



MX (Melbourne)

12/09/2007

Page: 6

General News

Region: Melbourne Circulation: 87341

Type: Capital City Daily

Size: 132.12 sq.cms

MTWTF--

Bosses keen for a work of love

Rebecca Beisler

Workers get more love from their bosses in Australia than they do in the US.

An Australian-first study has found company directors rank employees' needs in their top three priorities, slightly behind shareholders and the company.

US studies showed eight out

of 10 directors ranked shareholders as the No.1 priority – in Australia only four in 10 bosses do the same.

The Melbourne University study showed 72.8 per cent of bosses ranked employees as among the top three priorities.

Almost 7 per cent put workers at No.1.

Senior researcher Shelley Marshall said the person who

called the shots for the company had workers' interest at heart "more than what you would expect".

When asked what they would do if financial performance turned sour, almost 60 per cent said they would decrease or suspend the dividend paid to shareholders. Only 14.9 per cent said their first thought would be to retrench staff.

If profits increased, 60 per cent of bosses said they would boost shareholders' profits, while 24 per cent would give staff a rise or bonus.

Marshall said 70 per cent of directors considered the company was "in partnership" with their workers.

"That's a pretty strong line about the way they perceive their relationship with employees."