



Why middle managers will have to make do with less

Singapore is projected to have one of the lowest increases in Asia Pacific, with only 22% of employees expected to get a pay hike this year.

Heftier paychecks are on hold for most of Singapore's hopefuls as employers brave a lacklustre economic outlook this year. With a dearth in highly-skilled talent amidst a candidate-saturated market, firms are taking a more conservative approach in increasing salaries, offering bonuses, and taking in fresh blood. Only 22% of employees will experience a pay hike this year, but it will be so small it's almost negligible.

This year, a staggering 68% of Singapore's workforce expects salary hikes compared to an average of 49% of candidates and employees around the world, says **Michael Smith**, managing director, Randstad Singapore. Executives, who are now more concerned with containing costs than showering employees with bucks and benefits, are challenged to temper soaring expectations while making sure that their best talents are not snagged by other companies.

Across Singapore's industries, increases will be experienced by only 15% of those who expect it. Michael Page's Salary and Employment Outlook 2017 forecasts a 1-5% salary increase for this small part of the



Michael Smith



David Jones



Christine Wright



Jeffrey Ng

workforce, except for employees in senior-level and management who will possibly receive increases of a minimum of 5%. However, Willis Towers Watson's Asia Pacific Salary Budget Planning Report shows that Singapore is not one of the few countries that are actually expecting base salary hikes in real terms. Analysts at Willis Towers Watson forecast that only Sri Lanka, Indonesia, China, Cambodia, Hong Kong and Taiwan will experience higher base salaries in real terms in the coming year compared to 2016 numbers.

Pay hikes in recent years may be less than impressive, but 2017 seems to be the most dismal of all with China's economic slowdown being felt in the rest of the Asia Pacific region, primarily in financial hubs such as Hong Kong and Singapore. Employers in these two cities are thus faced with a huge task of strategising their remuneration schemes in order to squeeze out the most efficient system possible.

"Offering a competitive salary is an important strategy to win the war on talent, as well as retain top staff. Critical to achieving this strategy is

being aware of the most up-to-date market salary rates and remuneration trends," says **David Jones**, senior managing director, Robert Half Asia Pacific. Jones adds that it employees who are well-informed on remuneration trends can command reasonable salaries, facilitate good salary negotiations, and identify which skills are in demand in the market and which ones they should develop.

Pay or nay?

In terms of salary increases, candidates in Singapore continue to demand and expect high raises and offers of up to 40% across all sectors. **Christine Wright**, managing director, Hays Asia, says that increases are on the cards due to candidate shortages, however, employers are not keen on delivering high rates compared to a few years ago when the economy was growing faster than it is now. It is a tough balancing act, as salary remains to be the key motivator amongst other elements in the remuneration package such as annual leave, medical and insurance cover, and flexible work arrangements.

Michael Page's Salary and Employment Outlook 2017 reveals that employees in the legal sector can expect pay hikes of a minimum of 10% and a maximum of 20%, the highest in the coming year amongst all the sectors. Those who provide financial services in the legal sector with 10-15 years post-qualified experience (PQE) can command as much as \$350,000.00 with a minimum rate of \$200,000.00, while those with 15 years and above PQE can command a minimum of \$280,000.00. International private practice leads local private practice by almost double--lawyers in local firms with 3-5 years PQE can receive as much as \$150,000.00, but lawyers in international firms with the same experience can take home a maximum of \$250,000.00.

According to Robert Half's 2017 Singapore Salary Guide, demand is strong for junior and mid-level finance and accounting candidates and reveals that the best paying industries for finance professionals in

Singapore are pharmaceuticals, fast-moving consumer goods, technology, and real estate. Amongst all finance professionals, analysts and senior analysts in the tax division of large companies have the highest increase in salaries from a maximum of \$100,000.00 last year to a maximum of \$110,000.00 this year. Most other job titles in the finance sector such as specialists and executives in the payroll department and managers in the treasury department will experience no change in their paychecks.

Meanwhile, IT professionals who are security analysts and consultants in the financial services sector who have 4-7 years of experience can expect a pay hike of up to 12.1% in 2017, while those with more than 10 years of experience in the same department can receive as much as 14.8% increases from \$150,000.00 last year to \$180,000.00 this year. These IT professionals are projected to have the highest increases compared to test analysts and managers with an average of 6% increases, developers with an average of 7% increases, and IT audit and IT risk with an average of 9% increases. There are no changes for most other IT professionals such as network engineers, pre-sales and post-sales, and systems analysts.

As a general trend, candidates moving across jobs typically receive bigger hikes than those who stay. **Jeffrey Ng**, director, Michael Page Singapore, says that since companies are still very cautious of increasing headcount, a majority of recruitment is for replacement positions. According to him, salary increases and bonuses are likely to

be moderate this year as companies are still focused on containing costs. Job movers can expect an average of 10-15% salary increases. However, those who move even with the same pay do so because they think that the new role is more interesting and can provide them with better prospects.

“35% of finance and accounting workers in Singapore think they earn a salary that is below industry average and 44% think they are not being paid a fair salary. 40% of finance and accounting professionals in Singapore are willing to move abroad for a higher salary,” says Jones. Analysts at Robert Half think that pay does not only motivate job change within the Singaporean market, but also influence staff decisions on exploring more opportunities overseas.

Monitoring motivations

On the other hand, top IT candidates are aware that they are in demand, hence they can negotiate accordingly. Skills shortages in this sector are pushing companies to adjust their salary packages to remain competitive in attracting and retaining staff. Jones says that almost half of technology professionals in Singapore are not satisfied with their salaries and think that they should be paid more with due consideration for their workload and responsibilities.

Returning Singaporean professionals across all sectors can expect a high demand and higher offers for their skills and specialisations, as Singaporean companies believe that returning talent is ideally placed to offer a global perspective to local companies seeking to make inroads in Singapore and Southeast Asia, Wright adds.

HOW MUCH ARE EXPATS EARNING?

Twenty-eight year old Kieran Hughes had high hopes when he decided to move to Singapore to be with his partner a year ago. Back in the United Kingdom, Hughes worked as a professional broadcast engineer earning \$96,000 a year, enough to pay for mortgage and buy his own car. With his strong career background, he thought finding a job in Singapore with the same competitive pay would be just as easy. But when he started working in an audio-visual firm as a project manager, he suddenly realised that he bought himself a one-way ticket to dismal pay conditions.

Hughes earns \$4,000 a month – just enough to pay for his rent in a tiny dwelling and to cover for necessities. He describes living in Singapore as “barely living” and was nowhere near the life that he had back in the UK. “I have a three-bedroom house in the UK with big garden front and back and I rent it out for approx. \$1,000 dollars a month. Here in Singapore you can barely get a bedroom in a shared apartment for that kind of price,” he recalled.

Hughes is one of the 1.3m foreigners trying to make a living in Singapore. And whilst Singapore continues to be the most generous when it comes to expat salaries and benefit packages, it is almost like survival of the fittest for most of the expats like Hughes.

Shrinking pay packages

In a recent study by ECA International, expat packages in Singapore have fallen 6% to \$316,600 per annum, inclusive of salary, tax, and benefits. Meanwhile, in its closest rival Hong Kong, expat packages declined 2% to \$356,800 per annum. Over the past five years, the gap has widened between Singapore and Hong Kong for the total cost of an expatriate package offered to Middle Managers.

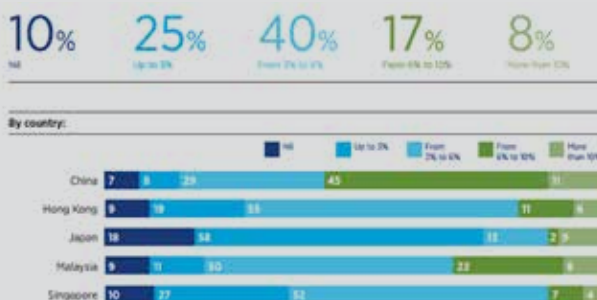
“Expatriates in Singapore have some or all of their cash and benefits determined in SGD values. For the purpose of our cross border comparison we have converted values into USD. As the value of the SGD has fallen against the USD in the past 12 months, USD values of expatriate packages in Singapore have suffered,” explains Lee Quane, ECA International’s regional director.

He adds that the costs associated with some of the benefits that have been provided to Singapore-based expatriates have fallen in the past 12 months. This led to accommodation costs in areas commonly inhabited by expatriate staff to fall in the past year, reducing the costs associated with housing assistance provided to expatriates.

Quane argues that this would not affect Singapore’s attractiveness when it comes to luring talent. “Despite a fall in the value of typical expatriate packages for middle managers, salaries are at their highest level in SGD terms for five years. Low tax rates also mean it remains an attractive location. Beyond salary incentives, Singapore will continue to be attractive to international talent as it is an attractive place to live and work,” he reckons.

Aon Hewitt Southeast Asia partner Kumar Subramanian concurs and says, “The value of working in a regional location and the experience of working in Asia are significant non-monetary factors that global talent find attractive. In addition, a decline in wage increases in Western markets as well as a greater pool of skilled talent including local Singaporeans and expats from India and China have moderated increases in expat packages.”

Average % increases from last reviews across all countries



Source: Hays Asia

SALARY SURVEY 2017

ACCOUNTING AND FINANCE	Salary (S\$'000)		
YEARS OF EXPERIENCE	3-5	5-10	10-15
GENERAL			
Accounts Payable Accountant	45 – 60	60 – 80	N/A
Financial Accountant	50 – 65	65 – 100	N/A
Cost Accountant	50 – 65	65 – 100	N/A
Credit Analyst	50 – 65	65 – 90	N/A
Group Accountant - Consolidation	60 – 80	80 – 100	N/A
Financial/Business Analyst	50 – 80	80 – 120	100 – 150
Accounts Payable Manager	70 – 90	90 – 140	110 – 150
Finance Manager (Small/Medium Organisation)	80 – 100	90 – 120	120+
Finance Manager (Shared Services Centre)	80 – 100	100 – 120	120+
Finance Manager (Large Organisation)	100 – 130	130 – 180	180+
Group Finance Manager	N/A	80-130	100 – 150
Credit Manager	80 – 100	100 – 130	130 – 150
Costing Manager	N/A	100 – 150	150+
Financial & Planning Analysis Manager	100 – 130	130 – 150	150 – 200
Financial Controller (Small/Medium Organisation)	130 – 150	150 – 180	180+
Financial Controller (Large Organisation)	150 – 200	180 – 220	220+
Finance Director (Shared Services Centre)	150 – 200	180 – 220	220+
CFO/Finance Director (Large Organisation)	220 – 250	250 – 300	300 – 350
Finance Director (Shared Services Centre)	200-220	220-250	250+
CFO/Finance Director (Large Organisation)	220-250	250-300	300-350
SPECIALIST			
Pricing Analyst	60 – 80	80 – 100	100 – 140
Treasury Analyst	60 – 80	80 – 120	N/A
Tax Analyst	60 – 80	80 – 110	N/A
Internal Auditor	65 – 90	90 – 130	120+
Pricing Manager	100 – 120	120 – 150	150+
Revenue Controller	80 – 120	120 – 180	130+
Corporate Finance Manager	90 – 120	120 – 180	180+
Treasury Manager	100 – 120	120 – 180	180+
Internal Audit Manager	100 – 130	130 – 150	150 – 200
Tax Manager	100 – 150	130 – 180	180+
Corporate Finance Director	200 – 220	220 – 250	250 – 300
Treasury Director	200 – 220	220 – 250	250 – 300
Internal Audit Director	200 – 220	220 – 250	250 – 300
Tax Director	200 – 220	220 – 250	250 – 300
Tax Director	200-220	220-250	250-300
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES & PUBLIC ACCOUNTING			
External Audit	50 – 70	70 – 150	120+
Tax	50 – 70	70 – 150	130+
Management Consultancy	60 – 100	100 – 150	140+
Corporate Finance	60 – 100	100 – 150	140+
Risk & Compliance	65 – 90	90 – 130	130+

SALARY SURVEY 2017

FINANCIAL SERVICES	Salary (S\$'000)				
ROLE	Experience	2017 Salary (SGD '000)	2017 Bonus - LOW (%)	2017 Bonus - MEDIUM (%)	2017 Bonus - HIGH (%)
Finance - Regulatory Finance					
Analyst	1 – 3 years	48 – 100	5	15	25
Associate/Assistant Vice President	3 – 6 years	100 – 150	5	15	30
Vice President	6 – 10 years	160 – 240	5	15	30
Executive Director	10+ years	240 – 300	5	15	40
Managing Director/Head	15+ years	300+	5	25	60
Regulatory	60-90	90-180	180-250+	250+	
Insurance	50-75	75-160	160-220+	220+	
Compliance - Investment Banking					
Analyst	1 – 3 years	60 – 100	5	15	30
Associate/Assistant Vice President	3 – 6 years	100 – 180	10	20	40
Vice President	6 – 10 years	190 – 280	10	20	40
Executive Director	10+ years	280 – 400	15	25	50
Managing Director/Head	15+ years	400+	20	30	70
Compliance - Insurance					
Assistant	1 – 3 years	60 – 100	5	15	30
Assistant Manager	3 – 5 years	100 – 180	10	20	40
Manager	5 – 7 years	190 – 280	10	20	40
Senior Manager	7 – 10 years	280 – 400	15	25	50
Director/Head	10+ years	360+	20	30	70
Finance - Financial Control – Investment Banking					
Analyst	1 – 3 years	48 – 96	5	15	30
Associate/Assistant Vice President	3 – 6 years	100 – 150	5	15	30
Vice President	6 – 10 years	150 – 200	5	15	30
Country Chief Financial Officer	12+ years	300+	5	20	50
Regional Chief Financial Officer	15+ years	400+	5	25	60
Senior Vice President/Director	10+ years	200 – 300	5	15	40

HEALTHCARE & LIFE SCIENCE	Salary (S\$'000)			
EXPERIENCE	3 to 5 years	5 to 10 years	10 to 15 years	15+ years
Clinical Research				
Drug Safety/Pharmacovigilance	50 – 65	65 – 90	90 – 150	N/A
Data Management	50 – 70	70 – 100	100 – 120	N/A
Clinical Operations	50 – 70	70 – 100	100 – 120	N/A
Biostatistician	50 – 80	80 – 100	N/A	N/A
SAS Programmer	50 – 80	80 – 100	N/A	N/A
Medical Affairs	110 – 130	130 – 180	180 – 250	300+
OPERATIONS				
Manufacturing	50 – 70	70 – 90	100 – 160	200+
Process Engineering	60 – 90	90 – 120	120 – 150	180+
Mechanical Engineering	60 – 90	90 – 120	120 – 150	180+
Electrical Engineering	60 – 90	90 – 120	120 – 150	180+
Controls/Automation	60 – 90	90 – 120	120 – 150	180+
EHS	60 – 90	90 – 120	120 – 150	180+

SALARY SURVEY 2017

HUMAN RESOURCES	Salary (\$'000)			
YEARS OF EXPERIENCE	3-5	5-10	10-15	15+ years
BANKING & FINANCE				
Payroll Specialist	45 – 65	65 – 100	100 – 130	130+
Mobility Specialist	50 – 70	70 – 120	120 – 150	150+
HRIS Specialist	50 – 85	85 – 130	130 – 150	150+
Learning and Development Specialist	60 – 100	100 – 150	150 – 200	200+
Recruitment Specialist	60 – 100	100 – 150	150 – 200	200+
HR Generalist/Business Partner	60 – 110	110 – 180	180 – 240	240+
Organisational Development	60 – 110	110 – 200	200 – 300	300+
Compensation and Benefits Specialist	60 – 120	120 – 220	220 – 300	300+
Head of Human Resources	N/A	N/A	250+	300+
COMMERCE & INDUSTRY				
Payroll Specialist	40 – 60	60 – 90	90 – 110	110+
Mobility Specialist	50 – 65	65 – 100	100 – 140	140+
HRIS Specialist	50 – 80	80 – 120	120 – 150	150+
Learning and Development Specialist	50 – 80	80 – 120	120 – 160	160+
Recruitment Specialist	50 – 80	80 – 120	120 – 165	165+
HR Generalist/Business Partner	55 – 100	100 – 160	160 – 200	200+
Organisational Development	55 – 100	100 – 160	160 – 220	220+
Compensation and Benefits Specialist	60 – 90	90 – 150	150 – 250	250+
Head of Human Resources	N/A	N/A	200 – 300	300+
LAWYERS	Salary (\$'000)			
YEARS OF EXPERIENCE	3-5 PQE	5-10 PQE	10-15 PQE	15+ years PQE
Private Practice (Local Firms)	70 – 150	95 – 200	190+	N/A
Private Practice (International Firms)	145 – 250	220 – 370	300+	N/A
In-house Corporate (MNC)	85 – 130	100 – 190	170 – 250	210+
Financial Services	100 – 180	100 – 180	200 – 350	280+
Paralegals	40 – 70	55+	N/A	N/A
Corporate Secretariat (Non ICSA-Certified)	30 – 60	55+	N/A	N/A
Corporate Secretariat (ICSA-Certified)	50 – 95	90+	N/A	N/A
PROPERTY & CONSTRUCTION	Salary (SG\$'000)			
YEARS OF EXPERIENCE	3-5	5-10	10-15	15+ years
Corporate Real Estate				
Environment Health & Safety	45 – 60	60 – 110	110 – 150	150+
Facilities Management & Corporate Services	45 – 60	60 – 108	115 – 160	160+
Property Management	45 – 65	65 – 120	120 – 140	140+
Security & BCP	45 – 60	60 – 125	125 – 180	180+
Leasing & Transaction Management	48 – 65	65 – 130	130 – 185	185+
Projects				
Design Management	35 – 55	55 – 90	90 – 125	125+
Office Fit-Out	45 – 70	70 – 110	110 – 150	150+
Construction & Project Management	45 – 70	70 – 120	120 – 170	170+
Project Development	60 – 90	90 – 145	145 – 190	190+
Real Estate Investments - Agency				
Asset Management	45 – 80	80 – 120	120 – 180	180+
Portfolio Management	45 – 80	80 – 120	120 – 160	160+
Investment Management	45 – 80	80 – 130	130 – 200	200+
Real Estate Investments - Client				
Asset Management	60 – 95	95 – 130	130 – 220	220+
Portfolio Management	55 – 90	95 – 130	130 – 220	220+
Investment Management	60 – 95	95 – 150	150 – 250	250+

SALARY SURVEY 2017

PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY CHAIN		Salary (S\$'000)			
YEARS OF EXPERIENCE	3-5	5-10	10-15+	15+ years	
OIL & GAS/PHARMACEUTICALS					
Quality	50 – 70	80 – 110	120 – 160	N/A	
Direct	50 – 100	100 – 150	150 – 200	N/A	
Logistics/3PL	40 – 80	80 – 140	130 – 180	N/A	
Supply Chain	40 – 80	90 – 140	150 – 230	N/A	
Distribution/Warehousing	40 – 70	80 – 140	150 – 180	N/A	
Planning	50 – 100	100 – 150	150 – 200	N/A	
Indirect	50 – 100	100 – 150	160 – 220	N/A	
Lean/Six Sigma	60 – 100	100 – 160	160 – 220	N/A	
FMCG/RETAIL					
Quality	50 – 80	80 – 110	120 – 160	N/A	
Direct	50 – 85	85 – 140	130 – 190	N/A	
Logistics/3PL	45 – 80	90 – 130	130 – 170	N/A	
Supply Chain	50 – 90	90 – 140	150 – 220	N/A	
Distribution/Warehousing	45 – 80	80 – 125	130 – 160	N/A	
Planning	50 – 90	90 – 150	150 – 220	N/A	
Indirect	50 – 90	90 – 140	160 – 220	N/A	
Lean/Six Sigma	60 – 90	100 – 150	160 – 220	N/A	
Technology					
Quality	50 – 80	80 – 110	130 – 160	N/A	
Direct	50 – 85	90 – 120	130 – 190	N/A	
Logistics/3PL	50 – 80	85 – 120	130 – 170	N/A	
Supply Chain	50 – 80	80 – 130	150 – 220	N/A	
Distribution/Warehousing	50 – 90	90 – 130	140 – 170	N/A	
Planning	50 – 85	90 – 140	140 – 200	N/A	
Indirect	50 – 90	100 – 140	160 – 220	N/A	
Lean/Six Sigma	60 – 100	100 – 170	180 – 240	N/A	
Financial Services					
Purchasing/Procurement Officer	50 – 70	60 – 80	75 – 90	75 – 90	
Procurement Specialist	70 – 90	90 – 130	130 – 170	140 – 180	
Procurement Analyst	65 – 75	70 – 100	N/A	N/A	
Procurement Manager	80 – 100	100 – 140	120 – 180	140 – 180	
Vendor/Supplier Relationship Manager	80 – 95	90 – 135	130 – 160	130 – 160	
Strategic Sourcing Leader/Manager	N/A	100 – 160	170 – 220	170 – 230	
Category/Commodity Manager	90 – 120	120 – 150	150 – 200	180 – 220	
GM/Head of Procurement	N/A	N/A	150 – 200	180 – 350	
CPO/Director	N/A	N/A	200 – 250	220 – 350+	
ENGINEERING & MANUFACTURING		Salary (S\$'000)			
YEARS OF EXPERIENCE	Engineer/Senior Eng.	Principal	Manager	Director	
R&D Engineering/R&D					
Design Engineer	45 – 75	70 – 100	100 – 150	150 – 160+	
Application Engineer	60 – 90	70 – 100	100 – 150	150 – 160+	
Engineering Manager	N/A	N/A	100 – 150	N/A	
Engineering Director	N/A	N/A	N/A	150 – 250	
Operations					
Manufacturing	50 – 70	70 – 90	100 – 160	200+	
Process Engineering	60 – 80	90 – 120	120 – 150	180+	
Mechanical Engineering	60 – 80	90 – 120	120 – 150	180+	
Electrical Engineering	60 – 80	90 – 120	120 – 150	180+	
Controls/Automation	60 – 80	90 – 120	120 – 150	180+	
EHS	60 – 80	90 – 120	120 – 150	180+	
Quality Control/Assurance					
Quality Engineer	40 – 75	70 – 100	N/A	N/A	
Quality Manager	N/A	N/A	80 – 120	N/A	
Quality Director	N/A	N/A	N/A	150 – 250	
Field Service/Service Engineering					
Field Service Engineer	40 – 65	65 – 90	N/A	N/A	
Service Manager	N/A	80 – 100	N/A	N/A	
Service Director	N/A	N/A	120+	N/A	
Sales Engineer	40 – 80	70 – 100	N/A	N/A	
Sales Engineering Manager	N/A	N/A	100 – 150	N/A	