

Payroll - Defining success in a demanding industry

The payroll environment is not for the faint-hearted. It is demanding, exacting and driven by deadlines. It is a career where mistakes can be expensive and missing a deadline potentially catastrophic. For those who work in this industry it is essential that they possess a strong work ethic, a commitment to quality and the ability to deliver measurable and reliable outcomes.

Keeping pace with the monthly deadline and the daily checks can be challenging, but those who have the determination can provide organisations with essential and relevant insight and value.

“The critical factor is to have the right knowledge and skills as these will ensure success in the payroll environment,” says Lavine Haripersad, Payroll Manager, South African Payroll Association (SAPA). “There are several training milestones that have to be achieved in order to build the knowledge required to become a comprehensive and reliable payroll professional.”

Payroll professionals should be up to date with the latest payroll legislative requirements, understand best practice and governance, and be aware of industry trends impacting on the payroll environment. This understanding will allow them to make informed decisions about their role, the work they do and driving business growth. It is a challenging environment, but it is also a rewarding one, especially if the practitioner is committed to education and training.

Connecting the dots

“Conferences and events are incredibly valuable for professionals who want to expand their knowledge base and their career opportunities,” says Haripersad. “In addition to attending sessions that offer insight and education, there is the chance to network with other practitioners in the industry. Most events offer attendees a forum where they can connect directly with thought leaders, partners and leads.”

The weight of knowledge that is traditionally borne by the payroll professional has not previously been recognised as much as it is today. As compliance and legislation continue to impact on mandate and deliverable, the role has become increasingly important. It is vital that practitioners understand how their skills influence organisations and people, and how to capitalise on this to improve performance and engagement.

“It is essential that every practitioner map their road to success and have a clear understanding of issues around legislation impacting payroll, labour laws affecting payroll, governance, employee benefits, payroll education and technology,” adds Haripersad.

Conference

In September, the South African Payroll Association will be hosting the SAPA Annual Conference. It is set to run from 6th -7th September in Johannesburg with two half-day regional conferences scheduled to run on 12th September in Cape Town and 14th September in Durban. The theme of the conference is 'Portraits of Success' and it has a clear mandate to focus on how the payroll practitioner can drive personal and professional success through knowledge and understanding.

"It is our objective as an organisation to promote excellence in the payroll profession and ultimately create our own 'Portraits of Success'," concludes Haripersad. "It is an opportunity for payroll practitioners to learn from the smartest minds in our industry while connecting with their peers and building their careers."

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MEDIA CONTACT: Idéle Prinsloo, 082 573 9219, idele@thatpoint.co.za,
www.atthatpoint.co.za

For more information on SAPA please visit:

Website: <http://www.sapayroll.co.za/>

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