

- ☐ **IS FLEXIBLE WORKING RIGHT FOR YOUR ORGANISATION?**
- ☐ **MAKE SURE YOU ARE SET UP TO CREATE A CULTURE THAT IS OPEN TO AND SUPPORTS DIFFERENT WAYS OF WORKING**
- ☐ **ENCOURAGE CLEAR, ONGOING COMMUNICATION AMONGST ALL INVOLVED**
- ☐ **SET CLEAR EXPECTATIONS OF WHAT'S EXPECTED OF STAFF FROM THE OUTSET**

## TIPS FOR EMPLOYERS

### KNOW THE RULES

Under the Employment Relations Act 2000, Part 6AA, employees are able to make a statutory request for flexible work arrangements. Employers have a duty to consider any request for flexibility and respond to a formal application within one month. You can read more about these obligations on the Employment New Zealand website.

### DETERMINE THE BEST OPTIONS

Think about the work your employees do – ideally, by breaking it down into key outputs they need to deliver. Then, consider the different flexible work arrangements you might be able to offer staff, such as working from home, flexible start and finish times, part-time hours, or job sharing. Not all types of flexibility will suit every role, team or business.

### FOSTER A SUPPORTIVE CULTURE

Before you roll out flexible working, make sure you are also set up to create a culture that is open to, and supports, different ways of working. For example, ask team members to discuss how they could make flex work for them, and how they would need to interact each day. Some organisations have core hours when everyone should be at work, or meeting-free days, to allow for flexibility within teams.

### GET THE RIGHT TECHNOLOGY

Check that you have the right technology available for staff to work remotely in particular – such as mobiles, laptops, and secure remote access – and that they know how to use it.

### PILOT

Pilot flexible working and related tools and processes in a part of your business to see how it works. Create some key measures for success and track the results. Encourage clear, ongoing communication amongst all involved, seek feedback, and make adjustments as needed.

### BUILD THE BUSINESS CASE

Flexible working can deliver a host of business benefits, but is it right for your organisation? Approach it as you would any new strategic initiative by building a business case. Scope out the specific opportunities and challenges it presents, and how you might seize the former and overcome the latter. Ensure senior leaders understand the potential benefits and the 'why' of flexible work for your business – they'll need to champion it internally.

### SAFETY FIRST

Employers are obliged to ensure their employees are safe and healthy – so far as is reasonably practicable – when they work remotely. So do all you can to make sure their location is suitable and set up so that they can work safely.

### COMMUNICATE

Trust is a key component in making flexible working successful, so set clear expectations of what's expected of staff from the outset, and ensure you can measure people's performance based on results and output, not just presence in the office.



# TIPS FOR EMPLOYEES

## PREPARE

Flexible working arrangements should work well for you and your employer. So consider the needs of your colleagues, customers and organisation when thinking about how flex could work for you. For example, how would starting earlier or finishing later at night impact your customers or your team?

Also, think about the way you work as well as the type of work you do. For example, would working from home enable you to get through your admin faster? Or are you more productive in an office environment?

Factoring in these things up front will help you to have a productive flex conversation with your manager, and help them to make the best decision. It also shows your commitment to ensuring the arrangement is successful.

## BE OPEN-MINDED

Flexible working arrangements are not 'one size fits all'. They will look different depending on your role and where you work.

While one sort of flexible work may not be suitable for you and/or your role, there may be others that do.

## BE FLEXIBLE

Remember that flexibility extends both ways and there will be times when work commitments take priority.

This means that, occasionally, you may need to change your flexible working arrangements. For example, you may have to attend training, a special work event, or customer meetings at a time/day you do not usually work.

## EARN TRUST

Mutual trust, between you, your manager and your colleagues in particular, is crucial to successful flexible working. So do everything you can to maintain your performance and not let them down when you're working flexibly.

## ENSURE SAFETY AND SECURITY

If you are working from home or another location, take responsibility for ensuring that you can work safely; your internet speed and bandwidth is sufficient for work tasks; and work security and privacy requirements can be met. Remember, health and safety, and information security, is a shared responsibility.

## UPSKILL

Consider what skills you need to learn to be able to work flexibly. For instance, can you set up a virtual meeting? Do you know the most effective way to store documents electronically? If not, you may need some quick tech training.

## COMMUNICATE

Use your out of office messages on your email and phone to clarify when you will return calls or emails. Use professional language: "I'm out of the office today" is preferable to "I don't work Thursdays".

Not all meetings need to be face-to-face, so consider what other options could work depending on the circumstances. Handover important tasks and information if you are job sharing or are going to be away from the office for a period of time.

# PWC CASE STUDY



"I have very talented people in my team who want to have a career, but not at the expense of important parts of their personal lives. So we trust them, and give them the necessary autonomy and support, to make flexible working a success. We've found that this approach makes people highly motivated, and fosters loyalty and team spirit."

**Erin Venter**  
Transfer Pricing Partner  
PWC

PWC is a leading professional services firm with offices around the world, including seven in New Zealand. More than 800 people work in its Auckland office.

The firm fully supports flexibility, empowering staff to have conversations with their managers about how, when and where they work, and what's best for them. This discussion and related decisions are guided by the following principles:

- One size of flexible working won't fit all
- Personal responsibility to build trust, communicate and be accessible
- A focus on high performance and exceptional client service

**IN ESSENCE, AS LONG AS THE INDIVIDUAL'S WORK CAN BE DONE TO THE HIGH STANDARDS SET BY THE FIRM, ANY FLEXIBLE WORKING WILL BE CONSIDERED.**

Erin Venter, Transfer Pricing Partner at PWC, has worked flexibly since she came back from maternity leave five years ago. She starts at 7am and leaves around 4:30pm, which enables her to do a full day's work, be home for her children in the afternoon, and avoid peak traffic. She also works from home most Fridays.

Erin leads a specialist team of nine people who all work flexibly in some way. For example, one works only during school hours, another works three days a week, and another is based in the firm's Christchurch office.

In Erin's team, productivity has gone up since flexible working was embraced fully. It's also helped PWC recruit a more diverse workforce, which the firm believes is crucial to its future prosperity.

# KEY BENEFITS

## BENEFITS FOR EMPLOYERS

- EASIER TO ATTRACT MORE DIVERSE TALENT
- BETTER STAFF ENGAGEMENT AND RETENTION
- INCREASED STAFF COMMITMENT
- GREATER STAFF PRODUCTIVITY
- DECREASED ABSENTEEISM
- LESS PRESSURE ON STAFF PARKING AND OFFICE SPACE



## BENEFITS FOR EMPLOYEES

- LESS TIME, ENERGY AND MONEY SPENT COMMUTING
- BETTER WORK-LIFE BALANCE
- LOWER STRESS LEVELS
- IMPROVED FOCUS AND PRODUCTIVITY
- GREATER JOB SATISFACTION
- ENHANCED WELLBEING



# MRCAGNEY CASE STUDY



"The nature of our work makes it relatively easy for us to support flexible working, but that doesn't mean everyone works remotely all the time. Collaborating in person is crucial to getting our work done and fostering a good work culture, too. It's all about finding the right balance."

**Jenson Varghese**

New Zealand Regional Manager  
MRCagney

MRCagney is an Australasian transport planning consultancy, with around 20 employees based at its office in central Auckland. Most of the work its employees do is project or outcome-based. The consultancy focuses on the ongoing successful completion of these projects, and employees' performance is measured accordingly.

MRCagney's flexible working policy gives employees full control over where and how they get their work done.

THE BUSINESS DOESN'T HAVE STRICT WORKING HOURS, AND PEOPLE TRAVEL TO AND FROM WORK WHEN IT SUITS THEM.

They are also free to work from home, or remotely somewhere else, at their discretion. Most days, the majority of the consultancy's people are in the office between 10am to 3pm, attending meetings or having other face-to-face interactions with colleagues and clients.

Jenson Varghese, New Zealand Regional Manager at MRCagney says that MRCagney's approach to flexible working is primarily aimed at helping staff to balance their work and personal lives, and to enhance their wellbeing. "We know that our people have a life and responsibilities outside of the office. We try to make life a little easier by offering a flexible working arrangement.

"Avoiding peak traffic is another important benefit to staff. Among other things, it helps to reduce stress and wasted time stuck in traffic. It also supports sustainable transport – our company's primary focus – by reducing our contribution to congestion during the peak periods."

In addition, Jenson says that flexible working has enhanced the consultancy's recruitment and retention, and boosted productivity.



# CASUAL FLEX WORKS FOR MATT



## SIMPSON GRIERSON CASE STUDY



"Flexible working is a strategic priority for us and will no doubt remain so as Auckland continues to grow and the need and demand for flexibility increases. There is always room for improvement, and we are determined to keep getting better by, for example, exploring future ways of working, investing more in innovative technology that supports flexibility, and developing how we manage our increasingly flexible workforce."

**Kevin Jaffe**  
Chairman  
Simpson Grierson

Simpson Grierson is one of New Zealand's leading commercial law firms, with over 330 staff in total, including 220 in Auckland.

Its Auckland-based employees live throughout the region and as far afield as Warkworth and Pokeno. They use all manner of private and public transport to commute into the firm's central office on Shortland Street.

A key focus of the firm is ensuring its people are given every opportunity to succeed on their merits. A range of initiatives are underway or being launched to help make this a reality. These include a comprehensive flexible working programme and first-class technology that allows secure remote working from anywhere.

Flexible working at the firm takes many forms. For example, some employees have flexi-time arrangements, starting earlier or later than standard hours to avoid peak traffic or drop kids off at school before coming into work. Others reduce their total travel by working remotely for one or two days a week.

**THE BENEFITS EMPLOYEES REPORT  
THEY GET FROM WORKING FLEXIBLY  
INCLUDE MORE CONTROL OVER  
THEIR WORKLOAD, GREATER  
PRODUCTIVITY, REDUCED STRESS,  
AND BETTER WORK-LIFE BALANCE.**

Kevin Jaffe, chairman of Simpson Grierson, says that the firm gets many benefits in return. "Ultimately, flexible working enhances our ability to provide great advice and service to our clients. Although it's not necessarily right for everyone, it gives those who need it the chance to contribute fully."



# LET'S TALK ABOUT FLEX

## COULD FLEXIBLE WORKING WORK FOR YOU?

Flexible Working is already working well for thousands of people in New Zealand and it's only getting more popular as employees and employers learn about the benefits.

A flexible working arrangement can boost productivity, improve staff commitment, reduce staff turnover and enhance wellbeing. Staff can commute outside peak hours and employers can look forward to a full day's work. So how about it?

Use our Travel Time Calculator to see what time savings you could make by commuting to work earlier or later, or by working from home.

"Businesses across New Zealand are embracing flexible work practices – the New Zealand Diversity Survey in April 2017 showed that 69 per cent of workplaces have a policy or initiative to give staff the flexibility they need, whether that's flexi-time, part-time hours, remote working, or job sharing. Research shows that organisations offering flexibility report improved productivity and focus, enjoy higher levels of staff loyalty and commitment, and have a bigger talent pool to recruit from. If you want to be competitive in today's economy, your business needs to flex."

**Bev Cassidy-Mackenzie**

Chief Executive

Diversity Works New Zealand

**For more information including helpful resources, key facts, benefits, case studies and advice, visit [AT.govt.nz/flexiworking](https://at.govt.nz/flexiworking)**

# LET'S TALK ABOUT FLEX

- ☐ **EMPLOYEES SAVE TIME AND ARE HAPPIER AND HEALTHIER**
- ☐ **EMPLOYERS ENJOY A FULL PRODUCTIVE DAY FROM STAFF**
- ☐ **LESS DEAD TIME SPENT COMMUTING IN THE MORNING**