



THIS WORKSHEET IS DESIGNED TO HELP YOU REQUEST FLEXIBLE WORK

This worksheet is designed to help you request flexible work. Taking time to prepare, and think carefully about your request, is the best first step. If you can, discuss your request with your manager before you submit your written request.

The Fair Work Ombudsman has a range of flexible working resources. For more information or assistance, call the Fair Work Ombudsman Infoline on 13 13 94 or visit the [Fair Work Ombudsman website](#).

The AWR Flexible Work Fact Sheet contains a summary of your rights and responsibilities.



1. PREPARE YOUR REQUEST

The best first step is to be really clear about the flexible work arrangement you'd like and why. By being clear about the problem you're trying to solve, or your motivation for requesting flexible work does, you can:

- State your case for the working arrangement you want, be clear about how it achieves your goals as well as your employer's.
- Be ready to consider other options if your initial request is refused on reasonable business grounds.

QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT ASK YOURSELF

Think about what you want

- Why do you want to work flexibly?
- How will flexible work make your life better?
- How does flexible work fit in with your life goals and other responsibilities?
- What is the most important thing you want your boss to understand about your request for flexible work?
- What kind of flexibility do you want – hours, schedule, location, leave, or ad hoc flexibility?

Think about your employer

- What's important to your manager and the team?
- Who will be impacted by you working flexibly?
- How will working flexibly benefit your manager, the team or your clients?
- If flexible working causes issues, what are some ways to address that?
- What objections might your employer raise about your proposal?
- What are your rights and responsibilities at work?

Brainstorm options

- Have you thought about all the different types of flexible work?
- What are your 'not negotiables'?
- What are some different ways that still allow you to achieve your life goals/responsibilities?
- What are some different ways that could make it work for your manager/team/clients?
- Who can help you come up with more ideas and options?
- What can you do if no agreement is reached?

2. DISCUSS WITH YOUR MANAGER

The best flexible work arrangements start with a conversation between the manager and employee.

It can be difficult to work up the courage to ask for flexible working arrangements for a host of reasons. Perhaps we're worried it will be seen as a lack of commitment, or perhaps we're just not used to asking for things that benefit us.

HERE ARE SOME TIPS ON HOW TO RAISE FLEXIBLE WORK WITH YOUR MANAGER:

Give your manager a heads-up

When you ask your manager about setting up a meeting, ensure you tell them what you would like to talk about so that they can warm up to the idea.

Be clear about what you're requesting

Generate a plan of what your working week will look like and how your job will continue to be performed before taking it to your manager. Bring along a 'cheat sheet' with the notes you made to prepare.

Address potential concerns

Raise issues that might hold your manager back from granting your request and be proactive in suggesting solutions.

Stay curious and confident

Go into the conversation with an open mind and listen carefully to your manager's response. Ask questions to better understand their perspective and be confident in putting forward your thoughts and ideas.

Be mindful of rights and responsibilities

Explain how this arrangement fits in with your employment responsibilities, and how it may even create additional benefits. At the same time, carefully consider whether your rights are being respected and that any objections are based on 'reasonable business grounds'.

Suggest a trial run

Consider framing your flexible arrangement as a pilot program. You may propose trying it out for three months and then take time to reassess. Decide with your manager how you will measure how things are working.



REMEMBER

Don't just copy your colleagues' flexible work—you may be inspired by your colleague's arrangements; however, your job and family circumstances probably differ to theirs. Think about your needs and how flexible work could help you.

You have a right to request flexible work—and your employer must provide reasonable business grounds for refusal. This isn't simply a 'perk', so it is best to approach flexible work as a business negotiation.

Expect a transition period as you start flexible work—even when your request has been accepted, it can be tricky getting used to a new work schedule. Don't give up, talk with family and colleagues about how it's going, and give yourself time to learn how you work best.



3. WRITE A FORMAL REQUEST

Flexible work requests need to be made in writing, and your employer must respond in writing within 21 days. There is no set format, but here's a template that might work for you.

[Date]

Private and confidential

[Your name]

[Your contact details]

[Your position title]

Dear [Manager's name]

RE: Request for flexible working arrangements

Following our discussion on [date], I would like to request to work a flexible work arrangement that is different to my current working arrangement.

I am making this request because I [am 55 or older/have a disability/am a carer].

I can confirm that I am a [full-time/part-time] employee and have worked continuously within this organisation for the last 12 months.

I would like to change my work arrangements to [explain the flexible work arrangement as agreed during the discussion with your manager].

These changes will assist me because [insert reasons].

This change could affect you/the team/clients by [include possible positive and negative impacts]. I believe these impacts could be accommodated by [include steps discussed with your manager to make your flexible work request practical].

I would like to request this working arrangement to start from [insert date] with a meeting to review its effectiveness on [insert date].

Thank you for taking the time to consider this request, and I look forward to receiving your response.

Yours sincerely,

[Insert name]

(Please keep a copy of this letter for your records)