



HANDOUT: FLEXIBLE JOB DESIGN ACTIVITY

Choose a role within your team and use the questions below to help identify where there are opportunities for flexibility in how this role is completed. Work individually, capturing your ideas in the boxes below about what flexibility could be possible in this role.

Try to capture both formal and informal flex arrangements that, with careful design, could be incorporated into this role. In this activity we are focussing on time based flex i.e. when the work happens, and how much work is done (reduced hours). We are not considering 'where' work is done for this example.

a) Flexibility in 'When' – considering what flexibility about times/days of work is possible. This refers to patterns in which the working day, week or year is adjusted. This includes patterns like flexitime, compressed hours, variable start/finish times.

Note here any opportunities you identify for flexing when the post holder works (with considerations/requirements to enable this). Think about both formal and informal flexibility:

THINK CREATIVELY ABOUT WHEN WORK IS DONE

- What are the expectations of customers / colleagues / other stakeholders of the role in terms of response time?
- Could alternative start/finish times / length of day or shift length be enabled in this role? Could this benefit the business?
- Are there core times when this role needs to work e.g. to attend key meetings?
- Are there peak times of activity during the day/week/month?
- Are there any important deadlines to be met?
- Are there key meetings during the week or briefings/handovers during the day that should be attended?
- Can anyone else provide cover if the individual is unavailable at certain times? Could they be briefed differently?
- Could you use technology to support different times of work and to keep people involved and informed even if working at different times to their colleagues?



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b) Flexibility in 'When' – considering if part time (reduced hours) is possible

Flexibility in 'when' can also include working reduced hours, such as working fewer long days, shorter days, term-time only, job sharing and job splitting. Considering the job design is critical to successful flex of any type, but particularly important to part-time working. Some roles will naturally be easier to reduce, for example by reducing the number of projects they work on, but for other roles it is important to identify how you can reduce workload and identify who else can do the work. It is important to ensure the same development and stretch opportunities are given to part-time workers, or those working at different times, so they are not disadvantaged by not being around all/every day. It is also important to ensure that staff don't miss key information and handovers.

Note here any opportunities you identify for working reduced hours (with any considerations/requirements to enable this):

REDUCE WORKLOAD

- What is the workload right now?
- Can any activities be stopped?
- Can responsibilities / deliverables be reduced?
- Can deadlines be delayed / timeframes extended?

FIND ALTERNATIVE RESOURCE

- Are other members of the team willing and able to support aspects of the work? Can this support development?
- What is the required staffing level & skill mix for the team?
- Could a job share or job split be formed? Would that be helpful? Is there anyone else in scope?
- Do you need to recruit backfill and how quickly can that be actioned?
- Can you advertise for specific work patterns to fill gaps or resource teams differently?
- Is there a minimum number of hours per week that you would require people to work in this role e.g. to keep skills / knowledge up to date?



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c) Consider different ways of planning and undertaking work to see if that enables more flexibility

Whilst many roles can be done remotely or with flexible hours, customer-facing (whether internal or external customers) and shift-based roles may require people to be present in specific locations at specific times, and so in order to redesign a role you may need to change the way the work is planned and delivered. We want to encourage all managers to be open-minded when it comes to considering creative ways to allow flexibility.

Note here any potential opportunities you identify to plan and undertake the work differently – these could be team solutions, or relate to how work is organised:

CAN YOU DESIGN THE WORK DIFFERENTLY?

- Could a mixture of shift lengths or working days work in this role/team?
- Could annualised hours be offered?
- Could talent be shared across teams?
- Could you design it so that team members have more input into their hours of work?



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Space for additional notes/comments on the activity, or things to follow up with your own teams:

Remember – flexible working is most successful and sustainable when the role is redesigned to enable the flexibility being considered. We would recommend that you as the line manager work together with the role holder (and potentially the wider team) to identify what flexibility is possible in the role & how it can work in practice. The types of questions you've worked through in this activity will also be valuable to you when designing roles in your own team.