

Types of Flexible Work Arrangements

1. Restructured Full-time Options

Generally do not affect salary, benefits or career advancement timeframes.

2. Reduced Work Time Options

Affect salary and may affect benefits; also likely to affect career advancement timeframes, depending on the arrangement, the length of its duration and policy.

Re-structured Full-time Options	Reduced Work Time Options
<p>Flextime</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Permits employees to choose their starting and quitting times within limits set by management. ▪ Requires a standard number of hours (usually 35-40) during a five-day week, within a given time period. ▪ Usually features core hours when all employees must be present. 	<p>Regular part-time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Voluntary ▪ Includes same job security and benefits (on a prorated basis) available to regular full-time workers.
<p>Daily Flextime</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Same as flextime except the employee may vary their work hours on a daily basis. 	<p>Job-sharing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Two part-time employees voluntarily share one full-time position with salary and benefits prorated.
<p>Compressed work schedule</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enables employees to work fewer than 5 days a week. ▪ Among the schedules used are four 10-hour days and three 12-hour days. 	<p>Voluntary reduced time (V-time)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Allows employees voluntarily to reduce their hours of work with a corresponding reduction in salary <i>for a predetermined period of time.</i> ▪ Reductions may be as small as 1% or as large as 50%. Generally, benefits are maintained.
<p>Flexplace or telecommuting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Allows regular employees to work at home all or part of the time, often linked to the office electronically with computers, word processors, fax machines and telephone. ▪ Work at home (designated work space at employee's home) 	<p>Leaves</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Authorized period of time away from work, without loss of employment rights. ▪ Paid or unpaid, leaves are usually extended for family, health care, education, or leisure time.

Creating Alternative Work Arrangements

Establishing alternative work arrangements is a cooperative effort between you and your supervisor. Work arrangements must consider both the operational needs of your unit and your personal needs. Advanced planning will allow your unit plenty of time to consider any necessary arrangements to accommodate your request.

You will be responsible for **developing and proposing an alternative work arrangement**. Create a plan that gives as much detail as possible to avoid problems in how your schedule works. You must work with your supervisor and have approval before implementing an alternative work arrangement.

You and your supervisor may be more comfortable if the plan were initiated on a trial basis. If it does not work, you can then make adjustments. Set a date for the **plan to be evaluated** to assure that both your needs and the unit's needs are being met.

Your new schedule should be **communicated to other staff and customers**. You may want to post your schedule at work for easy reference. Once implemented your plan should be evaluated in relation to your performance to ensure success.

Some items to include in your written plan:

- actual alternative schedule
- timeline of alternative schedule
- changes to benefits
- changes to salary
- date of evaluation
- performance measures
- signatures of both employee and supervisor
- names of co-workers providing coverage
- names of those needing to know of change (internal and external customers)

Important Considerations

Some of the following questions should be answered in your plan:

- How will holidays be paid? Is holiday coverage necessary?
- How will timekeeping be done? Are timesheets necessary?
- How will absences be managed? How do you call-in sick?
- How will communications occur with your supervisor, colleagues, and customers?
- Will performance measures need to change?
- How will your workload be altered? Who will pick up workload?
- How will conflicts with the schedule be resolved?
- What if your schedule needs to be altered? How will this take place?
- What if there are important or emergency meetings/events at work when you are not scheduled? What are your responsibilities?
- How will your benefit costs and salary change?
- If you are in a union position you may need to consider the impact your work plan has on union issues and seniority issues. Work with your supervisor and union steward in dealing with these issues.
- Exempt (paid monthly) and non-exempt (paid biweekly) status is an important consideration for you. If you are in an exempt position, you are not eligible for overtime. If you are in non-exempt position, you are eligible for overtime and the university is required to pay you overtime for hours worked over 40 in one week. How will your exemption status impact your work arrangement?

Flexibility vs. Control

By Shelley MacDermid

Flexibility surfaces very early in most conversations about work-life. It is said to give employees more control over their lives. Compared with many other work-life interventions, it is cheap and easy to implement, and it can be offered in workplaces of all sizes. But are flexibility and control really the same thing?

Consider technology. Today, phones and email messages can be monitored from anywhere. Conference calls and web conferences allow workers to attend meetings "virtually." Technology delivers tremendous flexibility, but when a boss or a subordinate can request help anytime, anywhere, who has control?

Since I'm a researcher (and therefore nosy), I decided to snoop around in some data about these issues. I used the 1997 National Study of the Changing Workplace, conducted by the Families and Work Institute using a nationally representative sample of U.S. workers.

To make my test as rigorous as possible, I first took into account all the resources and demands at work and at home I could think of that might affect workers' well-being. *Demands*, for example, arise from having young children, household chores, or working more or fewer hours than desired. Examples of *resources* are supervisor and coworker support, decent wages and benefits and stimulating and meaningful work.

After taking into account resources and demands, I asked for statistics that would tell me what kind(s) of flexibility?or lack thereof?matter most. I considered workers' responses to seven statements regarding types of flexibility where the worker *does* have some control:

- I can decide how the job gets done
- I decide when I take breaks
- I control my schedule
- I have paid vacation, holidays, or sick days
- I can take time during the work day for personal/family matters
- I am less likely to advance if I use flex options
- I could arrange to work part-time/full-time in this job if I wanted to

Regardless of what index of well-being I looked at-burnout, work-family tension, stress, or life satisfaction-the type of flexibility that helped the most was always the same:

I can take time during the work day for personal/family matters.

I have decided to call this "instant" flexibility-the wiggle room that makes it possible to respond to sudden, unexpected demands (the power went out at school and all the kids are being sent home; my sister just got really bad news and I need to calm her, etc.). And one of every three workers in the sample said that it was "somewhat hard" or "very hard" to take time during the work day for personal/family matters.

This is something to keep in mind as you develop or enhance programs promoting flexibility with a big "F"?compressed work weeks, flextime, flex-place, etc. Don't forget instant flexibility?it just may be the kind that makes the greatest difference of all.

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