Leader Skills for Working Flexibly

Development Guide

Version 2.0, May 2019

Works for me.
Works for NSW.

FLEXIBLE WORKING

NSW GOVERNMENT

Contents

Flexible Working Development Guide for Leaders

Flexible working: The role of leaders

The role of leaders in flexible working is one of advocacy, proactivity, and accountability. Leaders set the strategic context for flexible working and provide a clear vision for how flexible working is to be achieved in the organisation.

A leader drives and promotes the benefits of flexible working, role-models flexibility in their own role, pushes for continuous improvement and innovation in flexible working practices, and ensures workplace systems, supports, and team structures are designed to facilitate flexible working. Finally, leaders take their employees with them along the journey toward flexible working, dispelling myths, managing resistance, and holding others to account.

How to use this guide

Your *Flexible Working Self-Assessment Tool for Leaders* results should have identified three focus areas for skill development. The resources, tools, activities, and ideas found in the guide can assist you in building up these skills.

People learn in different ways, so it is important that you scan through the resources listed and identify those that are most useful to you. The self-assessment can also be re-used to track your progress in developing flexible working skills over time.

This is a sector-wide tool, so learning activities will also need to be adapted to your agency and what it has available. If you are unsure how best to navigate this, see your HR team for guidance.

Improving flexible working skills

Education

The formal components of learning that range from higher education through to face-to-face training programs and self-study.

Environment

The infrastructure that support learning is the final component. It can include all the technology that surrounds or supports learning, but it can also include institutional infrastructure like capability frameworks.

The Four E's Approach to Learning

The Four Es of learning[*] encompasses the different ingredients that comprise learning experiences and is the framework from which the capability development activities in this guide are built. The Four E's model includes both formal and informal learning experiences.

Exposure

The learning that comes from working with or observing others. This can be individual or one-on-one, including coaching and mentoring, or it can be institutions such as networking, communities of practice, or involvement with professional associations.

Experience

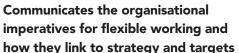The informal but nonetheless structured learning situations that one finds on the job, including secondments, job rotations, and assignments.

*Adapted from Bersin research (2016)

Awareness

The Awareness skillset is all about the extent to which a leader:

Promotes the benefits of flexible working to other employees	If you need to better understand what flexible working means for the NSW government sector your first port-of-call is the PSC website. The site contains excellent resources and case studies, so that you can better implement flexible working at your agency. To build awareness, knowledge, and advocacy of flexible working across your agency, check out the PSC's 'Changing communication and awareness' guide.	
Communicates the organisational imperatives for flexible working and how they link to strategy and targets	WGEA has some excellent resources for executive leaders understanding flexible working and how they can build a flexible working strategy.	
Advocates for the various types of flexible working available to myself and other employees	Set up a meeting with HR to understand the types of flexible working available to employees within your own agency. Find out which arrangements are used most, and what tends to work best for different work types, as well as the policy and other arrangements that are likely to impact your organisation's approach to flexible working. Contact sector peers to understand how they approach flexible working in their organisation. Create forums for people to discuss flexible working and raise concerns.	
	When you are next involved in the setting up of a new project team, ensure there is open discussion of team members' and your own flexible work practices and demonstrate that access to flexible working is fair and equitable.	
Understands the constraints from policy and industrial arrangements and integrates them into the flexible working strategy for my agency	Work with your HR team to review your own Public Service Industrial Relations Guide (PSIR) with a specific focus on flexible working. Ensure you are across all associated legislation and policies. Where you come across policies or practices you are less familiar with, spend time reviewing these and considering their application in your organisation.	

The Awareness skillset is all about the extent to which a leader:

Seeks reliable sources of advice when making important flexible working decisions	Ask your People Analytics team about available sources of data that reveal insights about your agency's flexible working culture (e.g. from these tools built by the PSC: Flexible Working Dashboard, People Matter Employee Survey, Flexible Implementation Tracker) Think about how these might affect your agency, how they relate to the business needs and to diversity and inclusion targets and consider discussing these with your leadership team.	
Learns from other agency approaches to flexible working and adapt them to my own agency context	Check in on flexible working projects and / or initiatives that are being rolled out in your agency (including pilot programs) and in other agencies, to compare notes and share resources.	

Inclusive leadership

Inclusion in the workplace means that all people, no matter what their gender, race, age, religious beliefs, disability, or personal commitments, feel safe to genuinely participate and contribute because they have no fear of being discriminated against due to their difference.

At the heart of the NSW government sector's policy commitment of 'all roles flex' is inclusion: everyone can request flexible working no matter what the reason; and making flexible work available to diverse groups will foster a more inclusive government sector, as individuals perhaps previously excluded can now participate.

The Inclusive leadership skillset focuses on leaders' behaviours, mindsets and practices and the extent to which they:

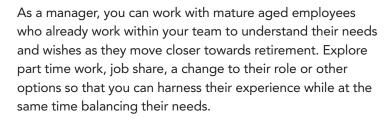|	
Value the diverse characteristics and contexts of employees with regards to their flexible working arrangements, and advocate for equitable access	An excellent starting place for understanding what makes an inclusive leader is the [PSC Inclusive Leadership video](#) or the [Transport for NSW video about conscious inclusion](#). The PSC video is based on [Deloitte's six signature traits of an inclusive leader](#).
	Engage with other senior leaders to define the meaning of inclusive leadership in your agency, as well as defining the key indicators, related strategies, and expected outcomes for your change strategy. You can use the [PSC Communications and Awareness change guide](#) to develop and implement a communication strategy that will relay intentions and expectations about flexible working to the wider organisation.
Use flexible working to optimise a diverse talent pool (e.g. respond to demographic shifts, push for D&I targets)	If you would like to better understand the various aspects of diversity and inclusion in the government sector, you can review [PSC's 'Diversity and Inclusion page'](#). Flexible working promotes workforce diversity by giving agencies the ability to attract and retain talent across several important workforce demographics:
	As a manager, you can support more women to participate in the workforce by being mindful of holding meetings during school hours, being open to women working compressed hours or working from home some days or learning about what it takes to manage a job share pair.
	The PSC website contains resources to help you learn the skills needed to include people with disabilities in your team, by way of workplace adjustments, building awareness and workforce planning that is more inclusive and committed to the goal of doubling the participation rate of people with disabilities in the government sector by 2027.

The Inclusive leadership skillset focuses on leaders' behaviours, mindsets and practices and the extent to which they:

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Use flexible working to optimise a diverse talent pool (e.g. respond to demographic shifts, push for D&I targets)

As a manager, you can work with mature aged employees who already work within your team to understand their needs and wishes as they move closer towards retirement. Explore part time work, job share, a change to their role or other options so that you can harness their experience while at the same time balancing their needs.

As a manager of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees it is important that you gain the cultural competency to understand the community needs of these team members, and that you proactively offer them opportunities to keep up with kinship commitments. Don't wait for them to ask – initiate a discussion which helps you identify what commitments they will have so that you can plan around how they can still meet the requirements of their role.

Young employees bring energy, passion, commitment, adaptability and, if they have recently finished study, the latest academic research or practical know-how to the workplace. Managers can offer flexible working as a way to attract and retain them by assisting them to devote time to work and other pursuits.

Drive clear diversity and inclusion targets for managers, as well as ways to achieve them

Ask your People Analytics team for available sources of data that reveal insights about how inclusive your agency is and the level of inclusive leadership capability amongst other leaders and managers (e.g. from these tools built by the PSC: Flexible Working Dashboard, People Matter Employee Survey, Flexible Implementation Tracker).

Review key talent management statistics for your business unit or team (e.g. turnover, promotions, uptake of flexible working) to check for equity between key demographics (e.g. gender, age).

Inclusive leadership

The Inclusive leadership skillset focuses on leaders' behaviours, mindsets and practices and the extent to which they:

'Sense check' for unconscious bias when responding to issues and making decisions related to flexible working	If you would like to know how to support diversity in your workplace and be aware of your own unconscious bias in the way you manage teams, review DPC's 'Behavioural approaches to increasing workforce diversity' guide. If you are particularly interested to learn how your mindset can shift to become more inclusive, read DCA's 'Building Inclusion' report.
	There's nothing like confronting unconscious biases to keep them in check, so take the Harvard Implicit Association Test to uncover what yours may be. Set up one-on-one coaching / mentoring with a leader who has been recognised as highly inclusive, to enhance your own strengths in this area. Learn about personal biases through feedback from peers or other leaders.
	There are so many opportunities within the NSW government sector to experience diversity and inclusion. Seek out and engage in current or future immersive experiences / projects / assignments within your agency or cluster (e.g. working in cross-functional / cross-national teams engaging with specific diversity or social groups) to broaden your experience working with diverse groups.

Creating the right environment

The Creating the right environment skillset is all about the extent to which a leader:

Visibly role-models flexible working and work / life balance	Seek feedback from others on your role-modelling and consistency in what you say, do, recognise and prioritise to support flexible working, and look for opportunities to role model your own flexible working arrangements. Encourage role-modelling by creating targets at an executive level (e.g. at least one male and one female senior executive role-modelling flexible working across each department).	
Communicates positively and consistently about flexible working	If you are seeking to build awareness, knowledge, and advocacy of flexible working across your agency, and to understand how you can also change culture and mindsets to encourage an environment that supports flexible working, review PSC's 'Changing communication and awareness' and 'Changing culture and mindsets' guides. If you feel like you need an overview of general ethics and good practice in creating the right environment in your agency, review PSC's 'Behaving Ethically' guide. The chapter on Difficult Discussions is particularly helpful advice if you are confronting any resistance to flexible working.	
Sets clear flexible working expectations for managers and employees, and holds them accountable for meeting these	To gain insight into designing, implementing, and reviewing an organisation-wide flexible working strategy (which is likely to demonstrate organisational commitment to flexible working), review WGEAs report on developing a flexible working strategy.	
	Flexible working is an opportunity for leaders to foster a culture of trust in their agency. Allowing teams to set up their own simple protocols about how they will work (guided by an up to date agency policy on flexible working) how they will communicate with each other, and how they will resolve issues that arise, will likely lead to the best outcomes in the workplace. This approach is one which models a team-based collaboration and a focus on outcomes, not presenteeism.	

The Creating the right environment skillset is all about the extent to which a leader:

Visibly and respectfully challenges resistance to, or jokes about flexible working when observed in their agency, and encourages capability-building

Make use of communication / collaboration platforms within your organisation to share flexible working success stories, outcomes of executive-level discussions regarding flexible working, learning relating to flexible working etc.

So that you can promote 'top-down' support for the implementation of flexible working at your agency, ensure that at least some aspect of flexible working is an agenda item at the executive level and has an executive-level sponsor.

Stay up to date about flexible working initiatives taking place in your agency and, where possible, participate in pilot programs such as job share.

Proactively adapts their leadership style and approach to account for employees' different flexible working arrangements

Creating the right environment for flexible working take up includes proactively adapting your own leadership style and approach to account for employees' flexible working arrangements, across all levels of the workforce, to model an openness and acceptance of flexible working. To increase the uptake of flexible working arrangements across the government sector, leaders will need to network with other leaders in the sector, trouble shoot the existing barriers and develop innovations so that eventually job share becomes commonplace and all employees are adept at working collaboratively with those who are job sharing.

Encourage and welcome feedback from peers and other employees regarding what is / isn't working to create a positive flexible working culture in your agency; consider asking for this feedback in both a broad sense, as well as in relation to specific flexible working projects or initiatives you may have recently undertaken.

If you learn best from hearing from others, shadow / meet with a leader known for success in the implementation of flexible working to find out what has worked for them and learn from their story.

Leading change

The Leading change skillset is about the extent to which a leader:

Considers the appetite for change relating to flexible working in their agency and the risks associated with implementation;	To test the appetite for change relating to flexible working, create forums for people to discuss flexible working and raise their concerns. Where new flexible working change initiatives have been proposed (or are in progress), consider developing initiative-specific forums for employees to air their concerns, share what they are learning, or discuss challenges.
Advocates for, and drives the implementation of, flexible working policies and approaches	When you support managers and your HR team to become confident in their knowledge and skills to manage flexible working arrangements, you can build a reputation as being an employer of choice, more able to innovate and adapt to the needs of a future way of working. Whether or not you decide to try flexible working for yourself, as a leader responsible for the advocacy of flexible working in your agency, it will be important for you to consider any misgivings you may have that would hinder your support of others to work flexibly. By measuring the uptake of flexible working and establishing a process for collecting feedback from anyone in a flexible working arrangement within your agency, you can foster a culture of continuous improvement. To understand how best to plan your change efforts relating to flexible work implementation (i.e. how to address current behaviours, beliefs, or practices), review PSC's range of Flexible Working Change Management Guides. It may be best to appoint a flexible working change lead who you can work with to understand and plan for change within your agency, to implement flexible working.
Drives the implementation and use of mechanisms to monitor uptake and attitudes toward flexible working	Ask your People Analytics team about available sources of data to understand your organisation's 'readiness' for flexible working change (i.e. your organisation's level of 'maturity'), as well as the success or otherwise of flexible working change initiatives over time (e.g. from these tools built by the PSC: Flexible Working Dashboard, People Matter Employee Survey, Flexible Implementation Tracker).

Leading change

The Leading change skillset is about the extent to which a leader:

Effectively manages resistance to change by respectfully challenging and working through diverse views	Consider providing employees with the opportunity to be formally mentored or coached in flexible working and change, particularly those who demonstrate resistance. Where you are not comfortable in taking on this role, identify appropriate flexible working champions who can act as mentors / coaches.
	Demonstrate and encourage divergent thinking about flexible working (i.e. generating a variety of ideas and responses to flexible working issues / looking at things from different points of view) – connect with a diverse range of people to facilitate this process (e.g. use networks to raise awareness and encourage sector-wide change).

Continuous improvement

The Continuous improvement skillset describes the extent to which a leader:

Takes a continuous improvement approach to flexible working that emphasises the use of trial periods, evaluation, and ongoing improvement	Use your agency's 'Flex Implementation Tracker' result as a conversation starter at the team / branch / division level, to plan improvement of flexible working implementation in your agency. Your HR team and / or People Analytics team will have access to the FIT results and be able to share these with you. If you need to gain insight into ways of embedding continuous improvement in your organisation, read Deloitte's paper 'Building a culture of continuous improvement in an age of disruption'. To understand how to model continuous learning in your own organisation, find and read a copy of Senge's book on the learning organisation: Senge, P. M. (2014). *The fifth discipline fieldbook: Strategies and tools for building a learning organization.* Crown Business.
Facilitates the implementation of lessons learned (in relation to flexible working), aligning this with the agency's broader strategy	When next developing new workplace strategies or approaches, familiarise yourself with flexible working insights and lessons learned. These could be gathered via employee surveys or focus groups, to check in with those most affected by the changes. Network with other agencies and peers to ask them what lessons they have learned from their own flexible working change processes.
	Ask your People Analytics team about available sources of data to understand your organisation's implementation of flexible working, as well as the success or otherwise of flexible working change initiatives over time (e.g. from these tools built by the PSC: Flexible Working Dashboard, People Matter Employee Survey, Flexible Implementation Tracker).
	If you are concerned that your agency may not be 100% ready to implement flexible working you can put in place formal trial periods for new or modified flexible working arrangements – these can be reviewed by yourself or line managers (e.g. at the 3 and 6-month mark). This will provide insight into how certain arrangements work in practice and whether they are likely to create practical difficulties for a team's department or the agency.

Continuous improvement

The Continuous improvement skillset describes the extent to which a leader:

Actively promotes flexible working innovations	Contribute to a regular company-wide blog, newsletter, Intranet updates to document and share valuable insights and 'lessons learned' with regards to flexible working.
Uses flexible working to drive better outcomes for the agency (e.g. greater productivity, enhanced motivation)	Use local employee surveys, or sector-wide people analytics tools to uncover issues affecting your agency's outcomes. Flexible working can be used to target specific problems, for example: - if you want to improve productivity or low employee engagement, satisfaction and motivation to go above and beyond, introduce a trial of condensed working hours or the ability to swap or split roster shifts, where possible, to assist employees to achieve better work / life balance; - if there are high levels of unscheduled absences, introduce a trial of employees working from home one or more days' per week, where possible; - if there are issues with talent attraction and retention issues, use job advertisements during the recruitment process to promote an employee value proposition that support flexible working- if your office costs are a problem, consider shifting to an agile work space. Foster a culture of continuous improvement within your agency by recognising flexible working innovations within team.

Workplace processes and support

The Workplace processes and support skillset is all about how confidently a leader:

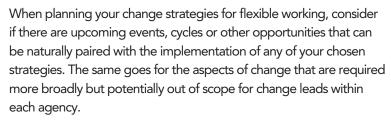|	
Advocates for safeguards to protect against work intensification resulting from flexible working (e.g. employees not "switching off")	To understand the link between flexible working and work intensification, read the article, '<u>Doing more with less</u>'.
	Think about how you might lower the potential for work intensification resulting from flexible working. These efforts can be aimed at stressors themselves (e.g. quantity of work) as well as things that might alleviate stress (e.g. emotional support, provision of additional resources, feedback).
Partners with HR / IT to develop effective solutions to issues that create barriers to flexible working (e.g. administrative, procurement, finance)	Ask your People Analytics team about available sources of data to understand the issues that may be creating barriers to flexible working (e.g. from these tools built by the PSC: <u>Flexible Working Dashboard, People Matter Employee Survey, Flexible Implementation Tracker</u>). Meet with IT/HR teams and discuss ways to overcome these.
	For insight into how to promote the adoption of technology and systems to enable flexible working in your agency, review PSC's '<u>Changing technology and systems' guide</u>.
	Monitor your own and others' interactions with the systems and processes set up around flexible working in your organisation (e.g. the initiation and set-up of flexible work arrangements). Keep a look out for areas of inefficiency or areas where they may be issues with usability or access. Partner with IT/HR to address these where appropriate.

The Workplace processes and support skillset is all about how confidently a leader:

Distinguishes between short vs. longer-term solutions to issues that create barriers to flexible working

When planning your change strategies for flexible working, consider if there are upcoming events, cycles or other opportunities that can be naturally paired with the implementation of any of your chosen strategies. The same goes for the aspects of change that are required more broadly but potentially out of scope for change leads within each agency.

For example, scheduled reviews of WHS or other policies, technology and systems updates, leadership training curricula development, industrial relations negotiations, compliance via procurement processes, organisational change or other sector reforms. An example is the recent GSE reforms that included a new performance management framework and mobility reforms, better enabling the uptake of flexible working.

Another opportunity for introducing change that supports flexible working is when contracts for service provision are being renegotiated, such as training providers, and employee self-service payroll and HR applications.

More difficult to tackle are amendments to industrial frameworks, or general/human resources and information technology systems. A policy-driven response may be the best first step in order to embed flexible working by end-2019, as you may find your agency's industrial negotiations may not conclude within this timeline, and the issues identified will vary by agency.

Outcomes-based leadership

Leaders who adopt Outcomes-based leadership:

Implement practices that ensure the outcomes produced by employees are valued more than the ways in which they are achieved (e.g. having a targeted discipline around performance planning and KPIs based on outcomes / outputs)	If you need to learn more about managing employee performance, read PSC's performance development framework and relevant guide(s).
	For information, insights, and directions on a broad range of leadership matters, including focusing on outcomes, review PSC's 'Senior Executive Fundamentals'.
	To understand the fundamental elements of Outcome Based Management, its relationship to strategy, ideas for development, and how agencies can apply it, review the WA Government sector Outcome-Based Management (OBM) Guidelines and associated links and resources.
	Read Gallup's article on outcome-based management and consider utilising some of the online resources.
Adjust deliverables and re-allocate work in view of employees' flexible working arrangements and ensure work intensification is managed	If you need to strengthen your understanding of how your teams can meet their deliverables whilst at the same time working flexibly, create opportunities to coach employees or managers as to effective ways of achieving this aim. That way, everyone learns together. Where you do not feel comfortable in doing this, consider other leaders or resources you can learn from or utilise as coaches / mentors in this area.
Coach others to meet their deliverables in the context of their flexible working arrangements	Review each position in your direct team – ensure that all positions have a framework of KPIs, targets, objectives etc., that cover your expectations of their work (e.g. quality, timing, efficiency) and ensure that these are directly linked with organisational goals and objectives. Schedule regular one on ones with team members to monitor progress and ensure that your communicated expectations are clearly understood and agreed on.
Confidently distinguish between core performance issues and flexible working arrangement issues	Critically evaluate your existing performance management framework / approach / tools and the criteria against which employees are appraised. Consider the extent to which criteria focuses on outcomes vs inputs, and the alignment between such criteria and desired outcomes, and also the ways in which this data is captured. Where certain criteria are misaligned, look for ways to foster closer alignment and measure this.

Team-based approach

The Team-based approach skillset is all about how well a leader:

Encourages employees to negotiate their flexible working arrangements with members of their team

For inspiration as to how you might draw on and implement your own team-based approaches to flexible working, access PSC's Mirvac case study.

To understand how flexible working can be approached from a team perspective, review the DCA's 'Future Flex' report, and associated material.

Creates opportunities for employees engaged in flexible working to collaborate with employees who are not (e.g. virtual or dispersed teams)

Consider ways you can improve your communication with other leaders or managers across timeframes and locations (e.g. for those working virtually or from other areas).

Review your current communication platforms for ways these might be improved and consider creating your own practices / principles around when face-to-face contact might be more effective or productive.

• How you will use technology such as videoconferencing, online project management tools and shared workspaces to facilitate collaboration;

• Identify any skill gaps such as how to run a meeting remotely (from both a technology and effective participation perspective) and make a plan for training.

• Develop a set of operating principles and protocols that everyone in the team must follow, whether their flexibility is ad hoc or longer-term.

Proactively involves others in decisions related to flexible working as far as possible, particularly when such decisions will impact them.

To understand how flexible working might work in your team or amongst other leaders, arrange a time to meet and discuss the needs of team members, how these might work together, and how traditional approaches could be adjusted or improved.

Discussions with your team may include:

• Scheduling time to talk through concerns that any team members may have, to address these and come up with solutions. During this session, respectfully challenge those who do not support it and establish if their concerns can be resolved through planning or team protocols.

• How performance targets will be agreed and maintained so that everyone clearly understands their role in relation to the team;

• How you will minimise impact on stakeholders and communicate expectations to stakeholders.

• How the arrangement(s) will be monitored and evaluated over time.

Team-based approach

The Team-based approach skillset is all about how well a leader:

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Proactively involves others in decisions related to flexible working as far as possible, particularly when such decisions will impact them.

If you want some exposure to involving others in decision making, exercise participatory leadership by openly sharing the information and knowledge necessary for making shared decisions. The next time an opportunity comes up for others to be involved in the making of an important decision, organise a forum / meeting with team members, depending on how significant the decision is. Facilitate the conversation, openly share knowledge, and encourage people to voice their ideas. Following the forum / meeting, synthesise all ideas and information suggested by the team, craft the solution that maximises the input of all team members, and communicate this back to the group.

Workforce and business design model

The Workforce and business design model skillset is all about how confidently a leader:

Engages in workforce planning to ensure team structures enable flexible working (e.g. right capability mix / structure)	For an overview of workforce planning, and to expand your knowledge of workforce planning tools, read CIPD's Workforce Planning Practice Guide. If you need to know how to drive change in workforce management processes to support flexible working, review PSC's 'Changing workforce management' guide. To understand ways of improving workforce planning and building leadership capability, as well as effective investment in the talent pipeline, review the WA PSC's 'Workforce and Diversity Planning' content.
	Organise a time to meet with other leaders to conduct a PESTLE analysis to gain insight into the alignment between your internal and the external labour market. This is an audit or external scan of an organisation's environmental influences that helps guide planning and strategic decision making.
Designs jobs differently to improve and / or make use of flexible working (e.g. hours of work, location of work)	For ideas on various aspects of the job redesign process, review EY's publication on 'Job redesign for flexibility'.
	Consider ways to foster job redesign where appropriate to facilitate flexible working via: • job rotation (e.g. shifting an employee from one job to another, relatively similar job), • job enlargement (increasing the scope of a job, not necessarily by introducing the need for new skills / abilities), • job simplification (breaking a job into sub-components / specialties and assigning these to different employees), or • job enrichment (providing employees with greater autonomy – i.e., greater scope for personal achievement, more responsibility etc).
Designs and modifies workflows to maximise the potential for employees to engage in flexible working	Encouraging managers and teams to make use of communication / collaboration platforms such as Trello or Smartsheet to improve workflows will also assist your employees to engage in flexible working.

Workforce and business design model

The Workforce and business design model skillset is all about how confidently a leader:

Uses non-traditional employment types and organisational structures to address workforce and business challenges (e.g. job share)	If you need to gain insight into the composition of your organisation's workforce, set up a meeting with senior HR leaders. Data and insights gained from this exchange will enable more effective and evidence-based workforce planning decisions and allow you to assess whether the capability mix and structure of teams within your organisation is conducive to flexible working.
	For example, if retention of employees is a trend for your agency, implement a flexible working strategy that supports individuals to better balance their work and personal wishes, to encourage loyalty to your agency.
Addresses unfeasible flexible work arrangements with employees in a supportive way	You can refuse a request to work flexibly when the employee will not be able to perform the role effectively, or the arrangement will prevent others from operating effectively. Use the role description and key responsibility areas as the basis for refusal. It is important to document your decision-making process to show how you genuinely reviewed the employee's proposal to work flexibly, including your rationale for why you believe the role cannot be done successfully under the proposal put forward.
	The PSC has identified a range of scenarios that should not be used to refuse a request. You cannot use the lack of a good reason as a ground for refusing the request or categorising one team member's request as 'more important' than another team member, except where the legislation gives them specific right to request. Requests can only be refused on operational grounds (i.e. by reference to their role description, key responsibilities and any performance criteria).

Throughout this guide, and in addition to materials produced by the PSC, reference is made to resources provided by several impactful agencies.

It is recommended that you regularly access the websites of the below agencies for reports, data, and other resources that might be relevant in your development of flexible working skills into the future:

• **Diversity Council of Australia (DCA):** peak body leading diversity and inclusion in the workplace; provides unique research, events and programs, curated resources and expert advice across all diversity dimensions (https://www.dca.org.au/).

• **Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA):** Australian Government statutory agency created by the Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012; responsible for promoting and improving gender equality in Australian workplaces (https://www.wgea.gov.au/).

• **PSC data sources related to flexible working:** The Flexible Working Dashboard App contains 2018 People Matter Employee Survey and workforce profile data. It will enable your agencies to more deeply analyse flexible work use, satisfaction and manager support in your agencies by a range of demographic or geographic factors, and to benchmark some of these scores against other agencies in your cluster, sector, and of a similar size. For the first time, agencies will be able to see correlational data between the employee survey and workforce profile data sets; specifically, the relationship between flexible working use and satisfaction, and paid unscheduled absence.

In the first half of 2019, this app will also be updated to include the results of the Flex Implementation Tracker (FIT) which was endorsed by the sector-wide flexible working implementation committee for launch in February. Similar to the employee data, the FIT will help agencies to compare the progress they have made in implementing flexible working relative to their peers, cluster and sector. Speak to your HR team, who typically have analytics access.