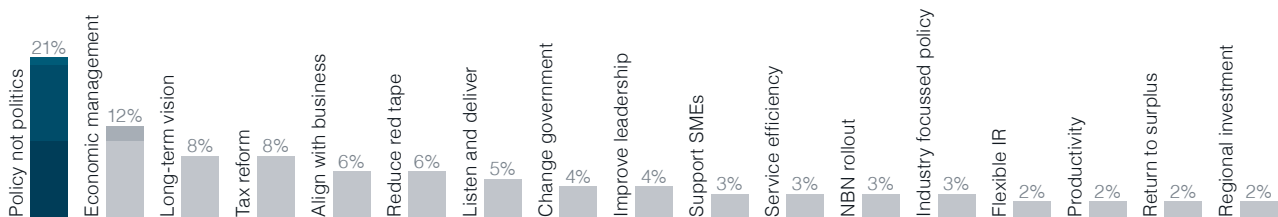
Strong economic management was also high on the agenda for leaders when it came to giving Canberra their advice. This is consistent with findings throughout this year's *State of Play*, which indicate a palpable concern around the jittery economy and the flow-on impact this is having throughout business, including the reduced appetite for investment, increasing job cuts and falling confidence.

Australian leaders also call for the government to adopt a longer term plan and vision. Many leaders felt that the government in recent years has been too focused on short-term tactics and policies designed to win elections rather than benefit the nation.

"We can't live forever on our mineral wealth. Let's get serious about encouraging business R&D investment"

"Focus on good policy that will support growth and stabilise confidence in the market"

4.03 Advice to government in Australia



## Fading concerns

only rating at 1% for leaders in 2013

1%

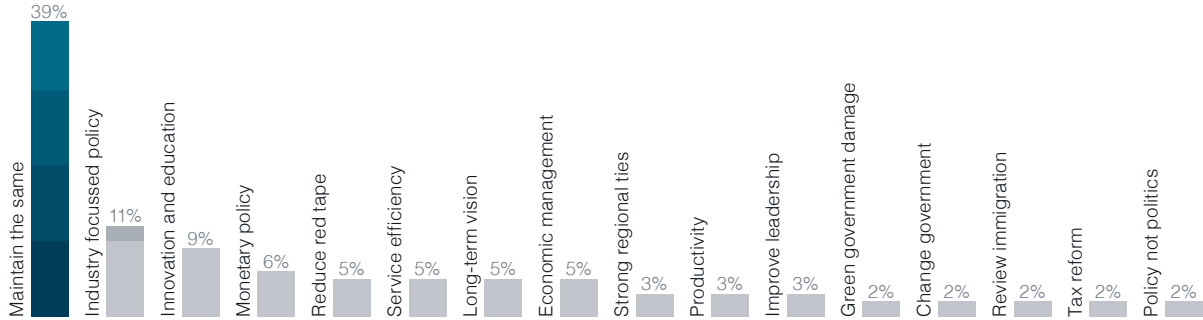
- Maintain the same
- Innovation and education
- Review immigration
- Environment focus
- Strong regional ties
- Monetary policy
- Adopt NZ government model

In New Zealand, the overall sentiment was again very different, with close to 40 per cent of leaders encouraging their government to continue with the strong existing model. Overall, Kiwi leaders expressed satisfaction with the government, its policies and its style. This compares to only 1 per cent of Australian leaders who encourage their government to keep doing the same. Also in New Zealand, leaders wanted to see an increase in funding for education and innovation, as well as policies that would support all sectors across the economy.

“Forget party politics and the status of being PM”

“Prioritise productivity improvements and deregulate the labour market”

4.04 Advice to government in New Zealand



# Research

## Demographics

*State of Play* is compiled from responses to a tailored online survey canvassing the thoughts and views of 270 business leaders in Australia and New Zealand across a range of business issues.

The survey was conducted between 12 June and 12 July 2013 and included questions on business confidence and productivity, as well as business expectations for the 12 months through June 2014.

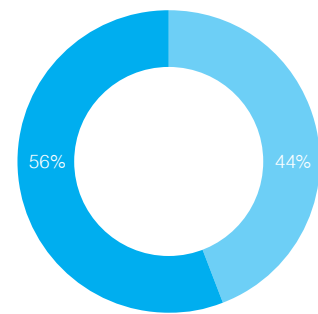
Survey participants can be broken down accordingly:

## About our survey

More than 280 leaders participated

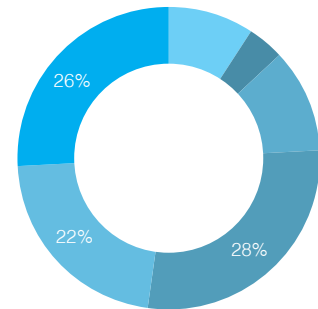
5.00 Country

- Australia
- New Zealand



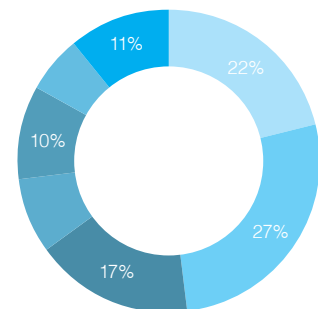
5.01 Employees

- 1 to 10
- 11 to 50
- 51 to 500
- 501 to 2000 (11%)
- 2001 to 5000 (4%)
- More than 5000 (9%)



5.02 Revenue

- More than \$1 billion
- \$1 billion to \$500 million (6%)
- \$500 million to \$100 million
- \$100 million to \$50 million (11%)
- \$50 million to \$10 million
- \$10 million to \$1 million
- Less than \$1 million



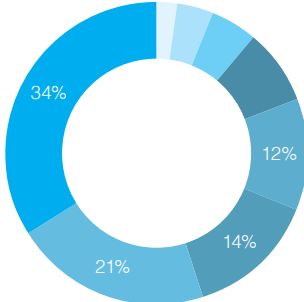
# Top leaders respond

to influential business confidence study

- 47%**  
C-Level and Chairman
- 52%**  
Companies with +200 employees
- 64%**  
Publicly listed companies

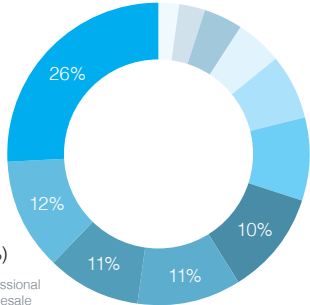
### 5.03 Position

- Business Owner
- National Head and GM
- C-Level and Chairman
- Director
- Manager (8%)
- Head and Senior Manager (5%)
- Coordinator and Employee (4%)
- President and Vice-President (2%)



### 5.04 Sector


- Business services\*
  - IT and Telecommunications
  - Transport, utilities and retail^
  - Government services
  - Banking and Finance
  - Manufacturing (9%)
  - Education, community and health (7%)
  - Resources, mining, oil and gas (5%)
  - Agriculture and Environment (4%)
  - Food, beverage and hospitality (3%)
  - Construction (2%)
- \*and Professional  
^and wholesale



# Research

## Survey questions

1. How confident are you about your business prospects in the year ahead?
2. How much do you expect revenue to grow in the year ahead?
3. Where will your growth come from?
4. How do you perceive the economy?
5. What is impacting your business outlook?
6. What is your employment outlook for the year ahead?
7. What is your wages outlook for the year ahead?
8. What are your plans regarding selling prices for the next 12 months?
9. What are your three main business priorities for the year ahead?
10. What are your greatest opportunities and challenges for the year ahead?
11. How do you think the productivity challenge is best addressed by?
12. What are your top three strategies to improve productivity in the year ahead?
13. What are your three key strategies to improve employee engagement in the year ahead?
14. How do you measure productivity?
15. In viewing issues of productivity in your industry sector, do you believe the workforce regulations are: a) Too flexible; b) OK as they are; or c) Not flexible enough
16. What would more flexible workforce regulations in your industry sector do for your business?
17. Is the government actively supporting business through its policies?
18. What are the three key policies the government, or the incoming government (for Australians), should focus on to best benefit businesses?
19. If you had an opportunity to send a message to your Prime Minister, or for Australians, to the incoming Prime Minister, what would it be?



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For more information regarding the research please contact at Manning & Co. on 1300 512 902 or at [gemma@manningandco.com.au](mailto:gemma@manningandco.com.au)

If you are an executive or business owner and wish to register your interest in participating in future surveys, please contact [info@manningandco.com.au](mailto:info@manningandco.com.au)



### About Newport Consulting

Newport Consulting is an operational management consultancy which helps companies to achieve operational excellence through aligning and optimising existing resources to achieve tangible, consistent and measurable business performance.

Newport provides experienced and talented experts to work closely with companies to create sustainable and measurable business improvement.

Established in 2006, Newport has worked with a number of large companies in Australia and New Zealand across a range of industry sectors including mining, oil and gas, professional services and food manufacturing.

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