



Successful Flexible Work Arrangements
An Employer's Guide

***Let's Get
Flexible!***





**SUCCESSFUL FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS:
AN EMPLOYER'S GUIDE**

Published by the Work-Life Unit, Family Development Division
Ministry of Community Development and Sports
512 Thomson Road, MCDS Building, Singapore 298136
Tel: 6355 8030 Fax: 6354 3976 Email: work-life@mcds.gov.sg
Internet website: www.mcds.gov.sg

Date of publication: Mar 2002
ISBN 981-04-5880-0

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced for commercial use. Non-commercial users must acknowledge the Ministry of Community Development and Sports as source and keep the Work-Life Unit, Family Development Division of the Ministry informed prior to publication.

Designed and printed by Kaleido Marketing Communications

Contents

pg 2 >>> Introduction

pg 5 >>> CHAPTER 1 - Benefits of Flexible Work Arrangements

- Organizational Benefits
- Benefits for Employees

pg 11 >>> CHAPTER 2 - General Steps for Implementation

pg 21 >>> CHAPTER 3 - Flexi-time

- Definitions
- Suitable Jobs For Flexi-Time
- Suitability of Employee
- Guidelines for HR Managers
- Guidelines for Employees
- Case Examples

pg 29 >>> CHAPTER 4 - Flexi-place (Teleworking/Telecommuting)

- Definition
- Types of Telecommuting
- What Jobs are Suitable For Telecommuting
- Attributes of a Successful Telecommuter
- Challenges to Telecommuting
- Setting Up The Home Office
- Guidelines for Managers
- Guidelines for Employees
- Case Examples

pg 40 >>> Key Success Factors in Implementing a Flexible Work Arrangement

pg 41 >>> Conclusion

APPENDICES

pg 42 >>> *Appendix A*

Steps to Cost-Benefit Analysis

pg 43 >>> *Appendix B*

Sample of a Company Guide to Flexible Work Arrangements

pg 44 >>> *Appendix C*

Sample Format for Flexible Work Arrangement Proposal

pg 47 >>> *Appendix D*

Checklist for Flexible Work Arrangement

pg 48 >>> *Appendix E*

Sample Telecommuting Agreement

pg 50 >>> *Appendix F*

Useful Websites on Flexible Work Arrangements

pg 52 >>> *Appendix G*

List of Useful Contacts

pg 53 >>> *Appendix H*

List of Available Work-Life Resources

pg 54 >>> *Appendix I*

Bibliography

pg 55 >>> *Appendix J*

Feedback Form

Introduction



Flexibility and work-life support are fast becoming the key drivers of employee commitment. The new knowledge-based economy demands a transformation of workplace practices. Workplaces must be prepared to respond rapidly to changing needs of businesses and demands of a new generation of knowledge workers. In developed countries, flexible work arrangements are leading to fundamental changes in the workplace, challenging the way we think about where, when and how work is done. Singapore has to realign its workplace practices to catch up with the competition.

Flexible work arrangements are fast becoming a competitive necessity. It is one of the key programmes of a growing class of work-life strategies. Whereas flexi-work has become an established work pattern in some developed countries, Singapore employers have been slow to catch on with only 0.3% of our workers adopting flexi-place as a flexible work arrangement compared to 3.3% in US and 4.1% in UK. Part-time workers make up only 4.7% as compared to 24% in the UK,

23% in Japan and 17% in the US. Less than 1.5% are on flexi-time compared to 28% in the US, 12% in UK and 8.7% in Japan.¹

Employers and employees alike have reasons for using flexible working patterns which work to each other's advantage.

Organizations may decide to implement flexible work arrangements either because they see these as a means to help solve an existing problem such as high absenteeism, or simply because they recognize the strategic importance of helping staff balance their work and personal life.

Work flexibility is also used as a key talent attraction tool. Companies that embark on flexi-work practices will achieve a win-win outcome for themselves and their employees. In the near future, flexi-work practices will be viewed as an integral part of workplaces.

This booklet is aimed at helping human resource professionals understand the varied forms of flexi-work and provide a succinct guide to implementing and evaluating the use of flexi-work in their companies. It is hoped that this guide will help companies to approach flexi-work as a means of gaining competitive advantage and to help their employees be effective in their work and personal lives. Now is the time for Singapore to align its workplace practices and culture to the new demands for flexibility.

¹ Report on Flexible Work Arrangements, Manpower Research and Statistics Dept of the Ministry of Manpower, Singapore. 1999



Chapter 1 Benefits of Flexible Work Arrangements

Both employers and employees benefit immensely from adopting flexible work arrangements. Overseas and local research has consistently found that they improve business results and the bottom-line whilst helping employees to enhance their work performance and quality of life.



ORGANIZATIONAL BENEFITS

Customer Service

In response to the 24-7 economy, flexi-work arrangements help provide round-the-clock customer service for banking and financial services, computer support, news, entertainment programmes, and late-night shopping. By providing longer hours of service, flexi-work therefore meets diverse customer needs and improves customer service and customer retention.

Retention & Recruitment

Retention of employees is a major reason behind workplace flexibility. Studies have shown that the workforce is increasingly placing a premium on achieving good work-life balance. Employees want the flexibility to manage their schedules to fulfill both work and personal responsibilities.

The competition for talent is no longer confined to our local shores. The demand for multi-national talent (MNT) is global and their short supply enables them to look for jobs that allow them to enjoy a good quality of life. In this regard, flexi-work is a prerequisite for attracting and retaining skilled staff. Employers who provide it will have a competitive edge in the search for talent.

Tapping a Wider Manpower Pool

Singapore's workforce is small and our declining birth rates and aging population aggravate this. In 1999, 7% of Singapore's population was 65 years and above. By 2030, this age group would rise to 19%.² We also have a large proportion of untapped

² Report of the Inter-Ministerial Committee on the Ageing Population, Nov 1999, Ministry of Community Development and Sports.



female labour.³ Employers who provide flexi-work will be able to tap the experience and expertise of senior citizens and female labour force who may not be able to take traditional working hours. It is also useful where work (such as project work) requires less than a full-time position.

Productivity

Employers have found flexi-work effective in reducing absenteeism as it provides more time for employees to handle personal demands without missing a whole day's work. Research shows that telecommuters are 20% more productive on average when they work offsite as they can focus

on their work without interruption.

In the event of major disruptions (eg. hand-foot mouth disease outbreaks), flexi-workers are also positioned to continue serving clients and completing assignments. Employers can therefore maintain productivity levels and circumvent losses linked to this.

Morale

Employees go the extra mile for employers who care for them and perceive them as whole persons rather than mere workers. Employers who respond to employee needs for flexibility will boost morale and cultivate loyalty to the firm.

³ In 1999, the female labor force participation rate was only 52.7%. The main reason for women dropping out of the workforce was the difficulty of balancing work and domestic duties. Of those inactive persons who intend to seek work, half preferred to work part-time. Labor Force Survey, Jun 1998, Ministry of Manpower.

Cost Savings

Flexible work practices enable companies to match work demands with the availability of employees. They are therefore able to provide longer operating hours without incurring overtime costs.

Flexi-work options like telecommuting will reduce overheads such as rental costs, as well as the costs tied to employee absenteeism, lateness and sick leave. Employees can also schedule their workday outside normal business hours and hence reduce the costs of computer usage during peak hours.

Retention of employees would also address the concern of turnover thus resulting in substantial savings that would otherwise have been incurred in recruiting, training and developing new hires.

Adjusting to Economic Situations

Flexi-work helps companies to better match the peaks and troughs of their business activities without incurring significant increases in manpower costs.

For instance, during difficult times, flexible work arrangements can give employers another method of adjusting cost by reducing the number of hours worked rather than terminating employment. Retrenchment is avoided or minimised because the flexibility of switching to job-sharing or part-time arrangements helps the organisation reduce costs yet retain the overall staff numbers. The original full-time arrangements can be reinstated when the economy improves.

Environmentally Friendly

With the environmental concerns of global warming, flexi-work is a strategy that encourages companies to help save the environment as not only is congestion reduced during peak hours, travelling time and pollution are also lowered.



BENEFITS FOR EMPLOYEES

Work-Life Balance

Social and demographic changes have led to the rising trend of small, dual income families and the consequent need to juggle work and family responsibilities. Workforce expectations are moving towards greater work-life balance and quality of life. Organizations can use flexi-work to respond to employees' desire for more wholesome lives.

Health and Wellness

Workplaces have a role to play in reducing the high levels of stress and workload, its attendant ill effects on health and fertility, and its implications on community involvement. Flexi-work practices serve to help people thrive in their multiple roles as employees, spouses, children and volunteers. The positive results will ripple through families, community and the Singapore society.

Morale, Commitment and Job Satisfaction

These positive attributes are developed when energy levels and motivation are optimal, made possible by flexibility in work options. Employees who have more control over their lives are happier and better workers.

Phased Retirement or Re-entry into Workforce

Part-time work is a way of allowing phased retirement for older employees. It can also facilitate re-entry of employees who have taken career breaks into the workforce and those who have gone on extended maternity leave.

Hitherto, employers have expected workers to adjust their family and personal commitments to suit job demands. In today's economy, employer-employee relations have taken on a new form. Employers cannot and should not ignore the diverse needs of employees. With flexi-work arrangements, employers are positioned to re-think their work arrangements to aim for the best match between interest of the organisation and the interest of employees.



Stipulations of the Employment Act Pertaining to Flexible Work Arrangements

The Employment Act set out in 1968 governs the terms and conditions of employment for persons whose salaries are up to and do not exceed \$1600 per month. The obligations and rights would apply to employees having access to flexible work arrangements except for part-time workers, who should refer to the Employment of Part-Time Employees Regulation. Part-time workers and job sharers would have their benefits pro-rated according to their responsibilities.

With regard to work patterns, the Act stipulates that working hours should not exceed 6 hours without a break, or more than 8 or 9 hours a day, or 44 hours a week. Workers on flexible work arrangements who work in excess of 44 hours a week will still be entitled to over-time pay. In short, the Act does not inhibit employees from working flexi-time, flexi-place, compressed work week and temporary contracts.



Chapter 2 General Steps for Implementation

The steps towards implementing flexible work arrangements in your workplace are as follows:



INFORMATION GATHERING

Before introducing flexible work arrangements, pertinent information about the organisation's needs and resources, employees' needs as well as possible community resources should be obtained.

These may be obtained through various means, including:

- a. Data from existing personnel records
- b. Employee needs assessment surveys
- c. Focus group and management interviews

Personnel Records

Personnel Records would provide information about the gender, age, marital status, average length of service of employees, as well as vital employment statistics such as percentage of employees who do not

return from childcare leave. The information gathered from these records may be useful in identifying any problems that may exist in the organization or in identifying employee needs that may be solved with the implementation of flexible work arrangements.

Employee Needs Assessment

Employee Needs Assessment Surveys and Focus Group discussions would be a value added means of obtaining more pertinent information regarding current and future needs of employees.

These may include the following information:

- utilization rate of any existing policies and benefits

- dependent care needs (childcare or eldercare - the types of problems with current arrangements, convenience of location, back-up arrangements, cost, degree of satisfaction etc.);
- number/percentage of dual career households;
- number of hours worked per week;
- plans for additional children;
- whether any morale problems exist;
- employee commuting time and arrangements;
- family related stress problems;
- any interest in flexible work arrangements: and
- what type of benefits and policies employees want most.

Surveys

Surveys may be carried out through hardcopy questionnaires or via the intranet. For hardcopy questionnaires, the number of questionnaires distributed would depend on the capacity to process them and the size of the organization.

It is always helpful to have a covering letter signed by the CEO to accompany the survey to lend importance to it and explain its significance.

Focus Groups

Focus group discussions with your staff may add value in exploring the range of issues, employee perceptions of these issues and the intensity of employee feelings on these issues.

It can also be used to supplement and clarify quantitative findings that are obtained through the needs assessment surveys.

Management Interviews

Management interviews are carried out to obtain and determine the needs for a flexible work arrangement initiative as well as the attitude of management to these issues.

In addition, pertinent information regarding employee needs and concerns can also be obtained during exit interviews, training workshops and seminars, the staff suggestion scheme or other avenues where staff are able to share or voice their concerns.

It may also be useful to gather information about what other companies are doing, especially competitors in the same industry.

SETTING GOALS

The next step will be to determine what work practices best meet your company's business goals. It may be important to work out what you want to achieve with the implementation of flexible work arrangements.

A cost-benefit analysis may be carried out to ascertain the anticipated benefits of implementing these practices as well as the costs of not implementing them. An example of how cost-benefit analysis may be carried out is given in Appendix A.

It is also possible to calculate the anticipated short and long-term benefits and compare these with the implementation cost while identifying possible barriers to these changes. You should consult your employees, management and trade unions throughout this decision-making process and monitor the changes to evaluate their success.





IMPLEMENTATION STAGES

The benefits of flexible work arrangement programmes must fit in with the organisation's goals, its corporate culture, management styles and fiscal concerns in order to be a strategic business practice.

The implementation stages involved include:

Gaining Support for the Initiative

Support for implementation needs to come from both the top management and from staff. Because many flexible work arrangements run counter to traditional management philosophies on scheduling, employees being visible and on-site, methods of supervision and evaluation, concerted efforts must be made to gather the support of all parties in the organization. The process of gaining support could include carrying out a cost-benefit analysis (as outlined above) and developing the business case for work-life.

Task Force

It is advisable that a top-level task force be appointed to oversee the implementation. Their responsibilities include defining the objectives and desired results,

developing an action plan and timetable for implementation, determining the scope and whether a pilot is to be implemented, and finally setting up the process to provide on-going support.

The task force members can comprise:

- line employees from several levels
- representatives of top and mid-level management
- diverse age groups
- male and female employees
- employees with and without childcare needs
- union members
- HR staff

It may be useful to have your staff from different sectors involved in the task force as they would be able to lend their expertise in the different areas such as:

- research - to develop tools for assessing needs
- finance - to assess the costs and benefits
- marketing - to develop a marketing strategy
- communications - to write guidelines and policies
- training - to develop programmes to prepare all levels of employees for the new arrangements
- HR staff - to ensure that HR policies



and the Employment Act are adhered to

- union/employee representatives - ensure employees' rights are not violated

Several organizations have taken the extra step of assigning dedicated staff to oversee the implementation of work-life programmes including flexible work arrangements. Others assign such responsibilities to HR staff who may oversee employee benefits or employee wellness programmes.

Marketing and Communicating the Initiative

The initiatives must be effectively made known to all employees, explaining the new work

arrangements and how employees can make use of these options. Employees must also be assured that participating in such programmes would not have adverse effects on their careers and managers must be encouraged to support such initiatives.

Means of communicating the initiatives include publicity through newsletters and other official company publications, via posters, training workshops, official company functions and the intranet.

Develop Written Descriptions, Guidelines and Policy

A clear set of written guidelines pertaining to each of the individual flexible work arrangements must be written. [The guidelines should clearly:](#)

- define the flexible work option
- explain who would be suitable for each option
- explain how to write a proposal for approval (or provide a standard form or format)
- answer any questions that employees may have regarding the options.

A sample of the format for company guidelines is at **Appendix B**.

The proposal form should include:

- * **Rationale:** The business reasons as well as employee's personal reasons for requesting for a flexible work arrangement.
- * **Personal characteristics:** Characteristics of the employee that would be suitable for the particular option.
- * **Benefits:** How it benefits both the organization as well as the employee.
- * **Concerns:** Any anticipated obstacles and measures to monitor and resolve them.
- * **Impact:** Impact on colleagues and how assignments with co-workers can be coordinated.
- * **Communication process:** How colleagues, clients and management can be kept in touch and informed about work status.
- * **Schedule of work:** For telecommuting, a balanced schedule between off-site and office work days must be

maintained, so that the employee does not feel isolated.

- * **Trial period:** A reasonable period of time to evaluate whether the flexible work arrangement is effective.
- * **Technical arrangements:** Whether any training or technical support is required.
- * **Monthly budget:** To assess if any additional equipment or set-up is required. For telecommuting option, whether additional off-site expenses are required.
- * **Additional points to address for telecommuting work options:**
 - **Security:** To address the concerns about the use of confidential and proprietary information outside of the office and how this information will be protected.
 - **Alternative workspace:** Includes the description and location of a dedicated workspace for



employees, and its degree of privacy and safety.

- **Insurance:** Pertains to employees working off-site and any equipment paid for by the employer.

The proposal may vary depending on the characteristic and nature of the option being requested.

A sample proposal is attached at **Appendix C** for reference.

REACHING AN AGREEMENT

As soon as it has been determined that the proposal is feasible, the employee and the manager will need to clarify the terms of their agreement. Among other things, the terms will include periodic evaluation of the pilot programme in order to modify, assess its success or discontinue if necessary.

Trial Period

This should typically be for a period of 3 to 6 months. During the trial period, if there are issues that arise, the manager should discuss these with the employee to try and resolve them, keeping the human resource manager informed at all times.

After the trial period, team members should evaluate the arrangement and the following issues should be taken into consideration:

a. whether the supervisor is able to



- manage the arrangement
- b. what do stakeholders (including customers) feel is the impact of this new arrangement
- c. whether individual performance measures and business objectives were achieved.

However, should the manager decide not to approve the proposal after the trial period, the reasons should be discussed with the employee. Perhaps modifications of the proposal, re-evaluations or alternatives can be discussed at the time.

Conditions for Employment

As job-sharing, flexi-time and flexi-place arrangements are restructured full-time work, there would be no



implications on the salary nor the benefits. However, part-time and some cases of job-sharing, being reduced-time options, may have implications on the employment benefits. Hence, the implications must be stated clearly prior to implementation.

Post-Trial Period

After the scheme is adopted as a regular working arrangement, it is necessary to get endorsement from the Chief Executive Officer for its official implementation.

Training for Managers

Training workshops specifically targeted at managers should also be carried out to ensure that they are prepared to handle issues that may arise from the new initiatives. It is also important to train the managers as staff will turn to them first with any questions they may have about the new policies.

Training can cover the following areas:

- Understanding flexible work arrangements and how they can be applied effectively;
- Developing efficient problem-solving skills and how to link flexible work arrangements to bottom line performance issues;
- How to overcome the challenges inherent in changing to a more flexible management style.

Training can take the form of lectures, case studies, small group discussions, role-playing, tests, games and simulations. At the same time, real-life examples can also be shared.

To make sure that managers implement the policies, it is suggested that:

- training programmes for managers address the issues
- managers' responsibilities be included in performance appraisals
- managers who have experience of specific areas such as part-time work or compressed work week be linked with other managers considering the options
- managers be given opportunities to openly discuss the difficulties as well as the rewards of implementing the policies.



REVIEW & EVALUATION

It may be prudent to build the evaluation process into the design of flexible work arrangements. The review and evaluation process may include using checklists, reports, surveys, observations, employee interviews as well as comparison of data before and after the flexible work arrangement was initiated. Adjustments and improvements can be made subsequently. It is important to maintain an open door policy to listen to staff at all levels and continue a two-way communication process throughout.

Here are some suggested means of measuring effectiveness of the policies⁴:

	Sources of Information
Return from maternity leave >>>	Personnel records/ exit interviews
Overall levels of absenteeism >>>	Personnel records/ staff surveys
Recruitment >>> (Work & family policies as an attraction)	Selection interviews/ during induction process
Retention >>>	Personnel records/ exit interviews/ climate surveys/ take-up rate of various policies
Impact of particular programmes >>>	Evaluation forms/ interviews & focus discussions/ staff surveys/ productivity & performance records/ Return On Investment Study
Morale & commitment >>>	Attitude or climate surveys/ anecdotal information

Conclusion

Flexible work arrangements can be implemented systematically to raise productivity and respond to rapidly changing needs of customers and employees. A studied approach involving the steps we have described will help you measure the effectiveness of flexible work arrangements. A checklist of these steps is in **Appendix D** to assist you.

It is important to remember that flexi-work arrangements should not be implemented in a reactive and piecemeal fashion. A total approach will help you reap results that are long-term and sustainable.

⁴ Adapted from: *Work & Family: Steps to Success*



Chapter 3 Flexi-time

Flexible Work Arrangements (FWA) are the core components of any work-life programme. They have a bigger impact on staff than the other parts of a work-life programme as they provide the fundamental flexibility for staff to manage their competing demands. This chapter will cover the various FWA which deal with being flexible in time schedules. The flexi-time options are:

1. Part-time work
2. Job-sharing
3. Flexi-hours (start/end times)
4. Compressed workweek
5. Temporary work

DEFINITIONS

Part-time work >>> A work arrangement in which the hours worked are below 30 hours a week.⁵ A part-time worker is entitled to employment benefits such as annual leave and sick leave on a pro-rata basis.

Job-sharing >>> An arrangement in which two or more employees share the same job, but work at different times, although there may be a time overlap to maintain continuity. They may each work part of the day or week, or alternate weeks. Pay,

holidays and other benefits are proportionate to the number of hours worked. There are 3 forms of job-sharing:

a. Shared responsibility >>>

2 employees jointly share the responsibilities of one full-time job.

They perform the full range of tasks associated with the single position they fill. They are interchangeable in their areas of work. This is most suited where work is ongoing as opposed to project based.

⁵ Employment Act Part VIA No. 66A, Singapore

b. Divided responsibility >>> 2 employees share one full-time position and divide responsibilities, usually by project or client group. They perform separate tasks and provide back up for each other when necessary. This is most suited when the work can be divided according to project or client group.

c. Unrelated responsibilities >>> 2 employees perform completely different tasks. But for headcount purposes, they are counted as one position. They generally work in the same division/department. No back up is required by either. In essence, these are 2 part-time jobs.

Flexi-hours (start/end times) >>> An arrangement in which employees can vary their daily start and finish times to suit their work and personal commitments provided they complete a stipulated number of hours. In most instances, all employees may be required to be present during certain "core hours" which are fixed at a period between the latest start time and earliest end time.

Compressed workweek >>> An arrangement in which an employee works his/her full-time hours (such as 40 hours) in fewer than 5 days per week.

Temporary work >>> Short-term employment which can be informal (as in 'on or off' seasonal or casual work) or formal (involving signed short-term employment contracts).

Temporary workers may work the full, ordinary hours of employment, but are not normally entitled to many of the employment benefits. They are paid on an hourly basis, and their services can be terminated at short notice.

Temporary employment is more suitable for short term projects or as a relief when staff go on long leave.



Concerns to Note

Generally, it is usually not possible to include all staff in the arrangements, especially those in jobs where continuity of service and customer contact are essential. Be careful that this may lead to jealousy and resentment among staff not selected for the FWA.

For flexible start and end times, employees may need to keep a record of their hours, and there may be an initial start-up cost of an efficient and accurate time recording device. Due to the possible extended office hours, there may also be increased security costs.

Suitable Jobs for Flexi-time

Generally, there are very few limits to the range and level of jobs that can be successfully worked on flexi-time. They include jobs in most locations and classifications as well as jobs at senior and management levels.

When identifying part-time opportunities, it is important to consider the nature of the job, the degree of customer contact, and the employee's proposed work schedule. Types of jobs that lend themselves to part-time work are jobs that require little supervision and include project-oriented and specialized jobs that are done independently.

If the job requires heavy communications with other divisions, frequent travel, intense and consistent customer/client contact or extensive supervisory responsibilities, this may be difficult to accomplish on a part-time basis.

Suitability of Employee

Working flexibly involves meeting the needs of both the organization and employee. While it is essential to ensure that the work processes or style are adapted for increased efficiency and benefit both parties, this working style may not be suitable for everyone. Factors such as organization and department goals, as well as employee work style and capability, determine if this arrangement can work for the employee. Hence, FWA should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Managers, supervisors and professionals can work successfully on part-time basis in the following circumstances:

- the work schedule of the individual is scaled back moderately
- the individual can delegate work comfortably
- the individual has solid communication
- the individual manages a limited number of employees
- management back-up is available.

Part-time employees are generally

more committed than the average full-time employee, because the company has taken care of their needs. A strong full-time performer may be just as effective when working on a part-time basis. If the full-time employee is suffering from burnout, stress or conflicting work/life obligations resulting in weak performance, the same employee may perform better on a part-time basis.

Guidelines for HR Managers

Managers should be trained in:

- Maintaining productivity while meeting employees' needs for flexibility - Know that FWA are not an entitlement. They are evaluated on a case-by-case basis and decisions are based on the business needs of the organisation.
- Performance management of employees on FWA - Manage by results
- The advantages of FWA



Support and advice to managers and employees:

Management/HR department should provide appropriate on-the-job support and advice to both managers and employees.

Potential Obstacles to Flexibility:

- A corporate culture that does not encourage the usage of FWA may be a deterrent to employees who wish to be on the programme even though that form of the work arrangement is available.
- Management scepticism or lack of support - management has to be convinced that the work arrangement is a viable alternative and be willing to support the employee in the programme.
- Work overload e.g. hiring 2 part-timers for each full-time job would mean that the organization has to maintain and process 2 sets of personnel records.
- Higher overheads (e.g. training cost, workmen compensation, furniture and equipment) may also be incurred as a result of having 2 persons in one position.
- Greater difficulty in arranging training sessions, team meetings etc., thereby placing additional scheduling demands on managers
- Certain jobs may need to be re-designed to make part-time work feasible and cost would be incurred in so doing.



Guidelines for Employees

Employees should be clear that flexi-time is not an entitlement. The business needs should be met and individual employees must assess their own situations to see if the FWA they would like to take on would meet their needs.

A suggested thought process for employees before embarking on an FWA:

- Be clear about what FWAs are available and what they entail.
- Assess own situation - Would the FWA be useful to the particular situation the employee is in and is the employee's situation suitable in terms of job nature and his/her personality?
- Sound out the boss, discuss the pros and cons and gather more information to prepare for the proposal writing.
- Write a proposal, setting clear job responsibilities, tasks, performance goals and how they will be measured (see general guidelines on writing proposal in Chap 2).



CASE EXAMPLES

Abacus International >>> Flexi-hours

Due to the move in 1998 from Singapore Power Building to Abacus Plaza (in Tampines), commuting for some people became a problem as it increased their travel time and costs. The company adopted flexible start and end times to address this problem.

Employees can start their work anytime between 7.30am and 9.30 a.m and end correspondingly between 4.30pm and 6.30 p.m. It worked well for those who needed to drop off their children at school or for those who lived far from the workplace. The only challenge faced was in the coordination of work since staff would come in at different times. However, once the routine set in, this was no longer a problem.

Administrative hiccups were minor compared to the huge cost savings and greater employee satisfaction. Turnover was managed at reasonable limits (due in part to other family-friendly workplace practices too).

In a survey by Towers Perrin (done in early 2001), more than 80% of the employees felt that they were better able to meet their deadlines and work more effectively. More than 75% felt that these arrangements allowed for better balance between work and family commitments. The organisation learnt that the key factors in the success were flexibility and transparency. Once they got the employees' buy-in, trust was built and effective execution of policies could take place.

KK Women's and Children's Hospital (KKWCH) >>> Compressed Work Week

A forerunner of flexible work arrangements and other work-life programmes, KKWCH mooted the 12-hour shift when a few nurses who had gone to Boston for an attachment in the Children Intensive Care Unit realized that this was a better arrangement compared to the usual 8-hour shift.

This provided better continuity of services to the patients, as it meant that there would be only 2 shift changes instead of 3. Hence better patient care was ensured and the patient felt more assured with the same nurse for a longer period of time. It cut down on reporting time for nurses and improved communication since less time was spent in passing over from one shift to another. Nurses could swap duties and work longer hours so that they could take a few days off. Eventhough all nursing staff had choices of other shifts (8-hour shift, permanent night shift), 90% of the nursing staff worked on the 12-hour shift as it was the most convenient. The only challenge they had was when some staff swapped shifts resulting in scheduling problems.

After 1 year of implementation, 77 out of 85 staff expressed satisfaction with this shift arrangement. Absenteeism was reduced. Customer satisfaction was increased arising from the drop in disruptions during shift changes. A survey conducted found that 66% of the staff felt more energized and motivated.





TELEWORKING / TELECOMMUTING

Definition

The Midwest Institute for Telecommuting Education, a group that conducts feasibility studies and implementation seminars with businesses defines telecommuting as follows:

“Telecommuting is an off-site work arrangement that permits employees to work in or near their homes for all or part of the work week. Thus they ‘commute’ to work by telephone and other telecommunications equipment rather than by car or transit.”

The Ministry of Manpower defines telecommuting as “an arrangement that allows employees to carry out their work at a location away from the conventional office, either in the employee’s home, satellite offices or neighbourhood work centers.”⁶

Presently, businesses and companies are talking about shared workspace, reserved for employees by the hour or day instead of being assigned a permanent work area.

Types of Telecommuting

HOME-BASED

The employee has an equipped home office from which they work regularly though not necessarily on a daily basis.

SATELLITE OFFICES

Often referred to as branch offices, these are satellite offices located at a distance from the company’s main office and are situated at a location that is convenient to themselves or to their customers. The office has equipment and furniture provided by the company and houses employees from one company.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WORK CENTRE

Essentially the same as a satellite office, the only difference is that the neighbourhood work centre houses more than one company’s employees. Several companies may share the lease on an office building but maintain separate office areas within the building.

In some cases, companies may not

⁶ Flexible Work Arrangements, Case Study Series 3/2001, Ministry of Manpower and Ministry of Community Development and Sports, 2001

have to lease the premises for their telecommuting employees but may rent space for them as needed. This is attractive to smaller companies as the vendor offers copying services, computer rental, conference facilities, fax machines and other office equipment all on an as-needed basis.

MOBILE WORKING

This form of telecommuting involves working from an assortment of locations. Most often used by staff who do not require a fixed desk in an office as they are frequently on the road, they use technology to communicate with the office from home, the car, plane or hotel. This arrangement is most suitable for employees who need to be constantly on the move to get their jobs done.

Some people regard telecommuting as a radical concept, but as the Singapore economy moves into the information age, there is an indication that telecommuting may gain popularity.

Conditions that favour the increasing trend to telecommute are as follows:

- Keen competition in the IT industry, the increased rate of computer literacy, improved technology and the falling costs of equipment necessary to telecommute on a regular basis
- Cost savings in rental and office space
- Telecommuting allows companies



to tap on a new pool of resource personnel such as the disabled and homemakers.

Benefits

PRODUCTIVITY

Research shows that telecommuters are 20% more productive on average when they work off-site as they can focus on their work without interruption.

EXPENSE REDUCTION

Working off-site (at home or at a less expensive location) can reduce overhead costs such as office space and subsequently rental costs. The telecommuter also saves in commuting costs.

DISASTER RECOVERY

In the midst of major disruptions (eg. hand-foot mouth disease outbreaks), telecommuters are positioned to continue serving clients and completing assignments.

USE OF EQUIPMENT

Telecommuters with flexible work hours can schedule their workday outside of normal business hours and extend the time that expensive business equipment is put to use. It also reduces the number of computer users during peak hours.

ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY

With the environmental concerns of global warming, telecommuting is a strategy that encourages companies to help save the environment as workers not only reduce travelling time, but the corresponding pollution that comes from driving as well.

TIME SAVINGS

Employees have more time to handle personal matters as they will enjoy the time savings accrued from travelling to and from the office.

What Jobs are Suitable for Telecommuting?

Characteristics of jobs that are suitable for telecommuting:

- Assignments that are clearly defined and have measurable outcomes

- Face to face interaction with clients/colleagues is on an as-needed basis
- Work-related material that are easily transportable and relocatable
- Tasks that require long stretches of uninterrupted time (e.g. writing, data entry, phone calls)
- Jobs that require the productive use of electronic equipment for the transmission of information
- Jobs that do not require too much face-to-face contact, can be handled from a distance and require concentration
- Jobs that can be done in a small, possibly confined area
- Jobs that do not require constant feedback from co-workers
- Jobs where tasks can be done by one employee or combined with the work of other employees at a later date

According to a US study⁷, about half of all employees could do their jobs just as well from home or a telework centre as from main corporate headquarters. About a third could easily fulfill about half of their job responsibility working from home. Only about a third held jobs for which it would be extremely difficult to justify telecommuting.

Attributes of a Successful Telecommuter

- Ability to work independently and

⁷ Study conducted by JALA Associates, extracted from the book *Telecommute! Go To Work Without Leaving Home*, 1996

with minimal supervision, self motivated, with a good solid history of job performance appraisals.

- They are flexible, goal-oriented, with good organizational, planning and time management skills.
- Ability to separate job demands from home and family needs.
- Communication is vital for telecommuters and employees should make it a point to call each other regularly and not rely too heavily on e-mail as subtle nuances conveyed in body language and vocal inflections, as well as corporate culture are lost in electronic correspondences. Keeping in regular telephone contact with the office also ensures that telecommuters maintain their personal touch with colleagues.

Challenges to Telecommuting

Although there are several advantages of telecommuting, several challenges may hamper an organization's willingness to integrate telecommuting into the traditional office environment. **Some of these challenges faced by management are as follows:**

- Change in the way management supervises staff
 - It is important that management of staff be supervised according to measurable deliverables as they are not able to monitor staff by sight.

As out of sight does not mean not at work, managers have to engage in different methods in supervising staff from the ones that they know. The deliverables are to be agreed upon beforehand between the supervisor and the employee.

- Social networking is affected
 - Working in different locations may affect teamwork and fragment the social network (of those left behind).
 - Possible resentment among those NOT chosen to telecommute.
 - As social learning and exchanges take place around the water cooler and other informal settings, this exchange is not possible when an employee telecommutes.
- Challenges in the home environment
 - Those who have family conflicts may find it difficult to work from home.
- Coordination of Schedules and Working in a Team
 - Schedules have to be co-ordinated as telecommuters are not available during the normal work hours and co-ordination is required for staff and group meetings. Meetings thus have to be planned in advance.
 - It is also advisable to establish contingency plans in the event that a telecommuter or an office counterpart cannot be reached.



Some Specific Challenges Faced By The Employees Are As Follows:

- Feelings of isolation without the regular social contact with the office
- Difficulty in self motivation
- Difficulty to stop working at the end of the day
- Distractions of TV, children, neighbours who drop in to chat and refrigerator in the home

Reaching an Agreement

Once it is determined that telecommuting is feasible, the employee and manager would need to clarify the terms of their agreement. **These terms should include:**

- Trial period - after the trial period is determined, there should be a periodic evaluation of the pilot programme to modify, assess the success of, or discontinue the programme if necessary
- The schedule between off-site and office work days - this typically works out to spending about 20% of the time in the office
- Security issues regarding proprietary information

- Office and technical equipment needed and who would be responsible for the costs and maintenance
- Written agreement regarding the equipment loaned to the employee and a guarantee for its safe return
- A final written agreement, a business requirement, that spells out the terms of the agreement

A sample proposal and agreement for telecommuting is attached at **Appendix E**.

Setting Up The Home Office

To maintain focus on the job, a separate area where proper equipment and time is set aside for work without the distractions of home responsibilities is required.

Items that are needed:

- Computer that supports LAN facilities including surge protector



- Subscription to broadband access for faster internet access if needed
- Fax/Modem
- Cellular phone to keep in contact with the office if employee is frequently on the move
- A separate telecommunication line (if necessary)
- Other items that are optional: copy machine and other electronic equipment
- Proper furniture to support the equipment

Cost savings can be obtained by using computers and other equipment that were left behind after an upgrading exercise.

It is important that the home office be in a separate room if possible as it frees the telecommuter from interruptions and distractions for the home and conveys the message to family members in the home that once the door is closed, he is not to be disturbed. It also means that the employee can leave the "office" when the day is over and shift into their off-hours life.

Guidelines for Managers

Suggestions For Managers Who Supervise Off-Site Employees

1. Out of sight does not mean not-at-work

- Trust and clearly written agreements with set goals and objectives will establish



deliverables to help overcome the perception that staff who are not in sight are not at work.

Employees must be reachable during specified periods and supervisors have to recognise that even on-site employees are not accessible some of the times.

2. Results-based management

- Define the objectives, set clear goals and establish the interim steps and timeline to completion. Work on outcomes and deliverables.

3. Career development and advancement

- Career advancement should not be affected by telecommuting as employees should have clear career goals. Workloads, career development and appraisals as well as performance are the deciding factors for evaluation and growth.

4. Support and guidance

- During the initial period of

adjustment, regular, but non-intrusive contact through phone, fax or e-mail initiated by managers can help to alleviate any anxieties the telecommuters may feel about being less connected during this period. Including them in more group meetings and encouraging them to spend more time in the office would also be strategies to help them overcome this anxiety.

5. Be Flexible

- Aspects of the job may have to change according to changes in the nature of the job, or if there are changes in the overall objectives of the department. This may signal a need to return to the standard schedule.

6. Periodic reviews

- To be conducted so that the employee and manager review progress, make adjustments and assess the effectiveness of the arrangement.

7. In-office contact

- Encourage interaction with your telecommuting employee whenever he or she is in the office. This is because good working relationships are maintained in face-to-face contacts.

8. Checklist Tip

- Develop a checklist as to what to look for in terms of the work produced at home and that to be done in the office.

9. Communication plan

- A communication plan should be established to keep each other informed of what is being done, how and when it is being done, and how successful one is with it.

Guidelines For Employees

Planning Your Day

Some tips on how the telecommuter can get the most out of his/her day in the home/off-site office:

1. Set goals for the day.

2. Stay professional

- Maintain separate phone lines for business calls.
- Talk with the supervisor several times each day. Calls made when on telecommuting arrangements tend to be more focused and keep the telecommuter in touch with the office.

3. Dress

- Dress may be a bit more casual than the usual office attire, but dressing up to a degree psychologically puts one in the mental frame of mind for work.

4. Take regular breaks

- Vary the kinds of work that is planned to be done each day. Take breaks like short walks to clear the head, or schedule an earlier lunch if the schedule is flexible.

5. Balance Home and Work Lives

- Draw a distinct line between the home office and your living home space.

 C A S E E X A M P L E S

Norsk Hydro

Norsk Hydro is one of Norway's largest companies specialising in oil production, global supply of fertilizers, and provision of gas and electrical power.

With the increased competition for talent and Norway's small population base, the need to attract and retain talent was the key motivating factor which led to the company's decision to introduce flexible work practices.

The company introduced flexi-work under the auspices of a project called Hydroflex in 1998. Under the scheme, employees have the choice of working at the office or from home. To create the home office, the company gave each employee computer equipment, ISDN line and US\$2,000 to purchase furniture. Working hours are full-time, approximately 37.5 hours per week, but flexible. Employees work when and where they want to, depending on the nature of work, deadlines and productivity goals, etc. They have the option to work at home two days a week.

Although some employees were initially doubtful about the viability of the scheme, most are now supportive. They are more productive as the focus now is on their results and output, rather than where and when they are working. They are also able to take advantage of the flexibility to fulfil their family responsibilities.

Source: The Digital Edge: Norwegian Company Develops Mobile, Flexible Work Force

The Guardian Life Insurance Company of America

This insurance company's reasons for embracing telework included space shortage, increased productivity, employees' satisfaction and retention of top performing employees.

First implemented in the claims approving department, the company used a combination of digital ISDN connections and some analog telephone connections to provide its teleworkers with dedicated and secure access to its data system. Teleworkers were provided with PCs and standard software, three-in-one print/fax/copy machines and furniture.

For the first two to three years, teleworkers were grouped under one supervisor. They were eventually divided evenly among supervisors and had to attend weekly group meetings with in-office staff. Teleworkers were required to visit the on-site office two or three times a week.

Managers reported an increase in productivity of 10-20%. This arose mainly from the elimination of disruptions which allowed the employee to process paperwork without interruption. Guardian's teleworkers were also more willing and able to work overtime during peak periods, since they had more flexible hours and no regular commute. Another benefit was lower absenteeism as employees were able to cope with their family responsibilities without taking the day off or leaving work.

Source: Case Study: The Guardian Life Insurance Company of America, Washington State University Cooperative Extension Energy Program and Commuter Challenge, April 1999

Procter and Gamble

Procter and Gamble is a manufacturer of a wide range of consumer products. The driving force behind the introduction of flexible work arrangements was the desire to nurture a motivated and engaged workforce, as well as to improve cost efficiency.

Under the “Work from Home” programme, employees were allowed to opt for this scheme if the nature of their work permitted it. For a better work-life balance, the company actively encouraged its employees to take up this scheme. Its office was designed such that there were no fixed seats for the employees and 60% - 70% of the seats were occupied daily. Procter and Gamble drew up a clear workplan and communicated its expectations to its employees. Besides providing a dedicated phone line meant for office work, it also installed a chat software in the employees’ laptop to enable them to stay in touch with one another. Employees were also reimbursed for the purchase of ergonomically designed chairs.

Procter and Gamble reported an increase in productivity as a result of more satisfied and motivated employees.

For the successful implementation of flexi-work, the company stressed that it was important to communicate the policies clearly and explain their rationale in a clear and transparent manner. Secondly, it was useful to pilot the scheme on a group of employees to showcase the success of the programmes. It would be easier to generate employee support if they could see tangible evidence of success.



KEY SUCCESS FACTORS IN IMPLEMENTING A FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENT

1. **Ensure** that the proposal is backed by a strong business case with measurable benefits.
2. **Assess** the employee and business needs. Provide flexible work arrangements that meet both these needs.
3. **Develop** clear goals and targets for monitoring and tracking the effectiveness of the scheme.
4. As some types of flexible work arrangements entail working out-of-sight and off-site, and differs from the normal work arrangement, **trust** is required.
5. **Accountability** should be based on results or deliverables rather than “face-time”.
6. **Effective communication** through other means is essential as the staff who telecommutes has less access to informal channels of communication.
7. **Clear, methodical guidelines and adequate training** have to be in place to help support the management in implementing flexible work arrangements.
8. **Pilot** the programme first to see what works and what does not.
9. **Review** the flexible work arrangement periodically to see if the objectives have been met.

CONCLUSION

Flexible work arrangements in Singapore are currently not widely used and are more focused on operational efficiency than employee well being. However, it is envisaged that this idea will gain popularity as employers realise that there is a business case for having flexible work arrangements and that it is a powerful strategy to use in the competition for talent. This is also because the new generation of workers view work flexibility as one of the most important influences in their choice of which company they work for.

Employers are beginning to realise that there is operational efficiency and economic gains from implementing flexible work arrangements as it allows them to tap on new or existing pools of talent. Companies which have employed such options have reported results in higher productivity, increased rate of staff recruitment and reduced turnover.

Telecommuting is not as prevalent a flexible work arrangement as

part-time work. However, as Singapore gears up for faster internet access through the introduction of broadband access to all households, the infrastructure is being set for telecommuting to become a more viable work option.

Living in a fast paced world where the buzzwords are “increased efficiency” and “productivity”, employers who take into account the needs of the individual to have a better work-life balance would have the added edge in the competition for talent. In Singapore’s rapidly ageing population, where 19% of the population will be aged 65 and above in 2030, flexible work options will also enable companies to tap on this pool of older and experienced workers.

The hope of the Work-Life Unit and the aim of this guide is for companies to realise the tremendous potential of using this strategy to give them that competitive edge over other companies. It is an arrangement that takes into account the needs of the individual and the needs of the organisation and ultimately works at achieving a win-win outcome for all.

Appendix A



COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS

Cost-Benefit Analysis is a decision-making tool to establish the rationale for adopting specific work-life programme/s as enables the benefits of alternative approaches to be weighed against cost.

Provided below is an adapted summary of a seven-step approach to assess the costs and benefits as outlined in *Workplace Guide to Work and Family* published by the *Work and Family Unit, Department of Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business, Canberra*.

Step 1 >>> Define the issue, identify objectives, and define those affected by the new arrangement.

The issue would be related to a specific problem that exists in the organisation or the type of work-life strategy proposed, for example telecommuting, part-time work etc. Those affected by the new arrangement might include human resource managers, line managers, employees and customers.

Step 2 >>> Identify available work-life options that might solve the problem identified above. Inputs from existing HR records, employee needs assessment and exit interviews would be useful to determine the viable work-life options.

Step 3 >>> List potential outcomes, including the benefits as well as costs and concerns. These should primarily be qualitative factors.

Step 4 >>> Estimate the costs and benefits of introducing/not introducing the measures. Making a comparative assessment of the various options as proposed in Step 2, against the outcomes listed in Step 3 for each option. The following should also be taken into account in assessing costs and benefits: recruitment costs, training costs, turnover costs and administrative costs.

Step 5 >>> Calculate the scope of the project. Here the total cost of implementing the work-life option is to be considered in terms of the number of employees who are likely to take up the option.

Step 6 >>> Additional Inputs. Qualitative effects should be added in support of the cost-benefit analysis. These might include the impact on morale and commitment to the organisation, the demographic changes in the workforce and the future impact on the organisation and corporate image.

Step 7 >>> Make the decision. The decision may be made to pilot the new arrangement and carry out reviews periodically.

Appendix B



SAMPLE OF A COMPANY GUIDE TO FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS

1. Our Company Principles and their Implications

2. Guidelines for:

- Job-sharing
- Flexi-hours
- Compressed work
- Temporary work
- Telecommuting etc.

(Information to include are: definition of the arrangement, suitability of the job and candidate, key success factors, tips for managers and employees.

3. Sample Request Form or Proposal

4. Sample Feedback Form

Appendix C



SAMPLE FORMAT FOR FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENT PROPOSAL (to be supplemented with discussion between Manager and Employee)

FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENT REQUEST FORM

SECTION 1 *Employee completes this section*

Date of Application _____ Employee ID No _____
 Name _____ Department _____
 Job Title _____

1 Flexible work arrangement requested

- Telecommuting
- Permanent part-time
- Flexi-Hour
- Compressed Work Week
- Job share
- Other _____

2. Describe your current and requested schedule

	Current		Requested		Location <small>(please tick)</small>	
	Start time	End time	Start time	End time	On-site	Off-site
Monday						
Tuesday						
Wednesday						
Thursday						
Friday						
Saturday						
Sunday						

Total Weekly Hours

3. How will your proposed arrangement enhance your ability to get the job done?

4. What potential barriers could your changed work arrangement raise with

External Customers _____

Internal Customers _____

Co-Workers _____

Your Manager _____

5. How do you suggest overcoming any challenges with these groups?

6. Describe any additional equipment/expense that your company might require. Detail any short and long term cost savings that might result from your new schedule to offset these expenses.

7. What impact will there be for you if this flexible work arrangement is not possible?

8. What review process with your manager do you propose for constructive monitoring and improvement of your flexible work option? Are there measurable outcomes to use in the review process? List these outcomes here.

9. Proposed review date _____

SECTION II *Line manager completes this section*

Request for Flexible Work Option approved declined

If you decline this request, please provide the reasons.

Line Manager's Signature

Employee's Signature

Date _____

Date _____

Effective date _____ to _____

If option is time limited or terminated

Copy of this form and any attachments should be given to HR

Appendix D



CHECKLIST FOR FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENT

Information Gathering

1. Establish the current business issues eg attrition, absenteeism, tardiness.
2. Establish customer (external and internal) expectations eg extended hours.
3. Establish employees' needs eg long commutes, family commitments.
4. Establish resources in the community.

Setting Goals

5. Determine the driving forces for flexi-work arrangements eg recruitment.
6. Determine the barriers to flexi-work arrangements eg "face-time" expectations.
7. Consider how to address these concerns from the viewpoints of employees, managers and senior management.
8. Carry out a cost-benefit analysis.
9. Establish business objectives for establishing flexi-work arrangements.

Implementation

10. Secure senior management support ie address concerns.
11. Set up a task force.
12. Communicate the initiative.
13. Draft guidelines for managers and employees eg consider the non-negotiables like maintaining productivity and communication.
14. Develop training programme for managers and employees eg mindsets, work culture, skills, modelling the way, performance management, evaluation.
15. Consider the need for a pilot study.
16. Implement flexi-work arrangements for a trial period.

Review and Evaluation

17. Assess and discuss how the arrangements are working.
18. Examine the outcomes and impact of flexi-work arrangements.
19. Fine-tune the guidelines.
20. Establish next steps.

Appendix E



SAMPLE TELECOMMUTING AGREEMENT

The following document will serve as an agreement between _____ (the employee) and _____ (the manager) at _____ (the company) in regard to a telecommuting work arrangement - including work schedule, equipment used, and other details - that will begin the week of _____ (the date) and end on (if applicable) _____ (the date).

1. The employee plans to work off-site at _____ (location).

2. The employee plans to work off-site according to the following schedule:
_____ (days, hours, weeks, months).

3. The employee requires the use of the following equipment in order to do the work satisfactorily _____

4. When working off-site, the employee will keep in touch with his or her supervisor and colleagues at the office in the following ways _____

5. The employee will focus on the following work tasks when working from home _____

6. If the employee requires an additional telephone line, the monthly connection costs, long-distance charges, plus any special services (call waiting, call forwarding, voicemail etc.) will be paid for by _____

7. The supervisor will determine the employee's progress on work completed at home through

8. The employee will participate in meetings and conferences held in the office in his or her absence through (teleconferencing, videoconferencing, the receipt of minutes, etc.)

9. The employee and supervisor will meet _____ (how often) to monitor the telecommuting arrangement.

10. The employee will set in place the following security measures to secure all proprietary information and documents that are brought home _____

11. Other stipulations of this telecommuting work arrangement _____

I agree to the conditions set forth in this agreement.

Employee

Supervisor

Date

Date

Please note: This is a sample Telecommuting Agreement and is not comprehensive. Management is advised to seek legal advice and adapt the form to their requirements.

Appendix F



USEFUL WEBSITES ON FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS

<i>Website</i>	<i>Description</i>
www.bluesuitmom.com	Their weekly poll shows that flexible work hours is the most popular FWA option among working mothers. Under the category “Career”, it explains the various FWA, and has a worksheet to help find the option that suits them best. It also teaches how to write a telecommuting proposal. (Note: Information is provided by consultant running the website, www.workoptions.com)
www.workoptions.com	The website has articles on the different types of FWAs (telecommuting, compressed work-week, part-time work, job sharing), it also promotes its book <i>“Flex Success Proposal Blueprint”</i>
www.workingwoman.com	This website carries articles pertinent to working mothers and includes the listing of 100 best companies for working mothers.
www.fastcompany.com	By running a search on keywords associated with FWAs, you can find many helpful articles to assist employees to use FWAs at their workplace.
www.jobsharing.com	Job-Sharing Resources is an employment services company dedicated to job-sharing. However, it does provide some basic information on job-sharing and its benefits. There are also links to job-sharing articles in other websites.

<i>Website</i>	<i>Description</i>
www.europa.eu.int/ISPO/infosoc/telework.html	Provides links to other websites that give information on teleworking in the European Union.
www.dti.gov.uk/work-lifebalance	Under Key Facts, figures from their survey on the different work-life options can be found, which is useful in proving the business case for FWAs. Under Case Studies, there are examples of companies with work-life policies and the benefits they achieved with these practices.
www.gmtma.org/altwork.htm	Explains the benefits of telecommuting and provides links to associated organisations.
www.worklifemontgomery.org	The toolkit is comprehensive and explains each of the options under FWAs. It also gives sample policies of each option.
www.athomemothers.com	Carries relevant articles on issues faced by working mothers. At http://www.athomemothers.com/infoguides/36a1.htm is an article that explains all the different flexible work options, helps working mothers choose the one that suits them and teaches them how to negotiate for it.
www.womans-work.com	A website targeted at job seekers/providers of flexible jobs. Under "Flex definitions", it explains each of the options under FWAs and gives sample policies of each option.
www.teleworker.com	The website has quotes and a glossary related to teleworking, links to other websites that are job sources for teleworkers as well as a pros and cons list for this flexible work option.

Appendix G



LIST OF USEFUL CONTACTS

Work-Life Unit

The Work-Life Unit was set up in the Ministry of Community Development and Sports (MCDS) on Sept 19, 2000 to bring about a work-life friendly workplace culture in Singapore through promoting awareness as well as providing resources, organising training seminars and research on work-life strategy. One aspect of work-life strategy is the provision of flexible work options.

A full listing of the available resources can be found in Appendix H.

Contact information:

Work-Life Unit

Family Development Division
Ministry of Community Development and Sports
512 Thomson Road
Singapore 298136

Tel: 6355 8030

Email: work-life@mcds.gov.sg

Fax: 6354 3976

Website: www.aboutfamilylife.org.sg

Human Resource Promotion Section

The Human Resource Promotion Section of the Ministry of Manpower raises the awareness of and promotes the adoption of good HR practices, including flexible work arrangements. For more information on flexible work arrangements, please contact:

Human Resource Promotion Section

Ministry of Manpower
18 Havelock Road
#04-02
Singapore 059764

Tel: 6539 5200

Email: mom_hrps@mom.gov.sg

Fax: 6535 4811

Website: www.mom.gov.sg

Appendix H



LIST OF AVAILABLE WORK-LIFE RESOURCES

I would like to have a copy of the following (Please tick the necessary boxes):

S/N	MATERIAL DESCRIPTION	QTY	REMARKS
1	Making Your Organisation Work-Life Friendly Booklet (English)		
2	Making Your Organisation Work-Life Friendly Booklet (Chinese)		
3	Wow Your Employees! Maximise Your Business Outcomes With Work-Life Strategy		
4	Work-Life Unit Corporate Brochure		
5	Successful Flexible Work Arrangements - An Employer's Guide		
6	Flexible Work Arrangements (Case Study)		
7	Feature Article Entitled "Creating The Workplace Of Tomorrow, Today"		
8	For Everything, A Season: Inspirations For Your Work and Life (A Catalogue Of Work-Life Resources)		

Contact Name _____ Tel _____ Fax _____

Address _____

Email _____ Date _____

Please fax this form to **6354 3976** or mail it to: Work-life Unit
 Family Development Division
 512 Thomson Road, MCDS Building
 Singapore 298136
 Tel: 6355 8030
 Website: www.aboutfamilylife.org.sg

Appendix I



BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Langhoff, June. *The Telecommuter's Advisor- Working In the Fast Lane*. Newport, RI. 1996
- Ministry of Community Development and Sports. *Report of the Inter-Ministerial Committee on the Ageing Population*. Singapore. November 1999
- Ministry of Manpower and Ministry of Community Development and Sports. Case Study Series 3/2001. *Flexible Work Arrangements*. Singapore. July 2001
- Ministry of Manpower. Manpower Research and Statistics Department. Occasional Paper No 1/99. *Flexible Work Arrangements*. Singapore. January 1999
- Ministry of Manpower. *Labour Force Survey*. Singapore. June 1998
- Nilles, Jack M. *Managing Telework- Strategies for Managing the Virtual Workforce*. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc. 1998.
- Office of the Director of Equal Opportunity in Public Employment. *"Part-Time Work with the New South Wales Government"*. New South Wales, June 1994.
- Office of the Director of Equal Opportunity in Public Employment. *"Success with Flexible Work Practices"*. New South Wales, November 1997.
- Office of the Director of Equal Opportunity in Public Employment. *"Flexible Work Practices. Training Resource Kit for Managers & Supervisors"*. New South Wales, March 1997.
- Rose, Karol. *Work/Life Effectiveness*. Kubu Communications. United States of America. January 2000.
- Shaw, Lisa. *Telecommute! Go to Work Without Leaving Home*. John Wiley & Sons, Inc. New York. 1996.
- Top Drawer Consultants and Families At Work. *Work & Family: Steps to Success*. Equal Opportunities Trust. New Zealand. 1996.
- Washington State University Cooperative Extension Energy Program and Commuter Challenge. *Case Study: The Guardian Life Insurance Company of America*. April 1999
- Work and Family Unit, Department of Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business. *Work & Family Resources*. Canberra Australia 2000.

Appendix J



FEEDBACK FORM

Attn: Work-Life Unit
Family Development Division
Ministry of Community Development and Sports
512 Thomson Road
MCDS Building
Singapore 298136
Fax: 6354 3976

Flexible Work Arrangements Manual

We value your feedback. Please take some time to fill in this feedback form and fax it back to us. In return, we will send you our latest publications when they become available.

1. How useful is this manual in providing you with some tips on implementing a flexible work arrangement?

- Very useful Useful Moderately useful Not useful

2. How do you rate the presentation and the user-friendliness of this guide?

- Very good Good Neutral Poor

3. Would you use the methods and strategies highlighted in the guide?

- Yes No

4. Would you like to be kept informed of upcoming seminars, consultancies, publications or new work-life resources?

- Yes No

Other comments _____

My Particulars

Name _____ (Mr/Mrs/Mdm/Ms/Dr)

Designation _____ Organisation _____

Tel/Fax _____ Address _____

Email _____

**Successful Flexible Work Arrangements
An Employer's Guide**

A guide researched and produced by the
Work-Life Unit,
Family Development Division,
Ministry of Community Development and Sports.

Enquiries can be directed to:

Work-Life Unit
Family Development Division
Ministry of Community Development and Sports
MCDS Building
512 Thomson Road
Singapore 298136

Tel: 6355 8030
E-mail: work-life@mcds.gov.sg

Printed in Singapore, Mar 2002

Information correct at time of print

ISBN 981-04-5880-0



512 Thomson Road MCDS Building Singapore 298136
Internet Website: www.mcds.gov.sg