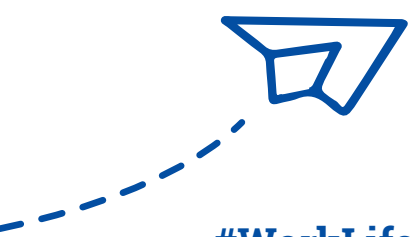




National Work Life Week

10-14 October 2022

Top tips for employers



#WorkLifeWeek





What is National Work Life Week?

National Work Life Week is an annual campaign to highlight the importance of flexible and family-friendly practices in the workplace. The campaign is run by Working Families, a national charity with working parents at its heart.

As an employer, you will have the opportunity over the course of the week to showcase how your workplace allows everyone to thrive both at work and at home. This short guide is your starting point, full of tips on how to make the most of National Work Life Week.

We've included a whole host of ideas for engaging your staff team and letting the wider world know that you are an employer that puts a high priority on work-life balance. But don't let it stop here! Let your imagination run and get input from your employees, family and carer network groups (if you have them), and senior team on ideas for activities that will suit your own unique culture.

Last year, we saw organisations of all shapes and sectors – including big banks, insurers, construction firms, universities, councils, and charities – all get involved. We hope you will join us this time around, and look forward to seeing how your teams celebrate and mark the week: make sure you share what you're doing using **#WorkLifeWeek**.

workingfamilies.org.uk/nationalworklifeweek



Why does flexible working matter?

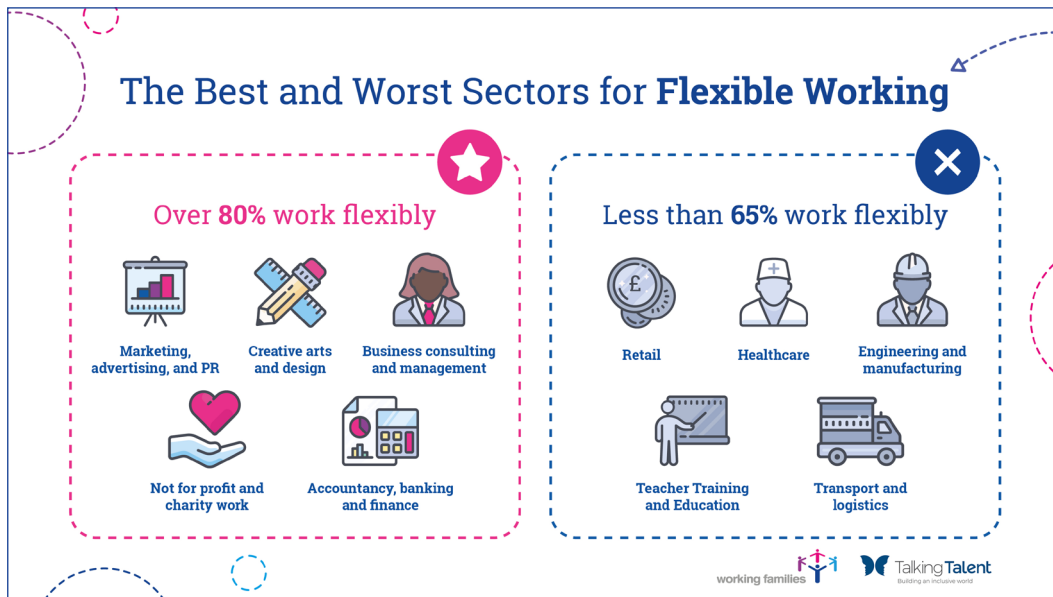
Flexible working isn't just a nice-to-have. For many people, it's a necessity. And while the pandemic has accelerated flexible working practices for many employers, some people are still being left behind. Below are some key findings from our 2022 *Working Families Index*—created in partnership with Talking Talent—to highlight why it's more important than ever to make flexible and family-friendly working a priority.



Families are struggling financially. Our Index shows that three in five parents and carers reported it's become more difficult to raise a family in the last three years. With the backdrop of the current cost-of-living crisis, it is critical that flexible jobs are available to allow those who need flexibility to find and stay in paid work.

Flex fosters loyalty. Our survey shows that flexible and family-friendly practices can boost retention: parents who felt their employer was supportive of family life were twice as likely to consider staying with their employer for the next two years than parents who did not feel this way.

Flex isn't fair—yet. The pandemic accelerated flexible working. But the shift has not been an equal one. Whilst knowledge-based industries have benefitted most from a growth in hybrid working, working from home is not an option, or the preferred choice, for all.



Culture matters. Three-quarters of parents and carers surveyed reported regularly working extra hours, predominantly because of finances, workload, and expectations.

Flex can be good for careers, but there's a part-time penalty. Parents and carers with flexible working arrangements reported higher rates of progression than those without. However, people in part-time roles—largely women—are still at a disadvantage when it comes to career progression.





Top tips on taking part



1: Lead from the front

One thing we know is that for culture change to work, it needs to be led by action and role modelling from the top. Involve senior leaders and your CEO in National Work Life Week from the start (get it in their diaries now!) and make sure they are a visible part of your activities.

- Do any of your senior team work flexibly? Part-time or flexed hours? Job share? Different locations? Then ask them to write a blog to mark the week and share their experiences of flexible working.
- Would your CEO be willing to lead a webinar? They could do it alongside team members with different experiences (parents, carers, people with other commitments outside work) to highlight the benefits diverse experience brings to the organisation.





2: Get the conversation going

Use this week as a chance to put flexible working and work-life balance at the forefront by starting a conversation about different ways of working; for example, a staff webinar / online session to talk work-life balance, such as a Working Families lunch and learn. You may want to invite some inspiring speakers who can talk about balancing work and family life, building confidence and prioritising self-care.

Why not keep the conversation going? Invite colleagues to share what flexible working and a good work-life balance helps them to do – whether it's getting into sports, being able to pick the kids up from school, or getting the shopping done when it's quiet. Set up a space on your intranet to share pictures and stories.

3: One size doesn't fit all

Although there has been a lot of emphasis on home-working and hybrid working since the pandemic, there are many other ways in which people work flexibly; for example, job-sharing, annualised hours, term-time working, shift swapping, and compressed hours. Take the opportunity to broaden the understanding of flexible working in your organisation by showcasing different working patterns. Testing a new way of working using a trial period is a really good way to understand if it is going to work for the individual and the team. If it works, then share it within the organisation – it may benefit another team too.

Consult with employees who can't work from home. Do they have an alternative vision for flexibility? You may discover they have their own solutions.



4: Support your managers

Good line manager support is vital to the success of flexible working and achieving a good work-life balance. Set your managers up for success by giving them the skills and tools they need to manage flexible or hybrid workers. Think about a coaching plan and **resources** (Working Families can help with this) and encourage managers to speak to each other – peer-to-peer support and what works and doesn't work in one team might help someone in another area.

5: HR's time to shine

Use this week as a chance to put the spotlight on your own family-friendly policies and employee benefits. Run seminars, use your intranet to highlight a policy a day, or do an all-staff Q&A to help promote what you are already doing.

6: Shout about switching off

Use this week to ensure that your staff team is finding time to disconnect, and check that line managers feel they have the skills and messages to encourage their teams to switch off on time. Encourage senior leaders to tweet or message the teams when they stop their shift, and share what they are going to do after work. Use it as an opportunity to show that productivity doesn't decrease when people finish on time; it often increases!

Remember to share your activities using the hashtag **#WorkLifeWeek**. Letting your communications team know about it well in advance will help make sure your organisation is primed and ready to make a big noise about all the great work you're doing.





Tips for SMEs

Running a smaller company? There are lots of ways you can encourage your team to think about and improve their wellbeing at work for National Work Life Week. Here are some suggestions to get you started:

- 1. Bring the team together.** If you've all been working virtually, suggest a meet up in person. Use the session as a chance to reconnect, review the strategic workplan, or just check in.
- 2. Switch up the communication.** Instead of virtual chats, why not make them telephone calls and walk together outside? Enjoy some time in nature and gets your steps in!
- 3. Share your stories.** Ask your team to share what they are doing to aid their wellbeing during the week. It could be going for a run, spending time with loved ones, or taking up a new hobby.
- 4. Offer staff a different experience.** Even if you don't have a big budget, there may be options, such as asking a local organisation if they can offer a virtual yoga class or meditation taster session.
- 5. Highlight what you've already got.** Whether that's coffee catch-ups with the CEO, access to support via a virtual app, or group fitness sessions, make sure you shout about it. And always share your own flexible working to inspire others.

Working Families will be launching a **NEW** support package specifically for small businesses during National Work Life Week.

If you'd like access to **FREE** resources about managing maternity, flexible working, and flexible recruitment prior to the launch, [head to our website.](#)





Resources and training

Running a training session for staff during National Work Life Week is a great way to show that you are actively encouraging a better balance at work. Book early to avoid disappointment!

Lunch and Learn sessions

Are you looking to support your employees and managers to work flexibly, optimise team engagement, and ensure high productivity? Why not take a look at our new [lunch and learn programme?](#) Each interactive 45-minute session, delivered by our experts, provides insight, guidance, and practical tips on a range of topics.

Flexible working group coaching

Our group coaching workshops will give you and your staff the strategies, skills, and tools they need to implement effective flexible working across your organisation. We can tailor the coaching for line managers, for employees, or for the senior leadership team and board. [Watch our taster films.](#)

Policy reviews and virtual consultancy

Our experts will help you [review your policies](#) and share with you what best practice looks like for flexible working and family-friendly policies. If you don't have policies, we can help you create them. We'll also provide you with comprehensive toolkits comprising tools, templates, factsheets, and guides for senior leaders and line managers.

Contact employers@workingfamilies.org.uk to find out more about what we offer.





Life after National Work Life Week...

After a week of focusing on good work-life balance and creating a culture of wellbeing at work, it's easy to slip back into our old ways.

If you want to build a family-friendly, flexible organisation that works for your employees and delivers big business benefits, then we can help.

Become a Working Families member

Keep your business in front with a Working Families membership. Our membership scheme works for all types of organisations, regardless of size, maturity, and working dynamic.

The way to attract and retain the best talent, whatever sector you're in, is to make sure your ways of working are outstanding.

Members have access to a wealth of information, support from experts, and easily accessible toolkits designed to help you to create a new culture, mindset and behaviours to embed flexible, high performing ways of working within your business.

You can expect a benchmark analysis, regular network workshops and webinars, as well as newsletters and updates on changes to legislation, case studies and best practice from the UK's leading employers. Plus, your employees can access a job share matching platform with our partner DuoMe, opening a world of flexible opportunities.

[Contact us now to find out more](#)



Sign up to our newsletter

Our free newsletter will make sure you stay informed about our work, our free webinar series and new publications, as well as what's happening in the world of family-friendly working.

[Sign up here](#)



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