



Do you employ staff?

Do you have difficulty understanding your legal and contractual responsibilities as an employer?

Do employment problems keep you awake at night?

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The Benefits of Flexible Working

What Is Flexible Working?

Flexible Working, also known as Workforce Agility, is the name given when companies implement policies allowing employees to work differently from the standard nine-to-five routine. The most common and popular ways of flexible working are part-time, job-share, flexi-time, and term-time working. The other options are:

- Compressed hours; when an employee works the normal amount of full time hours over a smaller amount of days i.e. three days instead of five.
- Annual hours; when an employee works a set amount of hours over the course of the year instead of working a set amount of hours over a week.
- Career break; otherwise known as sabbatical, when an employee can take unpaid leave from work for up to five years.
- Zero hour contracts; when an employee has no guaranteed hours set to work and waits to be called upon for their shifts.
- Mobile working/teleworking; when employees commute/work on location away from the office.
- Homeworking; when employees work from home instead of being based at the office.

The Benefits of Flexible Working

Implementing a flexible working scheme can be very good for the employer employee relationship. Research has been conducted by the CIPD that shows there is a high correlation between flexible working and a positive psychological contract. It has been found that the more flexible contracts you provide employees the more likely they are to be engaged, committed and satisfied with their work. This offers further benefits as there are also statistics to prove employees who are more engaged, committed and satisfied with their work are less likely to be absent from work due to illnesses, saving the company money.

Flexible working can also help companies to stay competitive in the labour market by making the company seem more desirable to prospective employees. By offering flexible working companies become more competitive in the global market where there is an increased requirement for 24/7 customer service. Finally, providing flexible working schemes helps companies in times of financial difficulty by providing an alternative to redundancies. Employees who can see their employers attempting to find an alternative to redundancy will feel grateful and appreciative and again more committed to their roles.

The Problems of Implementation

Unfortunately not all workplace cultures are welcoming to the idea of flexible working with many employees complaining that once they have started working part-time etc. their colleagues have behaved differently towards them. A lot of employees who are interested in the idea of flexible working will not apply for it due to fears that they will struggle to keep up with their workload, leading to anxiety about job security. In the same way, a lot of managers don't have the ability or the right attitude to manage flexible working, whether this is due to a lack of experience or the work place culture.

Correct Implementation

To overcome the aforementioned problems it is highly important that when considering implementing a flexible working scheme, you ensure everything is thoroughly communicated to management and employees alike. Being open and communicative will help the workplace culture accept changes and embrace them, hopefully preventing there from being any problems between those who work full time and those who work flexibly.

It can also be recommended for a company to initiate a pilot scheme so that any problems which arise from the implementation of a flexible working scheme can be identified. Once identified any problems can then be removed before the scheme is initiated across the whole company saving time and potentially money.

If you have any queries relating to any of the subjects raised within this newsletter then please don't hesitate to contact us at hradvice@hasslefreehr.co.uk

For clarification of any of the above updates or for advice and guidance on any HR and/or Health and Safety Concerns contact us by emailing hradvice@hasslefreehr.co.uk or by calling 02476 664092.

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