



Being a Flex-Able Leader

Flexibility at Westpac - making your Life Work



Being a Flex-Able Leader

Why Flexibility

Flexible work arrangements in New Zealand are fast becoming mainstream across the generational spectrum of workers in New Zealand. At Westpac we want to be known as one of the world's best organisations for diversity and inclusiveness and believe that flexibility is key to engaging a talented and productive workforce. A number of labour market factors are driving the need for flexibility:

- The increase in one parent families, three quarters of which are headed by women
- The growing number of dual career couples, creating greater need to balance the home life efficiently
- The growth of caring responsibilities, which may include caring for children, elderly, poor health, people with disability
- Our ageing population, which means an increasing number of older workers are willing to remain in the workforce, but are looking for flexible options
- Fathers in New Zealand becoming increasingly involved in the care of their children while holding down careers.



Debunking the Myths about Flexibility

There are many reasons why staff who would like an arrangement may not approach their leader, and why a leader may be reluctant to consider a request for flexibility.

Common myths about flexible work are:

- **It's all about working mums who want to work part-time**
- **If people are not physically sitting in the office, they cannot possibly be completing enough work**
- **It costs more to have staff working under flexible arrangements**
- **We can't do that in our team as we are customer facing**
- **It's impossible to manage teams where people are working flexibly as you never know where everyone is**
- **"It's just too hard".**

In fact we have seen from our Australian counterparts that their most productive workers have job flexibility. Almost half of 'super achievers' feel they have a lot of flexibility in their role.

Source: The EY Australian Productivity Pulse (2013)

The Benefits

Flexibility offers numerous benefits at the individual level as well as organisational and for our customers.

For Our People

On the recruitment side, demonstrating a willingness to consider a flexible working arrangement attracts a broader talent base who are advocates and more likely to remain with the organisation.

For the Organisation

It is common for people in flexible roles to work smarter than their counterparts due to the requirement to organise their work life. They often complete a similar amount of work in a compressed timeframe.

For Our Customers

Incorporating flexibility and being ready to adopt changes to what is perceived as a 'normal business day' means we are ready to meet the changing needs of our customers in a digitised world.

The Top 10 Success Factors for Leaders in Implementing Flexible Work

Maximising success and benefits of flexible work and flexible careers involves finding the right solutions and the most effective way of implementing them:

1 Treating each request individually

Understanding the reasons for wanting flexibility – what is the desired outcome? Finding the right type and mix of flexible work for each individual (not all types of flexibility will suit all people). The right type(s) and mix will produce the best result.

2 Involving the team

Having a team based discussion to maximise efficiency and benefits of flexible working. Establishing team agreements on delivery and communication.

3 Finding the wins

Looking for where flexibility could benefit the individual, the team, the business and the customer.

4 Creativity and innovation

Thinking outside the square and coming up with creative and different ways of introducing flexibility.

5 Establishing clear expectations and responsibilities

Everyone understands what is expected and what the non-negotiables and negotiables are – individuals, teams, stakeholders and customers.

6 Trust

Everyone in the team delivering what they promise. Managing people on outcomes, rather than visibility and observation.

7 Openness and dialogue

Being open to the discussion about flexibility. Keeping the conversation going. Being honest if it is not working and openness to alternate solutions.

8 Relationships and connection

Ensuring relationships with stakeholders and team members are built. Establishing ways in which the team can connect.

9 Responding to changing needs

Looking for ways to improve practices and options being undertaken. Adjusting as needs change.

10 Full use of technology

Ensuring team members are fully aware of technology available and have the appropriate training to use it.

Westpac's Obligations

Westpac has a legal obligation under the Employment Relations Amendment Act 2007 to provide flexible working arrangements for staff with carer responsibilities.

Over and above the legislation, Westpac is committed to being an Employer of Choice and provides a flexible work policy that aims to make flexible working arrangement accessible for as many eligible employees as possible.

Any permanent full or part-time employee of Westpac New Zealand Limited with a minimum of six (6) months' service is eligible to apply for a flexible working arrangement.

Check out the Flexible Work Policy on the Intranet for more information about what is required under legislation and Westpac's processes for implementing an arrangement (including all the forms you and your staff member need).

Putting Flexibility into practice

All staff have access to information, tools and templates about flexibility and how to request an arrangement on the Westpac Intranet.

The Process

Implementing a flexible working arrangement is a 5 stage process starting with planning at both the individual and leader level.

Plan Ahead

- Look for opportunities in the team, especially when you have a vacant role
- Take the time to read the flexibility policies available on the Intranet, and request that your team members do the same
- Talk to your people proactively about whether flexibility could improve their productivity and engagement, and support their lifestyle.

Making A Request

When your staff member approaches you:

- Be open to possibilities
- Treat every request as individual – even if flexibility hasn't worked in your team before

Schedule a dedicated time to talk with your staff member, and remind them to come prepared with what they are looking for, and how flexibility can help.

Finding a Solution

- Where possible, involve the team in how flexibility would work for the group (except where privacy may be an issue)
- Agree on the specific details of the arrangement (e.g. hours of work, physical location, communication processes, delegating responsibilities)
- Consider if additional technology is required
- Establish a trial period after which the arrangement will be reviewed.

Manage Expectations and Outcomes

- Ensure you continue with 1:1s and team meetings – check in with each other regularly
- Look for ways to communicate and connect as a group
- Speak up if something is not working; consider how to tweak the arrangement to better suit rather than dropping it completely
- Be a champion with other leaders; share experiences and gains with your peers.

Review and Improve

- Review outcomes on a regular basis especially at the beginning of any arrangement
- If there are performance issues, assess all possible factors (engagement, understanding etc.)
- Be aware of changing needs over time and respond to it
- Ensure the whole team is aware of the benefits and acknowledges the challenges.

Resources

Flexibility Policy

- Intranet > People > Paperwork > People Policies & Guidelines > Flexible Working Arrangements

Templates

- Flexible Work Arrangements Application Form
- Flexible Work Arrangements Application Response Form

The Carer's Portal

- Intranet > People > My Career > Diversity & Inclusiveness > Carers Portal



Diversity & Inclusion @ Westpac