

Webinar

Different Types of Flex



Finding flexible solutions

Date of event – 8th October 2024

Speakers

We were delighted to be joined by:

- Syndie Simon, Inclusion & Diversity Manager, Culture & Brand at Grant Thornton UK
- Squadron Leader Jenny Munro – Personnel Officer at the RAF
- Hannah Fender, HR Advisor at Southdown

Our Top Takeaways:

The possibilities are endless

- Think about what's realistic for the role. Site-based or shift-workers can still work flexibly, consider rota-swapping, or giving the option of static days, with rotas given with much notice as possible.
- Different flexible working patterns can function just as effectively for the same role or within the same team.
- When the goal is a better work-life balance, initiatives such as meeting-free days or finish-early Fridays can go a long way.
- Policies such as flexible bank holidays show flex is for everyone by enabling people to flex their leave, be it for family, cultural or religious reasons.

Employ a flexible mindset

- Finding the right flexible solution is a balancing act between the needs of the individual, the role and the organisation. Each case will be unique and will require a different solution.
- Establishing an individual's circumstances and what they want to achieve helps to clarify alternative patterns or opportunities and opens a meaningful dialogue.
- Focus on what can be offered rather than what can't. It can help to start small, with tweaks to working arrangements rather than big changes.
- Trust people to work in the way that suits them and the organisation.

Culture is key

- Story-telling opens minds. Sharing honest experiences of flexible working helps bring policies to life and demonstrates what's possible, for example case studies that show surrogacy or paternity leave in action.
- Encourage leaders to 'live flexibly' in their calendars, by highlighting when they are OOO for school pick-up or to go to the gym. Senior leaders are invaluable to help embed flex, but you only need one or two to tip the balance and kickstart change.
- Use staff surveys to discover what is preventing cultural acceptance of flex and consider ways to tackle this, such as line manager coaching or gender allyship workshops.
- Invest in people managers. Provide training, guidance and resources to encourage buy-in, broaden their thinking and equip them with tools.

Deliver the message

- Share the benefits of flex with managers so they can understand the why behind the policies.
- Encourage open dialogue and facilitate feedback through staff networks or other channels to continuously review how flex is working.
- Fair doesn't necessarily mean equal. But by clearly highlighting expectations and reasons, for example a junior member working less flexibly as they are still learning on the job, can help address tension within teams.
- Data is a powerful tool in changing minds. Use benchmarking information or seek out stats, particularly on the impact of flex on gender progression or intersectional experiences.