Getting it right: workplace flexibility

A flexible workplace allows employers and employees to make arrangements that suit both parties. Flexibility has great benefits and can take many forms. But sometimes, our well-intentioned attempts to create flexibility in the workplace are framed as *special treats* rather than the norm. Other times, we create a narrow framework: we either give people permission to do their work on their schedule or accommodate their life needs upon request.

Are we getting it right?

True flexibility aligns employers and employees to achieve performance and work-life goals.

#GettingItRight

Make sure you are all on the **same page**. Have a chat with your team leaders to understand how everyone defines flexibility.

Think about your employees and their offer: what **skills** and **capabilities** do they bring to the role? Then focus on the employee as an individual; what **type of flexibility** would enable them to **live their best life**? This could be location, working hours, changes in work shifts, use of software, or breaking down the job into smaller tasks and offering task and/or job sharing.

Remember, flexibility is a case-by-case scenario, but it also needs to be **available to all**. Every job deserves some flexibility; to avoid the danger of flexibility becoming a privilege in the workplace, explore your options. For example, could you open the shift rostering process? How would your workplace change if employees had the option to opt into their preferred shifts?

What type of **policies** do you need in place? Make sure you have a **clear written framework** to guide and support your team. Communicate the options and the possibilities often and across the organisation. Open communication and transparency will help increase trust; that's key for your policies to be implemented successfully.

Show, don't tell! The best way to foster flexibility in the workplace is by modelling it. Consider creating a system where you *call things in* as well as calling things out; take a moment to highlight when it works and celebrate your wins. You are doing great!

Interested to learn more?

- Check out the Workplace Flexibility Strategy Toolkit by the Workplace Gender Equality Agency. It is a practical guide to help you build your business 'strategy.

- Read the results of the 4-day working week AU/NZ pilot by the not-for-profit 4 Day Week Global; spoiler alert: it was a huge success!

- Visit our Resource Centre or get in touch with our team today.

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