Is working flexibly appropriate for your organisation?

A questionnaire

We have developed a questionnaire to help you understand current readiness for more flexible ways of working. Participants at our webinars are free to use it within their own organisations provided it carries the endorsement:

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This assessment questionnaire has been designed to help you think through whether working flexibly will suit the working environment of your organisation. The questionnaire will also help you to review how your organisation can be more effective when working flexibly.

The questionnaire covers the organisational development, cultural and management issues that impact the effectiveness of flexible working. There are other important issues such as the type of work, the ITC and support systems which are not dealt with in this questionnaire.

There are no right answers. Please take time to think about how your organisation works and what is required from the working environment. Be as honest as you can be as this questionnaire is designed to help you think about how flexible working can be effective in your workplace.

Before you start, decide whether you are answering these questions from the perspective of the whole organisation, the department or your team.

The assessment scale is:

1. **I strongly disagree with this statement**
2. **I disagree to some extent with this statement**
3. **I neither agree nor disagree with this statement**
4. **I agree to some extent with this statement**
5. **I strongly agree with this statement**

Question	Score
Managers take responsibility for managing their personal and team performance	
The culture encourages staff to improve or meet a standard of excellence	
Managers are clear about the organisation objectives and benefits of working in a flexible manner and communicate them to their staff	
Performance management including assessment and feedback works well in the organisation/team	
Managers know their strengths and limits and support staff to do so	
The working environment is focussed and not easily diverted	
Managers and staff are self motivated	
Managers encourage staff to work on their own without direct supervision	
Managers and staff are ready to embrace opportunities that arise, they are responsive to the environment	
Communication about needs is clear and direct	
Managers encourage staff to speak up for themselves whilst acknowledging the views and needs of others	
Managers and staff demonstrate a strong sense of their self-worth and capabilities	
Decisions about work is devolved to the individual	
The working environment supports the recognition of emotional responses and their effect on others	
The majority of managers and staff are comfortable with changing situations	
The work force demonstrates a relaxed approach to novel ideas, new approaches and information	
Staff work well in teams	
The impact of flexibly working on others will be monitored and managed	
Empathy with colleagues is demonstrated by sensing others' feelings and perspectives	
Communication across departments is facilitated and occurs at staff level	

Managers encourage all staff to take responsibility for customers'/service users' needs	
Discretion is given so that customers'/service users' can be met without asking for approval	
Time management is effective , plans are robust and effective but allow for the need to respond quickly	
Prioritising work is done well - more time is spent on important activities and less on the trivial	
Communication with colleagues is uncomplicated and works in a flexible working context	
When working flexibly, communication with other stakeholders and contacts is effective and efficient	
Communication with customers is effective and efficient and suitable for a flexible context	
Processes have been agreed to ensure that all staff are aware of current, relevant policies and procedures	
Knowledge is shared freely	
The health and safety implications of flexible working have been identified and codified	
Managers ensure staff are fully aware of their health and safety responsibilities when working flexibly	
Provision of ITC equipment is suitable for the flexible working options	
Facilities are provided which support effective flexible working such as touch down sites, informal meeting areas, 'tracking' phones	
Development is provided to ensure all staff are skilled and supported to work flexibly in an effective way	
Administration and support processes have been amended to support flexible working for instance work planning, claiming expenses, room booking	
Managers encourage flexible workers to consider the effect of changing their working style on people they share living space with: family, parents, friends, etc	
Managers encourage flexible workers to discuss any identified impact with those affected by their change in working style	
Managers encourage flexible workers to consider the impact my change in working style will have on social life/hobbies	
Managers encourage flexible workers to identify clear personal benefits to working flexibly	
Managers encourage flexible workers to consider how to manage their work life balance	

So, what do the answers mean?

A high number of *Strongly Agree and Agree* means your organisation/team should adapt well to the new way of working and embrace it enthusiastically. You may need to review how it works over time and amend your approach to prevent over enthusiasm getting out of control or the development of poor habits.

Predominately *Agree and Neither Agree nor Disagree* means your organisation/team will probably settle well to working in a more flexible way - though there may be areas where more consideration and planning is required. Some initial problems may be experienced. Further consideration of the questions that are less positive and more time for planning may be beneficial.

Predominantly *Neither Agree nor Disagree and Disagree:* there will be some issues with working flexibly but with support and a desire to do be successful, the organisation should adapt after an initial period of discomfort. More preparation would contribute to a more effective implementation of flexible working. Greater support of staff and regular review of the working arrangements may be advisable during the initial period.

A significant number of *Disagree or Strongly Disagree:* working flexibly may not be for your organisation at this time. Further consideration of how you will manage flexible working will be implemented and managed.

There may be an overall pattern to your replies. Look at the less positive questions and identify any types of questions that have a predominance of disagree or strongly disagree responses. More careful thought is indicated about those aspects if working flexibly is to be effective.

The results should be fed into your planning process.