

10 Tips for Successful Flexible Working

If you work flexibly, try the following tips to help you to make flexible working a success, as well as effectively manage your work life balance:



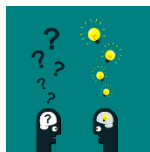
1. Clearly communicate your working pattern to colleagues and customers. Block the time out in your calendar and use an auto-signature or out-of-office message to communicate when you are available.



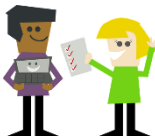
2. If your working pattern includes hours outside of those often considered typical office hours, consider including a note to this effect in your auto-signature with a reminder that a reply is not expected until the recipient's working times.



3. If your flexible working arrangement includes an element of homeworking, it is important to establish effective boundaries to avoid work overspill into home life. Create a separate space for work if you can, and aim to have a defined start and finish time. Ensure a break is taken during the working day and you don't neglect your wellbeing.



4. Should you be undertaking a work at a different schedule or from a different location to your colleagues, be proactive and talk to them about the best ways to keep in touch and stay connected. Let people know how best to contact you when you are not in the office. Consider using shared calendars within the team.



5. From time to time, build in a review with your manager about your working arrangements to ensure that they are still effective for both parties, and the full benefits of flexibility are being realised.



6. Ensure that you have all of the relevant technology available to you in order for you to undertake your role effectively, particularly if the working pattern includes an element of homeworking. Discuss this with the IT department where appropriate, and seek additional training if required.



7. If you have non-working days, plan for how work should be dealt with in your absence, and in particular about what should happen in the event that a decision needs to be made or serious problem arises. Communicate this internally, especially if you manage a team.



8. Ensure that you are familiar with organisational policies on health and safety, data protection and IT usage to ensure that any remote or homeworking is compliant with relevant requirements.



9. If part of your working pattern involves homeworking, make arrangements for participating remotely in meetings and ensure that you have all the necessary technology available in order to do so.



10. Don't feel guilty about your flexible working arrangement! Working flexibly does not make you any less committed to your role. Being open about flexible working helps to change the culture and pave the way for others. If you feel that you can, be a flexible working role model.