

*South African Payroll Association
23 August 2017*

Shrinking, but persistent gender pay gap in payroll sector
Author: Cathie Webb, Director at The South African Payroll Association

During Women's Month, it is important to consider the gender related problems we still face as professionals. One of the major concerns is the gender pay gap. Although this gap has been growing smaller over the past years, it remains a legitimate problem.

Even in a female dominated sector (such as retail, healthcare, cleaning, primary education and secretarial and administrative functions, including payroll), it is often found that male employees are paid more than their female counterparts for the same work.

Some of the remedies women in payroll can consider regarding the gender pay gap include: choosing to further/complete your education and negotiating your salary at each new career step and requesting constant on-the-job training.

Being a true professional

A payroll professional is a payroll employee who not only performs their basic job requirements, but also comprehends the implications of managing the payroll function in their business environment. They should be able to add strategic input to the company they work for, rather than only producing accurate and timeous pay slips.

Relevant advice on issues such as pending changes to tax law and requirements, making recommendations and transitioning their knowledge with ease from one type of business to the next are some of the important skills a payroll professional should have. Depending on their level of employment and the size of the employer, they should be able to manage a team, deal with HR issues, advise employees on tax issues and be able to manage projects.

The importance of the right qualifications

Traditionally payroll employees were trained by their predecessors and by the manufacturers of the payroll software used by the company. These imposed limitations in the scope for understanding how to improve systems and a wider view of business and strategy as a whole. As with all other qualifications, when the trained professional learns about the "outside world", how other professionals work and what is considered to be best practice internationally, they will have a broader impact on their business and be able to add more value.

Until the early 2000's, there were no formal payroll qualifications available in South Africa. An FET certificate in Payroll Administration (NQF Level 4) and an NQF Level 5 Diploma were then introduced, which were both approved by the South African

Qualifications Authority (SAQA). Training providers were also accredited by the Services SETA. In late 2015, a BCom degree with a focus on payroll was launched by the Da Vinci Institute for Technology Management, a Mode 2 university. The Da Vinci Institute selected Accsys as the payroll faculty for the degree. These qualifications assist in teaching payroll employees the necessary skills they will need to perform more than just their basic work.

Awarding payroll professionals

Each year SAPA runs an awards programme for payroll professionals. The programme is designed to give recognition to the people who make a difference in the payroll industry and in their respective businesses.

The awards programme serves to motivate payroll employees to go the extra mile in their jobs and truly become payroll professionals. There are three levels in the awards programme, Junior, Senior and Team, and nominees must satisfy strict criteria that measures their professionalism.

A list of the criteria is available on the SAPA website, as well as information on who can qualify for the awards, the nomination process and the awards themselves.

Nominations for the 2017 awards closed on the 11th August, 2017 and winners will be announced at the Annual SAPA Conference on 6th September 2017 at Emperors Palace.

ENDS

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

For more information on SIPA please visit:

Website: www.sapayroll.co.za

Twitter: [@SAPayroll](https://twitter.com/SAPayroll)

LinkedIn: [The South African Payroll Association](https://www.linkedin.com/company/the-south-african-payroll-association)