



Make Flexibility Happen

How to implement flexible working in your organisation

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FLEXIBLE WORKING

Step 1	
Build leadership buy-in	3
<hr/>	
Step 2	
Scope and plan your program of work	7
<hr/>	
Step 3	
Launch your flexible working initiatives	15
<hr/>	
Step 4	
Introduce the change slowly, and trial it	17
<hr/>	
Step 5	
Measure your progress and evaluate its impact	19
<hr/>	
Step 6	
Integrate flexible working into BAU processes	21
<hr/>	
Appendix	24

1.1 Why you need to do this

The NSW Government has made a policy commitment to ensure that all roles in the government sector can be flexible on an 'if not, why not' basis by 2019. While agency CEOs are responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented, how your agency decides to implement it is the first step. If you have been tasked with the work of implementing flexible working across your agency, this means engaging your agency's leadership first, to determine what flexibility will look like in your agency and how you will make it happen.

While not motivated by shareholder returns or a profit motive, there is increasing pressure on public sector organisations to consistently improve the productivity, quality and efficiency of their services, and leadership teams are keenly aware of this.

Introducing a change such as flexible working needs to be anchored in how it will help your agency to successfully address a number of significant business challenges, and you will need to work closely with each member of your executive to further translate how it will help each division.

Find your organisation's motivation to change and how flexible working is connected to strategic priorities, such as:

- Demographic shifts (such as a large percentage of skilled workforce who are ageing, or an inability to attract a younger workforce)
- Office space costs or changes to activity-based working
- Increasing engagement with work and/or organisation
- Wellbeing initiatives
- Geographic challenges, especially if your location is changing and staff have expressed concern about commuting
- Improving recruitment quality or resourcing hard to fill roles
- Diversity goals, including an increasing proportion of people with disability in the workforce
- The need to have a workforce that looks, thinks and feels like the community it serves, in order to design and deliver effective service
- Improving your employee value proposition, and ability to attract the right people to the right roles at the right time.

1.2 What you need to do

First, you need to build the **case for change**. Think about which of your agency's strategic priorities will your flexible working strategy address? Seek time to speak at your agency's Executive meeting. Use the time to think about and present the business need for the change to flexible working, and why it makes sense for your organisation to move towards an 'if not, why not' approach. Draw on case studies or visit executives from similar organisations, to research what is possible. Working with your executives to diagnose the problem will build buy-in to take it further.

Your initial conversation will likely only garner in-principle support for further investigation and a scope of the resources, timing and effort involved, and/or you may be required to go back with further information. It may also surface some valid concerns that will need resolving about how to make it work.

Further, some executives and people managers at all levels can enter these discussions carrying biases of their own, for example:

- an assumption that it can never be done in their service (even if it is being done now, they may be working from a default perception that it only means working from home)
- that it's 'one more thing to think about' rather than a business enabler
- that it will disrupt service, although the policy commitment is very clear that this cannot be the case
- that it requires a significant change to industrial arrangements, technology or work design. While these things may or may not be required longer term, much can be improved within the current environment simply by adopting the principle that anyone can ask, for any reason.

Every workforce will likely have a different menu of flexible options, and for those with less options due to the operational requirements of their roles, access is often as much about building managerial capability and addressing perceptions about who gets to use it as it is about technology or industrial agreements. Executives can share these concerns as much as line managers.



Surfacing these concerns and scoping the effort required provide your next steps, and may include a more rigorous diagnosis of the case for change to ensure that all levels of your organisation are included, and a more diverse range of opinions can emerge, to influence your leadership buy-in.

Before you commence project scope, however, you will need clear endorsement from your entire leadership team, and an agreed vision for what it will look like in your agency. Meet individually with each executive involved to surface any concerns they may have, or gauge support and a willingness to sponsor and/or champion the work. Encourage them to openly discuss their perspectives on flexible working, and explore any operational impacts.

Once you have a good handle on individual perspectives, then convene a short workshop with them to develop and articulate your organisation's vision for flexible working, based on the six principles espoused in the [Make Flexibility Count](#) strategic framework.

You can also use the [personas](#) and [misgivings](#) to encourage discussion about the dilemmas that exist, and openly discuss concerns. It is important this discussion lands on a shared understanding of your organisation's appetite for risk and doing things differently, as this will dictate the nature of your program of work. They may want to really explore and experiment, or they may want to focus on just ensuring that everyone is aware of their flexible working options and are free to use them for any reason—this is still a significant achievement.

When scoping your project you also need your executive to be very clear on the individual roles and goals of everyone involved - executives and project leads, what success will look like, and any expectations they may have on updates and progress.

Once you've received clear agreement on how flexible working will look and feel in your agency, it gives you a stronger footing to start scoping a program of work with resourcing. Another important step is to secure an executive sponsor to help you to steer through any further executive signoff or reporting required.

1.3 Resources at your disposal

All resources listed are available on the PSC Flexible Working website, unless specified otherwise.

Resources available	How they will help
<u>Influencing leaders toolkit—building an organisational vision</u>	This is a toolkit that helps you to build the case for change to present to your senior leadership team. Included are resources for delivering a workshop to your senior leadership team to confirm a vision for flexible working in your agency.
<u>Personas</u>	These capture current perspectives of flexible working and suggest ways the mindsets could be shaped to better support flexible working.
<u>Misgivings</u>	These capture the fears and dilemmas that people have about flexible working. Use the misgivings, and the suggested responses provided to prep yourself so you can effectively address them in your presentation or when you hear them. Your initial executive engagement will surface many of these, and later employee engagement will likewise.
<u>Workforce and PSC data</u>	<p>Where possible, use your own agency's workforce data to gather supporting evidence for your initial case to your executive. Draw on demographic, recruitment, workforce planning, strategy, diversity or recruitment data or interviews, where you know a challenge exists. Alternately, link it to any significant change initiatives already underway that will enable flexible working, or vice versa (such as new technology or a change in headquarters/move to activity-based working).</p> <p>The PSC has released analysis on its website that provides data on the links between flexible working and higher engagement, employee job satisfaction and willingness to go above and beyond. It also displays the correlation between flexible working use and satisfaction, and rates of lower unplanned leave, a significant cost saving. You can use this if your agency is too small to produce data to support a similar conclusion.</p> <p>Each NSW government sector agency has access to a PSC flexible working Dashboard to test if this data also holds for their own organisation, and explore more: contact PSC_WorkforceDashboard@psc.nsw.gov.au if you are unsure who in your agency holds the login, or if you need help deciphering the results.</p>
<u>Organisational case studies of best practice</u>	Case studies of public and private sector organisations who have successfully introduced flexible working and resolved challenges along the way; for example, Qantas, Mirvac, BHP, The Women's Hospital, NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet and the Reserve Bank of Australia.

Scope and plan your program of work

2.1 Why you need to do this

After your leadership team has agreed on the implementation need, the next step is to develop your project plan having scoped the changes and work required.

Conduct a **needs assessment** to determine who needs the project, how great the need is, and what might work to meet this need, in order of priority. Use data such as your Flex Implementation Tracker (FIT) or employee survey results findings to develop and therefore determine your priorities. Check the **Priorities Assessment Template** on page 11 for clear guidance on how to prioritise.

In order to gain the funding and resourcing required, you will have to plan out a program of change across the five different dimensions outlined in Make Flexibility Count to reach the 'embedded' state required:



Culture & Mindsets

The underlying beliefs, assumptions, values and ways of working that support or hinder the uptake of flexible working.



Skills & Experience

The confidence and ability of leaders, managers and staff to lead, manage and use flexible working options.



Communications & Awareness

The awareness, knowledge and advocacy of flexible working and its benefits.



Workforce Management

The utilisation of workforce management processes to integrate and support flexible working.



Technology & Systems

The adoption of technology, systems, support and policy that enable flexible working.

Each of these areas will require its own project plan aimed at influencing change across the five key areas. Follow the advice in each guide to pull together your overarching organisational change strategy for flexible working. This may sit as a standalone campaign, or within a larger organisational transformational program of work (e.g. a move to activity-based working).

When planning your change strategies consider if there are upcoming events, cycles or other organisational change opportunities that can be naturally paired with the implementation of any of your chosen strategies.

2.2 What you need to do

Your organisation's current state in each of these areas can be gauged from its most recent Flexibility Implementation Tracker (FIT) result. This will identify the work to be done, and your organisation's progress against it. If your organisation does not have a FIT result, [access the FIT tool from the PSC website](#), as it can help inform the decisions made on what to do and how to prioritise.

Next, develop a **project plan** or project logic for each of the key areas listed above. This should scope the deliverables/outcomes, timing, stakeholders, resourcing, and funding required to move towards an 'embedded' state for flexible working. Use your organisation's preferred project management methodology and approach, including templates and reporting, or see the examples we've provided on page 14 and in the appendix. Make sure you assign clear roles and responsibilities to the activities so that the right people know what is required of them, and when they need to report back on progress. Think strategically about who you invite to participate in the project team—a diversity of employees based on capabilities, roles/seniority and experiences will set you up for a shared vision and ownership of the change.

At the end of this process you should have a clear picture of how and why the project will produce the expected outcomes, which will help you **evaluate** your project at identified checkpoints along the way. Decide on what these checkpoints will be as part of your project plan. Will you conduct evaluations when each activity has been delivered, or will you schedule in regular meetings to evaluate the project throughout the project's timeframe?

There are several factors that can be measured to determine if your project is successful:

- **Effectiveness:** the extent to which a project or intervention meets its objectives.
- **Efficacy:** the ability to produce a desired or intended result.
- **Outputs:** the direct products or services resulting from a project; for example, the establishment of a learning program to build flexible working skills for managers.
- **Outcomes:** the results or effects of a program and the changes that occur in attitudes, values, behaviours or conditions. Outcomes may be short, medium or long-term. An example of a short-term outcome is that an agency's flexible working policy is refreshed. A longer-term outcome is that every employee has a laptop, when previously laptops were provided in an ad hoc way.
- **Impact:** the longer-term outcomes of a program. Impact may be positive, negative or neutral; intended or unintended.

Scope and plan your program of work

Planning an evaluation before a project is implemented can strengthen the rationale for the program, improve the design of the program, and increase the power of the evaluation.

This includes articulating evaluation questions and who will be involved in the evaluation process. Ideally, evaluators should be engaged during the formative stage to ensure that programs are designed in such a way that they can be evaluated.

You will also need to develop a change management plan that assesses your organisation's readiness for change, likely points of resistance or risk, advocates or champions who can help and how you might work with them, and how you will measure progress and adjust your change course where needed.

This may involve an assessment of recent change successes and failures, to understand 'what works' in your context; whether or not the timing of your change plan is sensible based on factors such as staff morale or competing demands; and whether or not there are any constraints, or shortfalls in capacity or capability to deliver the change.

All of these processes are outlined in more detail in the [PSC digital change playbooks](#) for each of the change dimensions listed above, and are addressed directly by in the FIT.

You will quickly find that you cannot achieve everything you identify in the time or resources that you will receive. Focus instead on what you can achieve within existing frameworks, and what will take a longer timeframe to unlock real change and opportunity (often driven by newer technology, or an evolution in the industrial instruments in place).

This is fine; for flexible working, even making it democratically accessible and normal to use in your existing structures is significant achievement enough, let alone tackling the biases that every organisation embodies around who gets to use it and their need to provide a reason to access flexible working.

The key consideration is finding the right mix in your program of work to successfully embed flexible working. This generally comprises of:

- quick wins that mostly emphasise change at the individual level (raising awareness and engagement);
- medium-term efforts that usually encompass changing current HR and recruitment practices used by line managers, which is absolutely necessary to embed flexibility as a way of working within the current technological or industrial limitations (see the Workforce Management change guide for help here);
- and then the longer term changes (most often found in the 'thankless task' quadrant) that will need starting now, will take longer to deliver, but may need to evolve to truly embed flexibility as a way of working, and better respond to the work of the future—most often these are technological or can sometimes be industrial.

Set specific realistic goals for change and build employee participation into your change plan, to share the load and encourage collaboration. Once you have received the authorisations needed to commence your project, it's time to launch flexible working in your organisation.

As your first step, convene a working group drawing from your ICT, Human Resources, Industrial Relations and Organisational Development teams to monitor progress and trouble shoot. Set up regular checkpoints with your executive sponsor as well to keep them engaged in the progress of the project.

2.3 Resources at your disposal

Resources available

How they will help

Flexibility Implementation Tracker (FIT)

This excel-based tool helps your organisation to self-assess how much progress it has made in embedding a culture of flexibility.

Every agency in the NSW Government sector has to complete one of these in order to report to the Public Service Commissioner on their progress. Use the latest results to build your project and change plans, as they can then be focused on how to move to the next level needed, or embed for continuous improvement. Locate the person in your agency's HR team who has access to this data and ask them to share it with you.

Change playbooks

These outline the simple, four-step process you can follow to effect change in each of the five dimensions needed to embed a culture of flexible working (i.e. communications, culture, capability, workforce management and information technology).

There are PDFs on the PSC website of the full change guides, or you can use a digital version to customise one to your organisation's latest FIT result.

PSC Diversity and Inclusion Forum

To share best practice with other flex work leads across the sector, as well as other D&I professionals.

The PSC has recordings on its webpage of past events (such as flexible working, disability and ageing workforces, job share and private sector perspectives).

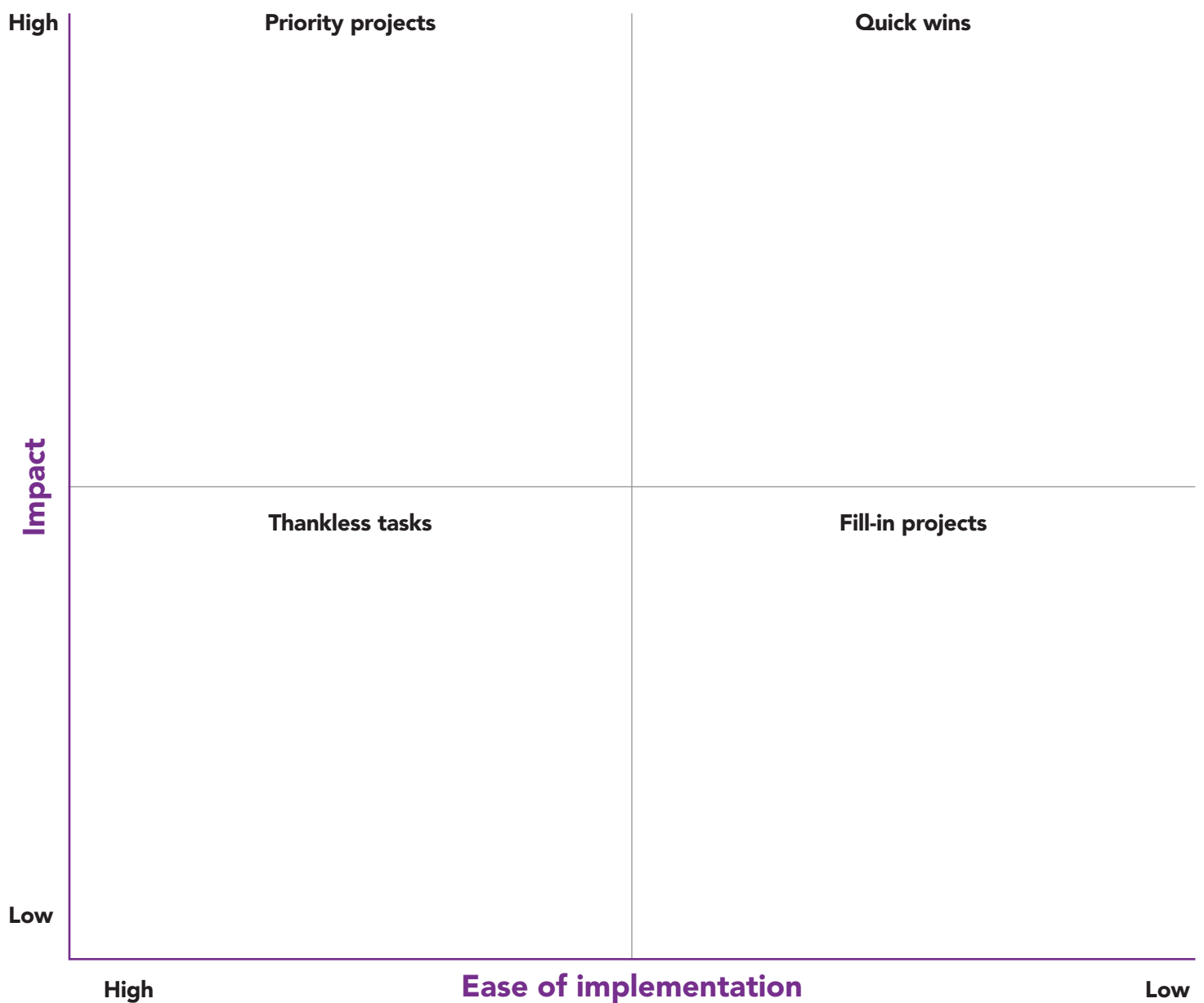
PSC flexible working hub

Email flexible.working@psc.nsw.gov.au to join a series of discussion boards, webinars and share resources with other agencies.

Priorities Assessment Template

Write your strategies in the appropriate quadrant. Use the 'Prioritisation criteria prompts' to assist in the assessment of 'impact' and 'ease of implementation'.

See page 12 and 13 for a more detailed explanation of how to use this tool.



Explanation of Priorities Assessment Template

	Impact	Ease of implementation
Low	<p>Strategy has 'low' impact if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits will only be realised by a small portion of the agency's workforce. • It will deliver little change impact to embedding flexible working on an organisational level. • Benefits are likely to have a short-term impact only. • Benefits have low likelihood of success. • Has poor strategic alignment to desired outcomes in recent FIT assessment. • It will help workforce feel more comfortable with adopting or integrating flexible work in their teams. 	<p>Strategy has 'low' ease of implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is insufficient resourcing to execute (currently or in the foreseeable future). • There is access to the appropriately skilled people to execute (currently or in the foreseeable future). • Stakeholders engagement is likely to be low. • Funding is readily available / not required / will be easily attainable. • There is low implementation risk. • Processes and technology are in place to execute and/or changes to processes and technology are complicated.
High	<p>Strategy has 'high' impact if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits will be realised by a large portion of the agency's workforce. • It will deliver wide change impact to embedding flexible working on an organisational level. • Benefits will be sustainable and long-lived. • Benefits have high likelihood of success. • Has poor strategic alignment to desired outcomes in recent FIT assessment. • It will help workforce feel more comfortable with adopting or integrating flexible work in their teams. 	<p>Strategy has 'high' ease of implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is sufficient resourcing to execute (currently or in the foreseeable future). • There is access to the appropriately skilled people to execute (currently or in the foreseeable future). • Stakeholders are readily / easily engaged. • Funding is readily available / not required / will be easily attainable. • There is low implementation risk. • Processes and technology are in place to execute and/or changes to processes and technology are non-complex.

Scope and plan your program of work

Example

Changing Workforce Management

Impact	<p>High</p> <p>Priority projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing organisation-wide employee value proposition (EVP). • Capability training for managers in flexible working role design and performance management. • Roundtable discussions with execs and managers to understand challenges in applying flexible working and provide support. 	<p>Quick wins</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updating existing job ads, recruitment practices and interview guidelines to drive flexible working. • Manager support for flex working practices, including conversation guides. • Improve access to communications for remote working employees. • Update onboarding practices for new employees for flexible working. 	
	<p>Low</p>	<p>Thankless tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remote working WHS tools i.e. processes which are too intrusive for remote working employees. • Reviewing and updating work policies to emphasize flexible working elements. 	<p>Fill-in projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating standard flexible work role designs—e.g. job sharing. • Improving handover between old and new managers around flexible working arrangements.
	High	Ease of implementation	Low

Flexible Working Workforce Management Change Plan Template - check the appendix for examples

Strategy	Target Stakeholders	Sponsorship
Name the strategy and area of focus (e.g. attraction or retention).	Who is the target of the strategy? You may consider front-line vs operations staff, different divisions and demographics of your workforce. How should we involve these stakeholders?	Which level of leadership should we engage? What are the governance arrangements and control mechanisms required to monitor execution of delivery?
Timeline		
Activities (including communications)		
Milestones & Measures		
Funding	Roles/responsibilities	Barriers
What is the funding required to carry out activities and build new ways of working? Consider both once-off and ongoing costs.	How is your team structured? Who can you work with internally and externally to help you deliver?	What are some key barriers and how can we overcome these to achieve outcomes?

Launch your flexible working initiatives

3.1 What you need to do

Now it is time to start building awareness and buy-in at all levels of your organisation. While consultation during your project plan will reveal what work will likely need to be done, it is in this phase that you will begin to work most collaboratively with your colleagues to make it happen.

This will be the most communications-heavy piece phase of your work, but while your communications strategy and tools and resource development is integral to raising awareness, it will have limited effect in driving change. Permanent changes in beliefs and behaviours require support in explaining not just the what and why, but also the 'how to do it', i.e. support in using all of these things. We'll address this further in Section 4.

3.2 How you can do it

The first step is to use the work already done with your executive team to communicate your organisation's case for change, and vision for what flexible working will look like in your context, and cascade that to lower levels of management. It's crucial that your leadership team provide visible, consistent support for this vision, and refer to it at every possible organisational event, whether by referencing their own flexible working arrangements, or recognising how it has helped a team or an individual to be more effective at their role.

Consider which all staff meetings, staff development days or intranet sites you can use to launch your coming initiatives and call for volunteers for involvement. The change playbook will help you to develop the communications strategy your organisation will need. Use the PSC's communications strategy, templates and suggested messaging to get started.

Then, having adapted the PSC communications toolkit to your own organisation's context and vision, start promoting awareness of flexible working, committing to a policy re-launch date and seeking involvement from advocates and champions, and volunteers from all levels of the organisation and a diverse demographic, interested in helping with the work. Kossek and Lautsch (2018), quoted in Russell and Haas (2019) note that flexibility policies that do not account for stakeholders' interests will typically fail. Any initiatives, such as revised policies and re-designed forms will need to draw on these volunteers for consultation to ensure they are fit for purpose.

Finally, develop a series of guides and toolkits, also in consultation with your audience. Release these via an intranet hub (or central repository known and accessible to all) and promote them on your internal social media channels. Consider including case studies or testimonials from your agency champions or advocates on how it has helped them to better address any business problems or service delivery challenges, as well as any benefits to wellbeing and organisational commitment. Your aim is to build the skills or capabilities required of employees to work flexibly, or manage flexible working teams, so consider running practical 'how to' workshops to achieve this.



3.3 Resources at your disposal

Resources available

How they will help

Communications strategy, toolkit and collateral

An integrated communication and information strategy to increase awareness and understanding of flexible working principles and practices. Can be adapted to suit the needs of each cluster or agency.

Best practice policy development guidance and sample policy

Agencies can use this guidance (and examples) to consider current practice and adapt it to their business context and industrial arrangements.

Sample checklists and proposal templates

The checklists and proposal templates assist managers and team members to explore all aspects of a flexible working arrangement and develop a proposal for an ongoing agreement, or to identify any alternatives in the case that the suggested arrangement may not work.

Job share user guides, case studies videos and communications toolkits

To promote this highly innovative, but relatively rarely used employment arrangement. Information available for prospective job sharers, managers, HR and leaders.

Conversation Guides

The Conversation Guides assist employees and managers to negotiate a flexible working arrangement between employee, team and manager, and help you know how to make it a success.

Skillsets

These skillsets could be used for individual training and development programs, or as part of a whole-agency strategy for implementing flexible working initiatives.

Use the Assessment tool to discover which skills you most need to improve, then check the Development guide for places you can go to gain new skills or insight in these areas.

Introduce the change slowly, and trial it

4.1 What you need to do

It's now time to start driving the change across your organisation. We recommend doing this slowly, particularly through localised, team-based trials, which allow for exploring possibilities, making adjustments and building capability through doing. Trials will also help you identify what parts of your project plan are effective in your agency context, and which parts may need to be adjusted before expanding to the rest of the organisation. Celebrate and promote any small wins so that the outcomes of the trial demonstrate their (presumably positive) impacts (Correll (2017), quoted in Russell and Haas, 2019).

4.2 How you can do it

In 2019, the PSC piloted across the sector an initiative known as '**team-based design**'. Taking a team-based approach in the workplace is an opportunity for teams to more strategically plan and arrange their work, with a view to making it more efficient and building an understanding of shared goals and responsibilities amongst team members. It also provides an opportunity to build a team culture and way of working that is relevant and useful well beyond flexible working.

The PSC recommends team-based design as an effective approach for road-testing flexibility, to guard against any operational impacts from undertaking it at scale. By involving the people who understand the work best in the design of their trial, the risks are minimised, and regular checkpoints conducted to address any challenges that arise.

Flexible work is woven in from there, by providing guided, structured assistance on what could work, and understanding and addressing any impacts on the individual, team, organisation and customers. The PSC has developed a toolkit that can be provided to managers on how to do this in their teams easily and effectively, and can provide some support on execution.

There are other ways to engage managers in flexible working, as they can be a key dependency for staff perceptions of access and satisfaction.

The **Behavioural Insights Unit** (BIU) and the Public Service Commission (PSC) worked with agency partners on a project aimed at encouraging middle managers to take action to promote flexible working options. The project involved designing and testing behaviourally-informed (BI) messages using emails sent to middle managers across several agencies in the NSW government sector. The email messages leveraged BI techniques to encourage middle managers to take an action to support flexible work in their teams. Results from the trial showed that managers receiving the behaviourally informed email were three times more likely to send the email than those receiving the standardised email. This affirms the usefulness of adopting behavioural insights techniques when crafting correspondence aimed at achieving behavioural change.

Introduce the change slowly, and trial it

4.3 Resources at your disposal

Resources available

How they will help

Team-based design toolkit

Due for release in November 2019, the toolkit will help team leaders adopt the team-based approach to plan and arrange the work of the team, including flexible working.

Behavioural insights trial results

Due for release in November 2019, the results of the trial will provide insights into how middle managers across the NSW government sector might be motivated to support flexible working in their teams.



4.4 Ensure your support with senior leaders

The preliminary results of trials should give you excellent data to take back to your leaders, to reinforce the commitments made previously to implementing flexible working at your organisation. At each step of your planning and project roll out, keep your leaders informed and engaged about the project's progress, looking for opportunities to invite their active participation and vocal support for the initiatives. An example of how to do this in a practical way would be to use a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis to evaluate the project at key checkpoints and ask executives to take ownership for problem solving with you.

Measure your progress and evaluate its impact

5.1 What you need to do

Your organisation has set out to introduce flexible working because it is seeking to respond to a given challenge, as identified with your leadership group. It is now time to measure if the benefit anticipated up front (e.g. better office space management, improved diversity representation for a given demographic, engagement scores, etc) has in fact happened.

5.2 How you can do it

Now is the time to take the evaluation framework you gave consideration to up front and see if the project is tracking as expected.

Has the case for change that you identified and pitched to your senior executive group been satisfied, or is tracking as hoped? Is the project meeting, or has the project met the needs of the agency and stakeholders? Was the project plan executed successfully, and were expected outcomes achieved? How were these measured? If they were not achieved, what prevented this? Can the plan be adjusted to either change the expected outcomes, or plan different activities to achieve the original outcomes? Who should be involved in evaluating the project?

From project start to finish, and at key checkpoints in between, there are resources available that have been provided for you to measure your impact.

It's common at points during this implementation that you could experience push back from stakeholders more interested in managing perceptions about successful progress than addressing the trickier, time consuming issues that can pop up.

Measurement and evaluation is where this often surfaces. It can be tempting to approach measurement such as the Flexibility Implementation Tracker (FIT) as something your agency 'ticks off' or 'needs a pass mark for', but in fact your agency will only achieve the real benefits of flexible working when it is willing to tackle the harder challenges.

These can include finding the flexibility in workforces with more constrained operational demands or thornier work practice issues requiring longer consultation, even if these things take longer to fix. The FIT is there to guide you on what needs to be done, and the change playbooks for each area will help you systematically work through the common challenges.

It is up to your agency to decide how far it wants to take it, to maximise the benefits.

Measure your progress and evaluate its impact

5.3 Resources at your disposal

Resources available

How they will help

Pulse survey

The PSC pulse survey has been provided to agencies so progress of key flexible working perceptions and attitudes can be monitored, and as a source of interim data between People Matter Employee Surveys. It is also a way that agencies can reassure employees they are tracking progress in this policy commitment.

FIT

The Flexibility Implementation Tracker (FIT) will help you evaluate your impact across the five key themes in the [PSC Change Playbook](#), with the aim of embedding flexible working into BAU.

Evaluation principles

TBC—PSC framework for building an evaluation of flexible working data you can monitor—will be available on our website by Dec 2019.

Workforce and PSC data

Use your People Matter Employee Survey (PMES) results to analyse the links between flexible working and higher engagement, employee job satisfaction and willingness to go above and beyond. Check for a correlation between flexible working use and satisfaction to measure the impact of your flexible working project over time

Each NSW government sector agency has access to a PSC flexible working Dashboard to test if this data also holds for their own organisation, and explore more: contact PSC_WorkforceDashboard@psc.nsw.gov.au if you are unsure who in your agency holds the login, or if you need help deciphering the results.



Integrate flexible working into BAU processes

6.1 What you need to do

Check that flexible working is embedded into BAU strategic plans, HR systems and processes, workforce management at each stage of the employee life cycle, information technology and systems, and organisational culture—that it has become the ‘way we do things around here’.

Your aim is to build an organisational culture that supports flexible working rather than relying on charismatic individuals to drive it.

A simple example of this is changing the day of the week that all staff meetings are held, so that employees who have a regular day out of the office can participate at least some of the time.

Integrate your change strategy into your organisation’s business strategy to draw the links between how flexible working can address business needs in the long term.

Consider how you can further improve the strategies you have delivered to continue to embed flexible working within your agency. You can track your progress over time by evaluating your agency’s workforce data related to flexible working.

6.2 How you can do it

If you have introduced trials and evaluated them, you can use the insights and results to expand across your organisation. Integrating flexible working into BAU processes means making it sustainable, incorporating changes into existing workplace processes such as your learning and development programs, including interviews, inductions, or into role descriptions and advertisements. You can also incorporate flexible working into regular executive or team meeting agendas, or your yearly performance development reviews, so that the topic is regularly discussed and sustainably adopted. Linking KPIs such as ‘reduction in turnover’ (evidenced via exit surveys) to flexible working performance builds accountability in to your plan over the longer term.

Stay up to date with how your peers across the sector are embedding flexible working by networking with others at the regular PSC D&I forums or by joining the online flexible working hub. This is a great way to increase your exposure to government sector or external experts on flexible working, to sharpen your approach over time.

Regularly check your employee survey data, particularly across demographics, regions and seniority, to spot any additional areas for improvement that could benefit from a focused approach.

For example, in office environments, it is often the administrative assistants who express the least satisfaction with their access. This can be because they are not in senior roles that provide more autonomy. Instead, their interactions in the workplace use presence as a proxy, and no one has considered different ways of doing their role (e.g. more upfront planning, or remote access). Their position at the lower end of the grade scale can mean they are unwilling to agitate.

This can be an opportunity to improve agency scores further.

Integrate flexible working into BAU processes

6.3 Resources at your disposal

Resources available

How they will help

D&I Forum

The Diversity and Inclusion Forum (D&I Forum) shares knowledge and best practice on inclusion to embed a culture of inclusion across the NSW public sector. The PSC holds at least four D&I Forum events per year and they are open to members of the NSW government sector and are recorded.

Online hub

Embedding of flexible work requires a capacity for flexible work practitioners to engage online, to access resources, share experiences and provide horizontal support to each other. The online hub, due for launch in Dec 2019, will support the growth of an online community of flexible work practitioners that is sustainable beyond the life of the Public Service Commission's stewardship of the Flexible Working program of work (due to conclude June 2020).

Workforce data

The Flexible Working Dashboard App contains People Matter Employee Survey and workforce profile data. It enables 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. Agencies are 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. Find out who at your agency has responsibility for the People Analytics data and ask them to share the findings with you.

PSC Change Playbooks

Section 4.2 of each of the [PSC Flexible Working Change Playbooks](#) focuses directly on strategies for embedding flexible working across the 5 key change areas.

Integrate flexible working into BAU processes

6.4 Avoiding slippage

There is a risk that your agency may go backwards in the quest to reach an embedded state on flexible working, especially if your change leads for flexible working exit your agency or change roles before getting there.

It is worth documenting your progress if you are working through this best practice guidance systematically, so that a new employee can clearly understand what has already been achieved, and what is yet to be done. If possible, set up a meeting between the exiting change lead and the incoming change lead, to provide a thorough handover before moving on.





Example Workforce Management Change Plan

Strategy	Target Stakeholders	Sponsorship
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Identify & address the human resources processes to support flexible working	<p>HR—are critical to enable this change, collaborate with the Working group and managers to drive implementation.</p> <p>Leaders & Managers—to champion, support and enable this change.</p> <p>All Staff—to ensure staff understand the mechanics of how to access flexible working and work within existing processes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR Director • ED, Corporate
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Timeline	Month 1–2: Awareness	Month 3–4: Onboarding	Month 5–6: PDP	Ongoing
Activities (including communications)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role Design—HR BPs to start conversations early with hiring managers about role design and rethink options for flexibility. • Policy review—Review relevant policies to enable flexible working e.g. flexible working, technology, WHS, leave etc. • Job advertisements—include statement about commitment to flexibility. • Diversity targets—attract specific diversity groups through flexible working. • Offer letters—include reference to availability to discuss working flexibly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Onboarding program—incorporate flexible working into current onboarding modules & incorporate into Diversity & inclusion elearn. • Team arrangements—provide guides for managers to incorporate new starter arrangements into existing team arrangements e.g. tea meetings, ‘in the office’ team days. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible working review—Ensure managers review flexible working arrangements at each PDP discussion to ensure they still work for the Commission, the team and the individual. • Managing for outcomes—provide training to managers on managing for outcomes including delineating between performance issues and flexible working access. • Training & development—provide alternate methods for flexible staff to participate in training i.e. elearns, live recordings, run multiple sessions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team communication—provide opportunities for the team to discuss flexible working arrangements to continuously improve. • Adhoc flexible working—establish a process for requesting adhoc flexible working. • Exit interviews—use exit interviews to capture information on how flexible working is implemented across the Commission.
Milestones & Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies reviewed and updated. • Job advertisements & offer letters include a standard flexibility statement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Onboarding program updated. • Guidelines created for managers on team arrangements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PDP discussions incorporating flexible working. • Training & development provided in multiple formats. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adhoc flexible working process established and used. • Data from exit interviews captured.

Funding	Roles/responsibilities	Barriers
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low funding required. • Time for HR team to work on workforce management system, policy and process changes. 	<p>HR—lead and implement the system and policy changes to existing process.</p> <p>Managers—support staff with having the conversation around flexible work and utilising workforce management frameworks.</p>	<p>Lack of real commitment—engage with managers upfront regarding workforce management changes to policy and process to incorporate feedback.</p>
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Example Communications & Awareness Change Plan

Strategy	Target Stakeholders				Sponsorship
<p>Build awareness, knowledge & advocacy for flexible working.</p>	<p>Comms—are critical to enable this change and collaborate with the Working group to build a Communications Plan to drive implementation.</p> <p>Leaders & Managers—to champion, support and enable this change.</p> <p>All Staff—to ensure staff understand what flexible working means and NSWEC flexible working principles. To address fears, concerns, assumptions and needs of staff and teams with flexible working.</p>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior Leadership Team
Timeline	Month 1–2: Awareness	Month 3–4: Onboarding	Month 5–6: PDP	Ongoing	
Activities (including communications)	<p>A new way of thinking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff aware that flexibility is about rethinking the where, when and how of work. Leaders & managers recognise the need to explore and innovate work and job design for existing and new roles. <p>Top down intent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'If not, why not' imperative, Commission intent and vision. <p>Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commission, team and individual benefits. <p>Method—Executive focus group, manager focus group, staff consultation groups, intranet, Commissioner email, onboarding modules, job advertisements, email signatures, posters, PSC merchandise, All Staff workshops, lunch n learns.</p>	<p>Truly understanding flexibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Types of flexibility, dynamic arrangements, evolution of flexible work. <p>Support materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to policy & guidelines, request documents, WHS checklist etc. <p>Skills & experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific skills to support leaders, managers and staff to manage flexible working effectively. <p>Method—Employee success stories, accessible channels (ESP to reflect working remotely), collaborative sharing sessions with DPC/ PSC, guest speakers, central info hub on intranet, learning program for leaders & managers, guides for employees.</p>	<p>Executive & manager support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Endorsement or sponsor for flexible working, interested groups i.e. Working group, engaging with those who resist and find out why. <p>Employee advocacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore attitudes & perceptions, non-flexible workers, success stories, online tools. <p>Role-modelling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaders & managers, various divisions, various flexible options, different demographics (gender, age, disability etc). <p>Method—Executive sponsor, compelling benefits for the Commission, sharing platform (intranet?, social media?), role-modelling.</p>	<p>Embed as BAU and continuously improve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate, measure, monitor and track effectiveness of communications. Continuously improve awareness and understanding. Review FIT tracker (PSC Flex Implementation Tracker). 	
Milestones & Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communications Plan developed to reflect awareness, knowledge & advocacy. Wide variety of communication methods used. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved knowledge across the Commission of flexible working, benefits and mechanics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaders & managers demonstrating commitment and role-modelling. Staff demonstrating commitment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PMES results FIT Tracker results Staff feedback 	
Funding	Roles/responsibilities		Barriers		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low funding required. Time for internal resources to work on project and manage communications materials. Some merchandise provided by PSC i.e. branded keep cups, branded lanyards etc. 	<p>Communications—provide support with collateral, materials and intranet usage.</p> <p>Managers—support staff with having the conversation around flexible work.</p> <p>HR—available to respond to specific questions from staff and managers.</p>		<p>Lack of real commitment—engage with leaders and managers upfront to tackle concerns, assumptions and fears.</p> <p>Lack of trust in messages communicated/ skepticism—use case studies & success stories to build understanding and commitment.</p>		



Example Culture & Mindsets Change Plan—Engaging with staff

Strategy	Target Stakeholders				Sponsorship
Engaging with staff	<p>All Staff—to ensure staff understand what flexible working means and the agency’s flexible working principles. To address fears, concerns, assumptions and needs of staff and teams with flexible working.</p> <p>Working Group—ensure the working group are committed to the implementation of flexible working and keen to champion this initiative.</p> <p>IS—ensure IS is across the IT requirements of flexible working and system access.</p>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaders & managers
Timeline	Month 1–2: Awareness	Month 3–4: Onboarding	Month 5–6: PDP	Ongoing	
Activities (including communications)	<p>Working group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a working group for the project with members who are passionate about flexible working and an Executive Sponsor/Advocate. Brief working group on project charter and work completed to date. <p>Consultation groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold consultation/focus groups with staff to explore: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What does flexibility mean to you? What type of flexibility would have the most benefit to you? Concerns around flexible working. Explore possible issues and barriers to implementation. Explore some case studies and success stories. 	<p>Analysing findings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working Group to analyse findings from workshops and group into like-themes. <p>Consultation groups—stage 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff explore how the issues could be addressed, and solutions or ways to minimize barriers or risks. Results documented, discussed with the Executive and incorporated into Flexible working strategy where possible. 	<p>Flexible working strategy launch</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Official launch of the agency’s flexible working principles. <p>Employee role-modelling/ success stories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff who currently practice flexible working start talking and communicating openly about their arrangements and how it works for them through staff workshops, lunch and learns, intranet etc. 	<p>Ongoing engagement & review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing engagement with existing and new staff on flexible working arrangements. Understanding and commitment to ‘mutual flexibility’ in line with business needs. 	
Milestones & Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working group established, briefed and operational. Consultation groups successful, well attended and produce outcomes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation group findings reviewed, analysed and incorporated into strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flexible working strategy launched successfully. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing commitment to flexible working from staff. FIT tracker results. PMES results. 	
Funding	Roles/responsibilities		Barriers		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low funding required Time for Working group and consultation groups Funding for launch if combined with a morning tea 	<p>Working Group—demonstrate genuine commitment and promote flex work to staff.</p> <p>HR—available to respond to specific questions from staff and managers.</p> <p>Communications—provide support with collateral, materials and intranet usage.</p>		<p>IT concerns—access to technology, access to systems remotely—address as a key stakeholder early.</p> <p>Lack of trust—lack of trust from employees that they won’t be disadvantaged by working flexibly—address through demonstration of genuine commitment from leaders & managers.</p>		

Example Culture & Mindsets Change Plan—Creating buy-in with Leaders & managers

Strategy	Target Stakeholders	Sponsorship
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Creating buy-in from Leaders & Managers	<p>Leaders—Culture is heavily influenced by leaders so there is a need to look at underlying beliefs, assumptions and unconscious bias about flexible working and for leaders to adopt and lead by example. Targeting the Senior Executive and Directors.</p> <p>Managers—Managers are critical in translating our flexible working vision into action. Targeting all Managers of staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commissioner • Senior Executive Committee
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Timeline	Month 1–2: Awareness	Month 3–4: Onboarding	Month 5–6: PDP	Ongoing
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Activities (including communications)	<p>Seek leadership support & address concerns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with the CEO & senior executives individually to present discussion paper and explore current mindsets on flexible working. • Gain approval to commence project. • Conduct Senior Exec focus group to explore assumptions/ unconscious bias and fears of impact on outcomes & address through examples. <p>Demonstrate value of flexible working</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilise case studies, business needs (Agile working) and workforce analytics data to build compelling picture for flexible work for leaders. • Demonstrate benefits to employee well-being, employee engagement, diversity & productivity and establish boundaries. 	<p>Working Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss and evaluate with Executive the creation of a working group for the project, agree membership and Executive Sponsor/ Advocate. <p>Seek Manager support & address fears</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct manager focus groups to explore assumptions/ unconscious bias and fears of impact on outcomes & address through examples. • Demonstrate benefits of flexible working. • Create Change Assessment that surfaces underlying manager concerns and business needs & addresses concerns and establish boundaries. 	<p>Demonstrate commitment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders to demonstrate commitment to flexible working by promoting their own flexible arrangements ('leaving loudly'). • Leaders to adopt flexible working email signature to reinforce commitment. • Top down endorsement through intranet, emails and practices. <p>Learning Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a learning program to equip managers with skills and tools to manage flexible working teams. • Inclusive leadership program. <p>Pilot/ Trial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate benefits of a pilot/ trial in a controlled environment to counteract concerns and demonstrate real benefits. 	<p>Flexible working strategy launch</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Official launch of the agency's flexible work strategy & policy via intranet, possible morning tea and hearing from some success stories. <p>Ongoing commitment & review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing demonstration and commitment to flexible working aligned to business needs. • Mutual flexibility—continue to reinforce staff with flexible arrangements need to be flexible during busy periods/elections.
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Milestones & Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval gained, concerns addressed. • Success measures defined, leaders prepared for change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working group established. • Manager commitment, concerns addressed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders & managers demonstrating commitment. • Learning program established. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible working strategy launched successfully. • PMES results.
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Funding	Roles/responsibilities	Barriers
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low funding required. • Time for Working Group to perform effectively. • Time to develop collateral, comms material and learning program materials. 	<p>Executive—demonstrate commitment, encourage staff and lead by example.</p> <p>Managers—demonstrate commitment, encourage staff to have the conversation around flexible work, lead by example and manage process.</p> <p>Working Group—demonstrate commitment, promote flex work to staff.</p>	<p>Lack of real commitment—engage with leaders and managers upfront to tackle concerns, assumptions and fears.</p> <p>Lack of trust—reinforce with leaders & managers this is a managed process, boundaries will be defined, performance will be managed based on outcomes.</p>
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