

NEW ZEALAND
**EMPLOYMENT
MARKET REPORT 2024**

BUSINESS SUPPORT

Business Support

The Market

In the first half of 2023, hiring activity for the business support sector was inconsistent, with the second half of the year being particularly challenging for job seekers. In the final few months of the year, activity slowed as we headed towards the election and employers had a laser focus on spending.

Whilst there were generally good skills and candidates available, the business support market did experience skills shortages for support-level roles in accounting and finance, especially in the regions.



69%

of Business Support Employers offer some form of flexible, hybrid or remote working options

More broadly, many businesses were changing to streamline roles by combining teams and functions to improve efficiencies. By the end of 2023, much of the public sector wasn't taking on new temps or contractors, and there were general hiring freezes for many government organisations. As building projects slowed, the building and construction industry also experienced hiring freezes during the year. Areas of exception included essential services and infrastructure businesses; they were sheltered from economic impacts and continued to hire throughout the year.

We also saw fewer project support roles available as businesses put project plans on hold in response to budget restrictions, natural disaster recovery, and the election. With technology and automation readily available, we've seen less of some roles, such as transcriptionists and receptionists, and we don't expect demand for these positions to return to levels seen in prior years.

Employers

With more spending restrictions, business support employers were careful when recruiting to ensure their new hires had the 'stickability' they were looking for. Stickability was often a combination of skills, attitude, willingness to learn, and a match for their team and organisational culture. Job seekers who could adapt and had like-minded values were highly sought after.

Conscious of cost, businesses looked at creative ways to resource their business, including continuing hiring for hybrid roles and considering which positions could be part-time. There were many part-time office management roles available throughout the year and employers were willing, within reason, to be flexible with days and hours of work for these roles. When advertised, the part-time roles attracted a high volume of applications.

Highly skilled Executive Assistants were hard to find because Personal Assistants, who would typically grow into these roles, favoured alternative career paths and sought Project Coordinator or Office Manager positions.

Employers offered a range of bonuses and benefits in 2023; from extra leave such as birthdays off or wellbeing leave, to fully subsidised insurance. With rising living costs, including household expenses, benefits were popular amongst job seekers and existing staff. There has been movement across the country as job seekers looked for a better lifestyle, including benefits such as more affordable housing options.



75%

of Business Support Employers think soft skills are more important than hard skills when hiring



Business Support

Job Seekers

In 2023, business support job seekers favoured stability and job security. When they were looking for a new role, more money and tangible benefits were the deciding factor in accepting a new position. Although money was the primary driving factor for moving roles, salary levels only increased marginally throughout the year. For some, shifting roles after 12 to 18 months allowed for career progression and a pay increase quicker than staying with their existing employer. Temporary assignments tended to be longer and, on average, three to six months in duration.

Candidates were more open to being approached about roles in 2023 than in previous years. When approached, they were most interested in the salary and earning potential. Besides remuneration, job seekers prioritised team fit, morale, company culture, and career development opportunities. Some kind of flexible or hybrid working was also high on the list.

While it did happen for some vacancies, candidates weren't necessarily prepared to move cities solely for a new role. There were numerous scenarios of movement out of Auckland to other regions, notably Canterbury. A key driver here was lifestyle and personal reasons including a lower cost of living and more affordable housing. Once relocated, candidates then began their job search in their new region.



85%

of Business Support Job Seekers consider their workplace a good place to work

The Year Ahead

As we head into the new year, we cautiously expect business confidence to become more positive as the economy improves. This should lead to increased recruitment activity and will be further influenced by the new government as they begin implementing their priorities. There's quiet optimism already in the market, and some projects previously put on hold have resumed or are expected to in the second quarter of the year. In construction, infrastructure projects are still busy and essential services continue. We expect candidate and skills availability to fluctuate and vary with waves of talent entering the market at times in the wake of restructuring and redundancies. Kiwis heading away on their OE will also influence candidate availability.

The trend of hybrid roles in business support will prevail, with many employers continuing to hire for a diverse range of skills for each new job. While the norm has been to work two days at home, especially in the public sector, there have been indications that many employers are keen to see their teams in the office full-time, favouring flexible working options over remote working.

We expect salary levels across the business support sector to remain relatively the same for the year or to see slight increases in response to the cost of living. For contractors that experienced inflated hourly rates during skills shortages, we expect to see hourly rates decrease or level out.

Many businesses want to grow and regain some old ground after a challenging year. For this, they will need to hire talented candidates, consider transferrable skills as roles change, and recognise the value of soft skills.



Competitive salary

is the most influential reason to accept a job offer for Business Support Job Seekers

Business Support Salary Guide

ROLE	AUCKLAND		WELLINGTON		WAIKATO & BAY OF PLENTY		LOWER NORTH ISLAND		CHRISTCHURCH	
	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High
Executive Assistant	95	140	80	120	75	90	60	85	70	95
Personal Assistant	85	100	65	85	75	80	60	75	65	80
Office Manager	80	100	80	100	70	85	65	80	65	80
Project Coordinator	80	110	70	110	70	85	55	80	65	85
Events Coordinator	65	80	60	80	60	65	55	70	65	75
Facilities Coordinator	65	80	60	80	65	70	55	70	60	70
Sales Support	65	75	60	75	60	65	55	70	58	65
Team Administrator	68	85	60	75	65	70	55	65	60	65
Office Administrator	62	78	60	70	60	70	55	70	57	70
Receptionist	60	75	55	65	55	65	50	60	52	57
Data Entry/Database Admin	56	65	52	60	50	60	50	55	52	57

Salary range in NZD \$'000s



About Madison

Madison was established in 1998 and is part of the Accordant Group, the only New Zealand recruitment company listed on the NZX. We operate across seven key locations in Auckland, Hamilton, Tauranga, Wairarapa, Manawatū-Whanganui, Wellington and Christchurch.

What We Do

Madison works across almost all industry sectors, with clients that range from small start-ups to global blue-chip corporates, large public sector and not-for-profit organisations. Our track record includes full-service recruitment covering temporary, permanent and contractor needs across the following sectors:

- Accounting, Banking, Finance and Insurance
- Business Support and Administration
- Business Transformation, Programme and Project Management
- Contact Centre and Customer Service
- Engineering
- Government and Policy
- Human Resources and Recruitment
- Industrial
- Marketing and Communications
- Procurement and Supply Chain
- Project and Volume
- Property and Construction
- Sales and Relationship Management

Within these disciplines, we recruit for the full range of positions from entry-level through to executive appointments. Depending on our clients' needs, our recruiters will deliver an end-to-end solution or unbundle the recruitment process to supplement the expertise and resources you have in your organisation.

How We Do It

Because we have a broad focus, but we are staffed by specialist recruitment professionals, we're able to offer the combined benefits of breadth, reach and personalised, expert service. Collaboration, sharing, building a real relationship and true partnerships are what set us apart. Not only do we understand New Zealand, but we have been specifically built and grown for this market.

Support & Partnership

We offer specialist consulting services to support our client organisations' talent lifecycles. Some of the key services we deliver via workshop, training or coaching include:

- Talent development
- Assessment centre design
- Outplacement services
- Psychometric profiling & skills testing
- High performance profiling

The Accordant Group

Delivering recruitment, resourcing and people solutions across New Zealand

Madison is part of the Accordant Group, which is the only staffing provider listed on the NZX. The Group comprises five businesses: Absolute IT, AWF, Hobson Leavy, JacksonStone & Partners and Madison Recruitment. Accordant Group's capability spans all levels and aspects of commercial and industrial recruitment services, including permanent roles, temporary assignments and contractor placements. In addition to this, in 2019 Accordant established The Work Collective, a social employment initiative.

To find out more, visit accordant.nz

Absolute IT is a specialist agency that operates solely in the tech and digital market, recruiting permanent and contract IT professionals.

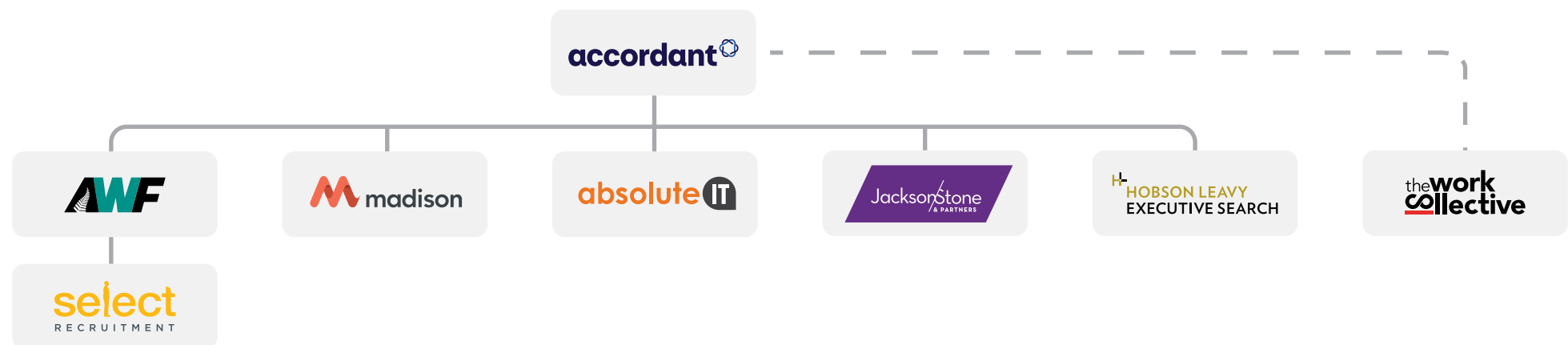
AWF provides labour hire and recruitment services from 21 branches across the country including Select Recruitment in Dunedin.

Hobson Leavy is a retained executive search firm with an extensive track record in both the public and private sectors, successfully appointing some of New Zealand's most senior leaders at Board, CEO and Executive level.

JacksonStone & Partners is one of the most experienced executive search, recruitment and contracting agencies in New Zealand, covering all disciplines up to chief executive and board appointments across the private, public and not-for-profit sectors.

Madison recruits temporary, contract and permanent staff for a broad range of clients and industries in the commercial and government sectors.

The Work Collective, our social employment initiative is supported by each of our businesses and focuses on helping people with barriers to employment find meaningful work opportunities.



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To find out more about Madison and our services,
you can visit our website or call us on **0508 MADISON**.

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