Employees guide to negotiating flexible work

Flexible by Design

Under the [*Industrial Relations Act 2016*](https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/LEGISLTN/CURRENT/I/IndustRelA16.pdf), any employee can request flexible work.

The [Flexible by Design framework](https://www.forgov.qld.gov.au/flexible-by-design) outlines that flexibility can have benefits for organisations, teams and employees. When implemented well:

* flexible work approaches are less about rules, process and structure and more about culture, outcomes, ways of thinking and wellbeing
* solutions demonstrate give and take, trust, open communication, cooperation, negotiation and ethics
* employees should proudly share and promote flexible work stories.

In the context of the Queensland public sector, an [evaluation of flexible work practices](https://www.forgov.qld.gov.au/case-studies-pilots) in three agencies found:

* a direct correlation between flexibility and employee wellbeing
* part-time workers have less opportunity
* combinations of traditional and contemporary flexible work approaches are more responsive to employee and business needs

There are three steps for employees to successfully negotiate flexible work:

1. Research

It is good to know the context first – here are a few things to consider:

* take the time to understand [Flexible by Design](https://www.forgov.qld.gov.au/flexible-by-design) within the sector
* the [flexible work possibilities](https://www.forgov.qld.gov.au/flexible-work-possibilities) and combinations that might work for you and your team
* [flexible work myths](https://www.forgov.qld.gov.au/flexible-working-myths)
* how to have [flexible work conversations](https://www.forgov.qld.gov.au/encourage-flexible-work-conversations).

2. Plan

Once you have identified a preferred way to work flexibly, review the [flexible work checklist](https://www.forgov.qld.gov.au/file/31721/download?token=hpoQfhOI) to understand the assessment and implementation process. Consider the following questions:

* How is it going to work for the organisation?
* How is it going to work for your clients?
* How is it going to work for your team?
* How is it going to work for you?

In preparation for meeting with your manager, complete the [flexible work agreement template](https://www.forgov.qld.gov.au/file/31726/download?token=O2fXA1l-) as a first draft.

2. Chat

Now the preparation is done, it is time to chat to your manager. Here are some tips:

* Book a meeting – it is important and requires both your time and attention
* Be prepared –to negotiate your agreement with an open mind
* Be confident – research shows employees with flexible work arrangements are some of the most productive in the workforce.

More information

Visit [Flexible by Design](https://www.forgov.qld.gov.au/flexible-by-design) for more information.

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