

Job seekers over 40

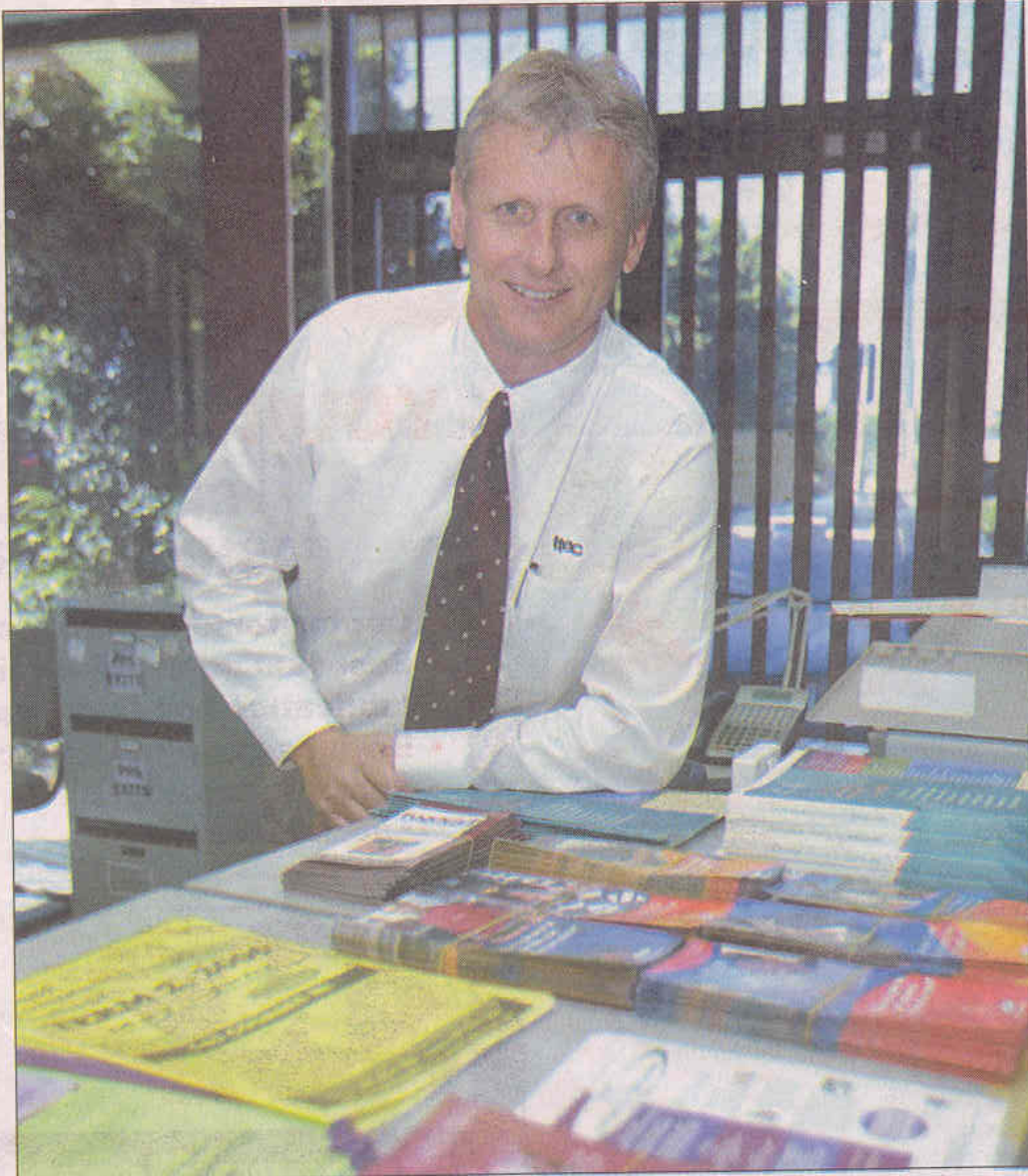
SEACHANGERS make up the majority of people looking for work on the Tweed, according to a local employment agency.

Employment services manager for Tweed Recruitment Steve Moore said that while the unemployment rate was above the national average of 6.3 per cent in regional Australia, and the youth unemployment rate was above 36 per cent, most of the recruitment companies' clients are over the age of 40.

"The job climate is different here than in metropolitan areas," Mr Moore said.

"People need to change their expectations for the kind of job they can find."

Mr Moore said most jobs on the Tweed are provided by small business, with the biggest employers being aged care, hospitality and construction industries.



□ Tweed Recruitment manager Steve Moore says a large number of his clients are over 40 years of age.

Photo: TOM WYNESS D98881a

Consulted by local tabloid, the Tweed Daily News, on issues that effect employment in workplaces.

worksearch

A flexible approach

HAPPY are productive staff – so Steve Moore loves it when his staff are happy.

The employment services manager for Tweed Recruitment has been gradually changing the set-up of his office to allow more flexibility for his workers, through measures such as job sharing and a four day, 35-hour week.

The result, he says, is his staff are often more productive while at work and easier to keep.

Mr Moore said flexible workplaces were the way of the future – especially with the arrival in the job market next year of single parents who will be required to take part-time jobs under the Federal Government's Welfare to Work package.

He acknowledged some employers were nervous about the idea of creating flexible workplaces and that nervousness was valid.

A single job shared between two staff, for example, risked breaking the sense of continuity a full time worker had.

However, the benefits far outweighed the risks.

Mr Moore said he had put two staff in his office onto a job-sharing arrangement at their request, which had the benefit of retaining two experienced workers.

Beyond that, he was able to strengthen the position they were

FLEXIBLE OPTIONS

■ **PART TIME WORK:** Fewer hours than full-time and allowing those hours to shift from one week to the next

■ **JOB SHARE:** Letting two people take on the work and responsibilities for a single full-time equivalent job.

■ **FLEXIBLE WORKING HOURS:** Varying start and finish times, such as letting people work from 8am to 4pm instead of 9am to 5pm.

■ **PART YEAR EMPLOYMENT:** Allowing a staff member to take additional leave, without pay. Pay can be averaged out over the working year.

sharing by making sure they complemented each other's strengths – one was good with people, the other with organisation.

The two staff had also agreed to do extra hours when necessary to fill in for each other when one was on holidays or ill.

The position maintained continuity through the week because of strict hand-over protocols between the two staff.

"You wouldn't do it with your whole organisation," he said. "But it certainly has its benefits."



HAPPY STAFF: Tweed Recruitment employment services manager Steve Moore says flexible workplaces, such as allowing job sharing, make for happy staff.