

1. I've got an idea for Flexible Working – what happens now?

1. Introduction

Congratulations! You've got an idea for how Flexible working could be used to create a new way of working within your team. This paper outlines the first step in transforming your idea into a reality – getting your team colleagues excited about your idea.

2. Get your team excited about your idea

As outlined in our introductory papers, Flexible working is about the whole team deciding to embrace a new way of working. Involving the team from the outset helps to establish commitment, ownership and drive to make a change. Without support from your team, it will be very difficult to move beyond the idea stage.

If you are a team member with an idea, why not canvass other team members in an informal way to see what they think of your proposal. Have a chat to your manager and ask if this can be discussed at a team meeting.

A facilitated workshop for the team provides everyone a chance to think about the current way of working and what the possibilities could be. It's a focused time away from the office environment encouraging creative and imaginative solutions for the future. Listen to team ideas and concerns and think creatively about how the change could benefit all concerned.

Top Tip!

It's highly likely that your team colleagues will have some concerns. Start an 'Issues Log' – this can record points of detail from colleagues that you might not be able to answer now but will require a resolution at some point. This avoids getting into the finer details of solutions too early. We've included a sample Issues Log in the FW Toolkit.

A suggested format for the workshop can be found below. You might wish to invite a facilitator to assist – this person can provide a neutral independent focus helping to tease out contributions from team members.

Top Tip!

Get the workshop started with an ice-breaker exercise – this helps to get everyone involved and making a contribution from the start.

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3. Suggested format for workshop

- a. **Consider current working arrangements.** What does the team do?
What types of mobile and flexible working are already in place?
- b. **Consider drivers for change.** What factors are pushing for change?
What's the vision for the future?
- c. **Review the idea or proposal.** Explain the idea. What are the anticipated benefits? Who do they benefit and why? Is it a good idea worth investigating further?
- d. **Measuring the benefits.** Identify your stakeholders – how might they benefit from the change? How could the potential benefits be measured? What can be measured now, and what could be measured after the change to see if it has made the expected difference? Would any new measures need to be gathered – if so, how easy would this be to introduce?
- e. **Communication Plan.** Who would the team need to communicate with about the proposed change? Who are the key stakeholders and what channels of communication are available? What do we want to say, to whom and when?
- f. **Understanding the idea from different angles.** Try a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) or PEST analysis (Political, Economic, Social, Technological). Think about the idea from different stakeholders perspectives – customer, team member, team manager, colleagues, head of service, directorate, WCC, HR, Finance, partners, regulators and suppliers. Can role play be used to observe the change from different stakeholder perspectives?
- g. **Agreeing what happens next.** Group discussion about thoughts raised and moving forward. Record ideas and actions.

The outcome of the workshop will determine whether the idea can be taken forward to the next stage – Assessment. Material from the workshop will be used in the Assessment stage, so look after it!

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