Challenges/Mindsets/Myths when considering approving a flexible work arrangement

Negative reactions to flexible work begin with some of these thoughts:

- There won’t be enough coverage.
- I’ll have to work longer hours or take on more work as their supervisor.
- If a staff member works from home they’ll feel out of the loop.
- Getting everyone together for a meeting will be impossible.
- Staff who are not requesting flexible work will be upset.
- How do I know if someone is working from home, is truly getting the work done, or working without the presence of their children?
- If I let one person do it, I’ll have to let everyone flex their schedule.
- What if I have more people request a flex schedule than I have available opportunities? How do I choose?
- I had to figure it out/ I had to pay my dues, no one gave me a flexible schedule.

Stepping Back

Take a step back and ask yourself some questions about the request, your department and the requestor—as an individual like:

- Why am I feeling closed to this? Is it because of the nature of the work or the nature of my management style, or the staff employment history?
- What characteristics about them would lead me to believe that they will (or won’t) get the job done, if they have a flexible schedule?
- Do I want to retain them?
- Are they a hard worker?
- What is the performance history of the requestor?
- What would this look like if this worked well?
- Am I willing to potentially sacrifice this employee in order to keep schedules status quo?
- How would I justify telling them “no” if business needs allows and performance reviews are at a meets or exceeds?
- Even if I say no this time, will this be the last request, or is it just matter of time before someone else approaches me? Therefore does it benefit me/college/unit and staff to try to figure it out now instead of just hoping that flexible work needs and wants will disappear?