

# Are you getting paid what you're really worth?

ADD UP ALL THE 'LITTLE EXTRAS' YOU DO FOR YOUR BOSS AND IT MAY WELL BE YOU'RE UNDERPAID, AS ONE READER DISCOVERED

**O**ver the past seven years, Melanie Hailey, 24, from Brisbane, has worked her way up from office junior to practice manager for a busy health clinic – and scored a degree in Applied Science on the side. Her jam-packed day begins at 6.45am, while most of us are still sleeping, and finishes at 7.30pm when she collapses in front of the TV. For one work day, Melanie kept a diary of every little task she undertook as part of her rewarding, but exhausting, job.

**6.45am**  
On the way to my job at Lifestyle Physical Therapies I stop into the service station to pick up milk for staff/patient cappuccinos. There's a queue to pay and already I'm looking at my watch, worrying I'm going to be late to open up.  
**Time taken: 15 minutes**  
**Job: waitress – \$4.23**

**7am**  
Manage to get to the practice in time and unlock the doors, turn off alarms, turn on lights, airconditioning and radios. Then it's a mad dash to turn on all the computers and log on to the right programs for reception, physiotherapists, massage therapists and doctors before they – and the patients – arrive.  
**Time taken: 10 minutes**  
**Job: administrative assistant – \$3.38**

**7.10am**  
Turning on the coffee machine, boiling the kettle and filling up the water cooler with filtered water means I've got my waitress hat back on again.  
**Time taken: five minutes**  
**Job: waitress – \$1.41**

**7.15am**  
Next on the list is reconciling money for reception and counting out a float.

**Time taken: five minutes**  
**Job: accountant – \$2.18**

**7.20am**  
Before I can grab myself a coffee, I have to set up the practitioners' rooms for the day. This includes setting out bottles of cold water and a clean drinking glass, making sure the consult room is tidy, printing a patient list and tidying the waiting room.  
**Time taken: Five minutes**  
**Job: cleaner – \$1.66**

**7.25am**  
Go on the coffee run for me and our practice physiotherapist. One of my favourite jobs of the day!  
**Time taken: Five minutes (or more if I can stretch it)**  
**Job: Waitress – \$1.41**

**7.30am**  
For the next 20 minutes I'm constantly swapping job hats between receptionist – as I run through all the messages on the phone from the previous night,





**In The Devil Wears Prada, Andy sports many different job hats, as well as some trendy designer ones**

check emails, invoices and attempt to clear my in-tray – and customer service manager – greeting the first patients of the day and making sure they're looked after.

**Time taken: 20 minutes**  
**Job: receptionist/customer service manager – \$6.61**

**7.50am**

I have a daily phone conversation with my boss to 'touch base' on all that's going on in the practice, and also what's on the priority list for today.

**Time taken: 10 minutes**  
**Job: management – \$6.36**

**8am**

Now's the time to reconcile any payments we've received against a printout of our bank account. Then I move on to updating rosters for staff holidays.

**Time taken: 30 minutes**  
**Job: accounts/inventory clerk/staff coordinator – \$11.74**

**8.30am to 1.30pm**

During the morning I greet patients and answer around 60

calls requesting appointments, take payments from and rebook a further 40 patients, deal with accounts, invoices and health fund payments and liaise with lawyers over requests for patient notes. I spend almost an hour sorting out the staff payroll before putting on my postal worker uniform to collect, open and distribute mail.

**Time taken: Five hours**  
**Job: receptionist/legal secretary/payroll clerk/postal worker – \$123.64**

**1.30pm**

For the next hour I get to sit still for once by taking part in a staff meeting.

**Time taken: One hour**  
**Job: management – \$44.54**

**2.30pm**

In the afternoon, there's even more of a mix as I have to work on developing new brochures for upcoming promotions and events. It's a nice change and means I get to use my creative side – although one of the reasons why I came back to the practice after I finished my degree was because I missed the patients so much!

**Time taken: One hour**  
**Job: marketing & PR – \$27.69**

**3.30pm**

I get out of the office by driving to pick up guest practitioners from interstate and bringing them back to the clinic, or ferrying them to a function. It's a nice part of my job because it means I get to meet interesting people and it gives me the chance to chat!

**Time taken: 90 minutes**  
**Job: chauffeur – \$30.04**

**5pm**

Back in the office I catch up on suppliers' invoices and the payment of utility bills.

**Time taken: One hour**  
**Job: accounts clerk – \$22.31**

**6pm**

Part of my role involves organising team-building activities for staff, like our recent 12-week health challenge, and updating our procedure manual.

**Time taken: 30 minutes.**  
**Job: training & development – \$16.45**

**6.30pm**

Slightly embarrassing but I'm the model for photos that are included in advertising literature for massage and Pilates. I try to not look too self-conscious for the photographer as I pose in a towel and then my gym gear.

**Time taken: 30 minutes**  
**Job: model – \$15.83**

**7pm**

I phone the staff with their starting times for the next day, sort out the day's takings and file copies of patient reports. Then off go the lights and radio before I lock everything up. Another frantic day over. Until tomorrow...

**Time taken: 30 minutes**  
**Job: staff coordinator/administrator – \$11.58**

**So, is Melanie underselling herself?**

**In a word, yes!** Her current salary is \$50,000 per year which equals \$192.30 per day, based on a 38-hour working week. Her actual worth is almost double that, coming in at \$331.06 per day (\$86,075 per year!) taking into account the longer hours she works, but not including overtime. While she does get bonuses in the form of lunches, gifts and trips away, she's still losing out on pay day.

**Current salary = \$50,000**

**Her worth = \$86,075**

**4 WAYS TO BOOST YOUR PAY PACKET**

If your pay doesn't reflect what you do, Ross Scutts, managing director of International Success Coaching ([www.internationalsuccesscoaching.com](http://www.internationalsuccesscoaching.com)), gives his four-point plan on successfully asking for, and receiving, a pay rise.

**1 Know what you want**

Clarity gives power. Know what you want, when you want it and why. Your confidence and belief in your ability and worth will shine through.

**2 See the bigger picture**

Your reasons for going for a promotion or pay rise need to align with the company's values and aims. For example, if the company plans to expand interstate, how would you help this happen in a quicker or more efficient way, and how are you currently adding value to the company?

**3 Understand your true worth**

Ask yourself, 'Am I worth more than my current position?' If the answer is yes, why? If the answer is no, then you may not be in the best position to negotiate a pay rise. Decide what you need to do in order to add value to the company and implement these strategies before approaching your boss.

**4 Sell yourself**

Arrange a time with your boss to 'pitch' yourself. Make sure this is a low-stress time (lunch, after a profit increase is always a sure bet). Be clear in highlighting how long you've been with the company, what your current position involves and why you feel you deserve a pay rise, e.g. you've developed successful campaigns, work long hours, etc. Then watch those dollars roll in...

WORDS: JANE KEIGHLEY PHOTOGRAPHY: SCOPE ALL FIGURES FROM THE MYCAREER.COM SALARY CENTRE. FOR MORE INFORMATION ON AVERAGE SALARIES AND PAY INCREASES, SEE MYCAREER.COM.AU