

TIP SHEET: FLEXIBILITY

Flexible Working Hours

Here are the essential details, mindsets and frameworks to facilitate flexible working hours across an organisation and workforce.

Key Requirements

- Good communication and planning
- Ability to prioritise, communicate and meet the expectations of the organisation, clients/customers and colleagues
- Effective management of workload
- Realistic expectations of all parties
- Both parties need to be flexible with the arrangement
- An organisational culture supportive of dealing with the challenges of balancing work and other interests and commitments

Organisation And Manager Support

- Support to establish flexible working hours that are suitable for both the organisation and the employee
- Support and communication with the broader team to maintain communication with the employee who has flexible working hours
- Agreed ways to manage workload, duties and responsibilities
- Discuss expectations and strategies
- A clear way to report on completion of tasks and finalisation of work (e.g. sign off of documents)
- Transparency with clients and colleagues regarding the work arrangement
- Scheduling of meetings so the employee is able to contribute and attend
- Educate managers of employees who are undertaking flexible working hours
- Develop an organisational culture supportive of diversity in work/life issues

EMPLOYEES

An employee working flexible hours needs to:

- Perform the requirements of the role and meet the expectations of the organisation, clients and colleagues
- Consider the type of work that is able to be carried out with flexible hours
- Be flexible and offer reciprocity if required or needed



Implementation

Flexible working hours can be arranged in many different ways such as:

- Flexible start and finish times
- Changing lunch breaks

The arrangement should be regularly reviewed as agreed in the request to ensure that the terms of the arrangement are still acceptable to both the organisation and the employee. Any changes to either the circumstances of the employee or the employee's key responsibilities may also require review of the arrangement.

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**PRACTICAL TIPS FOR
CONSIDERING FLEXIBLE
WORKING HOURS**

- Review current position to determine whether flexible working hours can be accommodated
- Negotiate the employee's working hours based on the needs of the organisation, the customer/clients and the employee
- If necessary, consider core times to be at work and allow the employee to choose their starting and finishing times to suit lifestyle and family commitments
- Employees who are undertaking flexible working hours should be included in training opportunities and should have the same opportunities for promotion as other employees

Advantages Of Flexible Working Hours

- Retention of experienced and skilled employees across the generations
- Promotes a culture of loyalty and support within the organisation
- Major attraction strategy for recruitment — organisations are facing greater competition for skilled staff
- Encourages a positive culture of work/life balance
- Ability of employees to meet obligations and follow interests outside of work
- Improved productivity and morale
- An acknowledgement of the correlation between different work styles and work schedules (e.g. starting late and finishing late to match energy levels and preferred working style)
- Expanded work day across the organisation with different start and finish times, and offices in different locations and time zones



Challenges Of Flexible Working Hours

- Clients and colleagues may prefer dealing with an employee who works standard hours. This can be addressed with proper management of customer/client expectations and education of the team
- Ensure there is adequate coverage of particular times of the day to manage workflow requirements. This can be overcome with effective scheduling and in some cases the introduction of core times to be at work