Manager Skills for Working Flexibly

Development Guide

Version 2.0, May 2019

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FLEXIBLE WORKING

NSW GOVERNMENT

Contents

Flexible Working Development Guide for Managers

Flexible working: The role of managers

The role of managers is to foster positive team dynamics, undertake resource planning and task allocation, and to coordinate and support team members to make the most of flexible working.

Managers discuss performance as part of reviewing employee flexible working arrangements, monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of flexible working arrangements, and ensure that flexible working continues to work for everyone: the employee, their team and for the business.

How to use this guide

Your *Flexible Working Self-Assessment Tool for Managers* 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.

Education

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

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.

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.

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)

Having flexible working awareness involves:

Promoting the various types of flexible working available to your team and drawing distinctions between what is / isn't flexible working (e.g. thinking beyond 'flex time')	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.	
Discussing with your team how we could use flexible working to help achieve strategies and targets, where known	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 understand how to implement flexible working at your agency. WGEA also has some excellent resources for managers understanding their role and how they can build a flexible working strategy.	
Promoting the benefits of flexible working to your team	To broaden the exposure of your teams to flexible working, set up forums or mechanisms for employees to discuss flexible working and raise concerns. This could feature as an agenda item in regular team meetings. Consulting with your whole team about how to work flexibly will help address any misconceptions and encourage take up.	
	Alternatively, you could get involved in the initiatives being rolled out in new areas of your agency, or with new audiences (including pilot programs). This is a great way to sharpen your lived experience with flexible working and promote the benefits to others.	
Knowing how to find reliable sources of advice when making important flexible working decisions	If you are feeling like you need more experience with flexible working you could volunteer to be involved in a task force or working group to explore flexible working issues (e.g. via internal or external projects). It is likely that any such group will be keen to get across the latest advice for making flexible working decisions.	

Having flexible working awareness involves:

Supporting your team to understand the processes involved in flexible working (e.g. requesting a flexible working arrangement, forms to complete etc.)	HR can help you understand how best to guide your employees through the processes related to flexible working (e.g. initiating a flexible working arrangement).
	Reviewing your agency's policies, processes, and practices around flexible working will help you understand your local flexible working context, and even identify areas for continuous improvement. Share your knowledge gained with other managers and employees to facilitate learning.
Challenging system-related barriers to flexible working (e.g. a timesheet system that does not allow for changing work days)	To better understand the flexible working trends within your agency, check your agency's flexible working employee data (e.g. Flexible Working Dashboard, People Matter Employee Survey, Flexible Implementation Tracker – find out who at your agency has responsibility for these and ask them to share the data with you). Think about how these might affect your team or how they relate to business needs, and consider discussing these with employees or other managers.
	Where your investigation uncovers pain points, or barriers to flexible working, raise these with HR to see if they have workaround suggestions, or offer to be part of a pilot to trial problem-solving strategies.

Fostering inclusion

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.

Fostering inclusion means that you:

Believe that all members of your team should have equal access to flexible working arrangements	The NSW State Government's priority to make all roles flex by 2019 includes a principle that everyone is able to request the types of flexibility that make sense within their roles but what it looks like will vary depending on the role.
	You cannot categorise one team member's request as 'more important' than another team member, except where the legislation gives them specific right to request or they could not otherwise do their job. Requests can only be refused on operational grounds (i.e. by reference to their role description, key responsibilities and any performance criteria).
	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.
Ensure that all members of your team have the same access to flexible working arrangements, regardless of their personal situation or context	There may be a situation where two employees' situations can't be accommodated at the same time. In this situation a manager will need to negotiate an outcome that takes into account need and fairness and try to still broker a solution that is agreeable to all. Involve both/all parties in the discussion: your team will be more likely to accept an outcome where they have participated in a consultative process, even if the outcome is not their first preference.

Fostering inclusion means that you:

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Ensure that all members of your team have the same access to flexible working arrangements, regardless of their personal situation or context

To better understand how promoting diversity and inclusion in the workplace meets business needs, read the PSC's 'A Conversation' report. If you are particularly interested to learn how you can become a more inclusive manager, read DCA's 'Building Inclusion' report.

Draw on available workplace data to understand how inclusive your agency is and the level of capability around inclusion amongst other managers, e.g. People Matter Employee Survey. Find out what is being done across the sector to promote diversity and inclusion.

Try to avoid any personal biases that might unfairly influence the flexible working decisions you make

There's nothing like confronting your own unconscious biases to keep them in check, so take the Harvard Implicit Association Test to uncover what yours may be. We all have them, so it's good to be aware of your own.

Sometimes the best way to shift the deeper beliefs and values we have is by being exposed to new ways and new ideas. Ask other managers to help you define what inclusion means for your role as a manager and for your teams, and to help you identify key indicators and outcomes for fostering a more inclusive workplace.

Seek out current or future immersive experiences, projects or assignments within your organisation (e.g. working in cross-functional / cross-national teams, engaging with specific diversity or social groups) to become more experienced in working with diverse groups.

Think about the team you manage and the extent to which they comprise a diverse mix of individuals (e.g. thought, demographics, gender, cultural background etc.). Where possible, try to create teams with a mix of capabilities and characteristics to foster a varied approach to flexible working, and also to foster inclusion, diversity, and innovative thinking.

If you would like to know how to support diversity in your workplace and how to be aware of your own unconscious bias in the way you manage teams, review DPC's 'Behavioural approaches to increasing workforce diversity' guide.

Creating the right environment is about:

Visibly role-modelling flexible working and work / life balance

Gone are the days when people with flexible working arrangements snuck out of the building to attend to their personal commitments. Employees and managers are now encouraged to share openly their access to flexible working and encourage others to also work flexibly.

Look for opportunities to role model your own flexible working arrangements, such as 'leaving loudly'. Some teams have even made a 'sport' out of it, setting targets and competing against each other to encourage everyone to participate, if it makes sense. One example is the Department of Premier and Cabinet competition to change employee start and finish times.

Encourage and welcome feedback from peers and other employees regarding what is / isn't working to create a positive flexible working culture in your team. 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 advocated for or been involved in.

Think about how your team could work differently to facilitate flexible working (i.e., access to break-out spaces for collaboration and to minimise disruption, rotation between workstations, working from home etc.). Set up a meeting with the appropriate leader or HR partner to discuss what processes to put in place so that you continue to function well as a team.

Creating the right environment

Creating the right environment is about:

Sharing positive messages in discussions about flexible working, and calling out success stories to reinforce effective use of flexible working

To understand how to create a culture within your team that fosters openness and transparency around flexible working (from the perspective of managers and employees), review Gallup's article on flexible working.

Make use of communication / collaboration platforms within your organisation to share flexible working success stories, outcomes of team and managerial-level discussions regarding flexible working, and the tips and tricks of flexible working etc.

Make flexible working an agenda item at managerial and team level meetings. Where possible, network with managers across the sector to learn how they have created positive flexible working cultures. Topics to discuss include, 'How to use flexible working', or 'How is flexible working used in each agency or team?', 'What are the parameters and protocols that work effectively in each agency or team?', 'What is team-based design and how do you use it to negotiate flexible working arrangements?', or 'How do teams stay productive when they are working flexibly?', for example.

Try to stay up-to-date about flexible working initiatives taking place in your agency and, where possible, support your team to become early adopters or participate in pilot programs.

Courageous conversations

Having courageous conversations means that you:

Confidently discuss the inherent requirements of a role or operational needs to address an unfeasible or ineffective flexible working arrangement

You can refuse a request to work flexibly when the team member 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 to address the issues.

To gain insight into the sorts of questions employees might ask about flexible working, and how best to respond, review WGEA's 'Employee Flexibility Toolkit', particularly Section 2 around 'requesting flexibility'. The toolkit will also help you understand common concerns that might surface for managers during such conversations and what solutions employees are likely to present you with.

If you would like to sharpen your skills in having difficult discussions that result in ethically informed and effective decisions, review PSC's 'Difficult discussions' guide.

The Fair Work Ombudsman has developed a Manager's guide to difficult conversations in the workplace and the Queensland Government has developed a managers guide to encouraging flexible work conversations.

All these should help you know how to have effective conversations about flexible working arrangements.

Are comfortable having conversations with team members, leaders and managers who may express scepticism or resistance towards flexible working arrangements

Read through the Personas and flexible working misgivings sections of the PSC website to arm yourself with strategies and information to combat resistance, and to guide team discussions about flexible working and their mindsets.

If you need ideas about changing mindsets, or building awareness, knowledge and advocacy around flexible working across your agency, review PSC's 'Changing communication and awareness' and 'Changing culture and mindsets' guides.

If you need help challenging resistance to flexible working in your workplace, PSC's 'Behaving Ethically' guide has a helpful chapter about having 'Difficult Discussions'.

Courageous conversations

Having courageous conversations means that you:

Are comfortable having conversations with team members, leaders and managers who may express scepticism or resistance towards flexible working arrangements

If offered, attend any formal training sessions or programs relating to flexible working and / or negotiation skills more specifically.

Explore your organisation's processes, practices, and policies around flexible working; this information will ensure you are informed about how to implement flexible working in the local context and is likely to provide you with insight into the most common ways to approach flexible working conversations with leaders and other managers.

Discuss all possible flexible working options with team members before approving or declining a request

Where you have reservations about a flexible working conversation you know is coming up with a member of your team, consider role-modelling / practicing this conversation with another, trusted manager. Ask for considered feedback on your approach.

Or, set up an informal meeting with another manager in your organisation who you know has recently negotiated a new flexible working arrangement with an employee. How did they find the process? Was there anything they missed in their preparation that might have been helpful? What sort of questions are you likely to be asked? What were the key factors that contributed to them approving or declining a request?

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).

Workplace processes and supports

The Workplace processes and supports skillset is how you:

Allocate work so that business outcomes are reached, and your team has access to fair and equitable flexible working arrangements

If you need some help with managing workflows and work allocation within your team there are multiple work in process platforms such as Trello and Smartsheet that can create clear tasks with timelines and responsibilities. These tools provide visibility so that everyone can see what each other is working on, which can be helpful when your team is working flexibly and not in the same place at the same time.

Put safeguards in place to protect against work intensification resulting from flexible working (e.g. employees not 'switching off')

Encourage your team to monitor their workload and flexible working arrangements over time (e.g. greater number of hours of work, greater work effort during work hours). They could do this by tracking work activity in a calendar / diary and comparing it to what it was like before they started working flexibly. Discuss possible remedies (including team-based solutions) with team members and help them draw clear boundaries that help them separate work from non-work time (i.e. when they are vs. are not available).

Encourage them to consider removing work email access from their phone if they are finding it particularly hard to switch off when not at work, on weekends or when on leave.

Trial new flexible working arrangements with members of your team to identify opportunities or issues, and follow up on these

Consider how failures, mistakes, and mishaps are treated in your organisation; be conscious of how you handle these when they happen. Creating an environment where employees feel safe to try new things can foster learning and innovation. Increasing transparency is one aspect of this process so consider setting up a forum for your team members to share ideas and their lessons learnt.

Encourage "fast failures". If your employees know they are going to try a new way of working flexibly, suggest that they create an outline or skeleton to discuss and provide feedback before going ahead with the change.

Develop effective solutions to issues that create barriers to flexible working (e.g. IT systems)

Meet with IT/HR teams to understand issues that may be creating barriers to flexible working (these could be identified through the People Matter Employee Survey or you could find out who in your agency has access to the Flexible Working Dashboard data) and discuss ways to find workarounds to overcome these.

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). Look for areas of inefficiency or areas where there may be issues with usability or access.

Outcome- and trust-based management

Outcome- and trust-based management is how you:

Focus on the outcomes produced by team members more than how, where and/or when they are achieved

It is important managers can find ways of measuring productivity when team members are not visibly present in the workplace. Outcomes-focused performance management involves[1]:

Establishing accountability – flexibly working teams often need greater transparency about the work being done across the team, and this can help ensure accountability.

Building in autonomy – flexibility often means that employees will work more autonomously. Research and experience clearly show that when employees are given greater autonomy to decide how they achieve work outcomes, they work more productively and are more engaged.

Discussing performance as part of reviewing flexibility arrangements – Employees need clear, factual feedback about how they're tracking in relation to performance objectives. Discussions should focus on objective, observable facts. If a results-based management framework is in place, there will be clear and readily-accessible information about the person's performance to hand.

Celebrating and recognising success – Reward good performance, especially when the excellent outcomes were met working flexibly. Not only does rewarding good performance contribute to stronger results, it also improves morale and employee engagement.

Critically review your agency's framework, approach and the tools used to evaluate the performance of employees. Consider the extent to which the criteria focus on outcomes vs inputs. Ensure that employee performance is being assessed based on the outcomes they produce, rather than the ways in which they are produced.

[1] WGEA Manager Flexibility Toolkit: https://www.wgea.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/42373_manager_flexibility_toolkit.pdf

Outcome- and trust-based management

Outcome- and trust-based management is how you:

Clearly articulate the outcomes and standards expected from their team, ensuring these align with organisational goals and objectives

A performance plan will help identify what the employee's performance is being measured against, i.e. what are the specific goals or key performance indicators (KPIs) that both you and your employee have agreed will be met, and by when. A performance plan will also assist you to monitor and evaluate how the arrangement is working over time when you meet with team members one-on-one for regular check ins.

To better 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: https://www.gallup.com/workplace/235961/outcome-based-managers-focus-people-finish-line.aspx

Are objective when deciding whether performance issues are due to capability, conduct, flex arrangement or other reasons

It is important to remember that an employee's poor performance isn't necessarily because they have a flexible working arrangement. The range of causes of poor performance should be identified and addressed, including a strategy for how the employee can adjust the way they work to more effectively meet their KPIs, what supports or training they may need, and what type of flexible working will complement this strategy.

Effectively manage virtual and dispersed teams where these exist

Create opportunities to coach employees (or other managers if approached) about effective ways of meeting deliverables within the context of their flexible working arrangements.

Use the Manager conversation guide to fine-tune your skills of managing virtual teams. You can find it on the PSC website.

If you need to learn how to host or participate in a virtual meeting, Slack has put together a helpful 'ultimate guide to remote meetings'. The Google 'Distributed work playbook' is also a helpful guide for teams working remotely, to assist with collaboration.

If you want to learn more about managing employee performance, read PSC's performance development framework and relevant guide(s).

Team cohesion

Building team cohesion means that you:

Adopt a team-based approach, where flexible work arrangements are negotiated collaboratively between team members	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 learn how flexible working can be approached from a team perspective, review the DCA's 'Future Flex' report, and associated material.
Create opportunities for team members engaged in flexible working to collaborate with those who are not (e.g. virtual teams)	The next time an opportunity comes up for your team members to be involved in a new project that could be done flexibly, organise an informal meeting to share knowledge and allow people to voice their ideas. Develop a shared overall approach, parameters and guidelines for flexibility with the team. It is important to agree on the processes for communication if employees are working away from the office; i.e. home, hub, another government office. What is the process for team meetings? Can these be scheduled on a day that everyone is working from the office? How will the team use email, Skype, WhatsApp, phone conferencing etc. How might the structure of meetings change to get the most out of the 'connected' time? Further ideas for developing team protocols around flexible working are listed in the Managers Guide to Flexible Working, on the PSC website.
Train your team in flexible working practices so they can work together effectively	Help your team to succeed in their role and flexible working arrangements by developing protocols that assist everyone to clearly understand the expectations and responsibilities around working flexibly. Making sure your team members know what the agency's flexible working policy and practices are from the start to help everyone stay on the same page.
	Consider ways you can improve your communication with employees and/or other managers across timeframes and locations (e.g. for those working virtually or from other areas) using IT platforms. Where possible, test these approaches through involvement in pilot initiatives. In saying this, recognise when face-to-face contact might be more appropriate.
Involve team members in decisions related to flexible working by seeking out and providing feedback to the team, particularly when they are affected by the decisions being made	Facilitate team sessions / meetings to discuss employees' various flexible working arrangements and the ways in which these can be coordinated to make sure deliverables are met at the same time as maximising flexible working for everyone. Encourage negotiation and compromise during these meetings to 'health check' team cohesion and promote healthy and open interactions between team members.

Delegation & trust

Delegation and trust involves:

Equitably and fairly delegating tasks to team members to enable flexible working for all	If you would like to gain insight into strategies for effective delegation, read the Harvard Business Review article 'To be a great leader, you have to learn how to delegate well'.
	When delegating tasks to members of your team, ensure you provide a brief overview of the context and importance of these tasks. Make your instructions straightforward and put them in writing when you are not physically present, to brief employees. Consult with your team to make sure the workplan you have developed matches the flexible working arrangements in place.
Trusting team members to strike an effective balance between their workload and flexible working arrangements	Review each position in your team – ensure that all roles have clearly defined KPIs, targets, objectives etc., so that your performance expectations are clear to your team (e.g. quality, timing, efficiency); use online project-management tools available to you to maintain visibility of these and related issues.
	If not already in place, consider ways to enhance the visibility of your team members' availability and enable flexible working (e.g. calendar-sharing, visible display of employees' 'in' vs. 'out of office' days, inclusion of flexible working days / arrangements in employees' email signatures).
	When everyone is clear on what is to be achieved, you can step back and trust your team to get on with the work. Regular check ins to monitor progress and assist with trouble shooting will help you know if everyone is still on track. Most employees want to succeed and achieve their goals; creating a trusting environment will foster productivity and a willingness to go 'above and beyond', evidenced by the People Matter Employee Survey data which links access to flexible working with performance indicators.
	Build trust with your team by intentionally getting to know them, fostering transparency (e.g. updating the team on significant developments in your agency), and demonstrating vulnerability (e.g. embracing and learning from mistakes or otherwise). By role-modelling your own flexible working arrangement your team will see that you actively promote and encourage flexible working, and can trust that they can do it too.

Solving business problems skillset means that you can:

Consider the business need for flexible working and use this in negotiating flexible working arrangements with team members

Flexible working can lead to greater employee buy-in and commitment to the organisation and its goals, greater productivity, a more compelling employee value proposition (which may assist agencies to attract and retain talent), office cost savings and support for greater diversity in the workplace.

If you need to better understand how flexible working responds to the business need within the government sector, read the PSC 'Make Flexibility Count' Framework.

To understand how to use business metrics to develop your agency's own business case for flexible working, review WGEA's guide for building a flexibility business case.

It might be helpful to get in touch with your HR team to understand your agency-specific metrics for developing a business case for flexible working and to gain access to these; there may be some data you would like to access that requires time for collection / development.

When meeting with employees who may be requesting new or modified flexible working arrangements, come prepared with an overview of the business need and business benefits of flexible working to your organisation, as well as a clear picture of the business goals and targets. Ensure you take all these into account when negotiating flexible working arrangements so that it continues to work for everyone, including the business.

Solving business problems

Solving business problems skillset means that you can:

Draw on flexible working to provide solutions to business problems (e.g. for hard to fill roles)

When next filling a role or redesigning your team structure, consider whether flexible working could provide solutions to business challenges, including team design, role filling or improving the attractiveness of a role.

You can foster job redesign to facilitate flexible working through:

- changing, where, when or how the work is done (re-shape the job to include at least one of these, to suit the employee)
- 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).

Find out who in your agency has log in access to the Flexible Work Dashboard, Flexible Implementation Tracker, or People Matter Employee Survey data (usually an HR team member) and ask if they can discuss the results with you so that you can understand issues related to uptake and perceptions of flexible working, productivity and engagement, employee wellbeing etc. Knowing what these are testing for can guide how you manage a flexible working team.

Monitoring and evaluation involves:

Encouraging team members to identify improvements to their flexible working arrangements in line with the changing nature of work	Put in place formal trial periods for members of your team engaging in new or modified flexible working arrangements (e.g. review at the 3 or 6-month mark). This will provide insight into how certain arrangements work in practice and whether they are likely to create practical difficulties for your team and / or Agency. It also build a level of agility into the arrangement, as any updates in business plans / strategic plans that impact on an employee's flexible working arrangement can be renegotiated after this time, to continue to work for everyone.
	If you need to better understand what continuous improvement means for your agency, read Deloitte's paper, 'Building a culture of continuous improvement in an age of disruption'.
	If you want to go a bit deeper in your understanding of how to model continuous learning in your agency, 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.
	What are the ways you can recognise members of your team who demonstrate positive flexible working behaviours (e.g. role-modelling flexible working, positive story-telling etc.)? How might flexible working innovations be recognised and / or rewarded?
Working with HR to encourage completion of surveys and data collection	The People Matter Employee Survey provides an important opportunity for almost 400,000 employees in the NSW government sector to have a say about their workplace and to help make the government sector a better place to work. The data gathered in the survey informs the sector-wide implementation of flexible working. Read key insights on the PSC website.
	When next developing new workplace strategies or approaches, familiarise yourself with flexible working insights and lessons learned. These could be both from within your organisation or from other organisations and peers. The PSC pulse surveys will assist you to do this.

Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation involves:

Making use of metrics to understand the impacts of flexible working on the business (e.g. turnover, unplanned leave, time to hire, engagement)

How could you use your Agency's IT / systems to document and share valuable insights and 'lessons learned' for flexible working in your team (e.g. incorporate into regular team meetings, email updates, online team forum)? Your team members may have more ideas.

Ensure important flexible working decisions are data-driven so that you can track improvements over time and how your agency compares with other similar agencies in the sector.

This might be achieved via reviews of the <u>Flexibility Implementation Tracker assessment(s) / Flexible Working Dashboard / People Matter Employee Survey data</u> – locate the person in your agency's HR team who has access to this data and ask them to share it with you so that you can track the trends over time: has there been an improvement in rates of turnover, unplanned leave, time to hire, engagement and other indicators of a productive workplace, since the introduction of new policies and practices around flexible working?

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.