



## Underemployed embarrassed to admit they're part-time

By Sarah Michael | news.com.au | June 15, 2012 3:28pm

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**MORE than one in ten Australians are looking for more work, and experts say many people are embarrassed to admit they're only employed part-time.**

ABS figures show there are 892,900 "underemployed workers" in Australia - workers who want more hours of work than they currently have.

Australia's underemployment rate sits at 7.4 per cent, or 9.6 per cent of females and 5.5 per cent of males.

The labour force underutilisation rate, which adds underemployment and underemployment, sits at 12.5 per cent.

Juliet Bourke, senior partner at global management firm Deloitte, said part-time workers weren't only concerned about finances, they were often worried about how co-workers would react to their flexible hours.

"If the assumption is that you're working full time do you actively say that's not the case or do you just let people go along that line?" Ms Bourke said.

"Because there's a question mark over people's heads when they work flexibly - are they professional, are they committed, are they team player - then the safe thing is to not say anything at all."

Kathryn MacMillan, managing director of recruitment company Nine2Three, said part-time workers were worried that they were seen as being "less serious" or having less commitment to their careers.



"I actually don't think that's correct, but if you look at some who is looking for work, on their resume they very rarely would say 'I've been doing this job part time,'" Ms MacMillan said.

Their comments come as a study in the UK showed that one in ten part-time workers are earning the equivalent a full time salary (\$62,000 a year), but more than a third would never describe themselves as "part-time".

The majority of the 2000 workers surveyed by part-time recruitment firm Timewise said they prefer to say they work "flexibly".

But one in seven said they try to avoid disclosing their status and let co-workers assume they work full-time.

Timewise founder Karen Mattison said there were two reasons part-time workers tried to fly under the radar.

"One of the reasons is that people are worried about seeming uncommitted to their job; the other is that people have what they see as delicate arrangements, maybe with their line managers, and they are worried that by telling other people they might upset the applecart," she said.