

# Managing flexible working requests

Delivered by Kat Derbyshire



# A bit about me.

- Barnsley based
- Wife to Jon
- Step-mum to two teenage boys
- Lover of a glass of wine and the gym

.....I love helping businesses create GREAT places to work which includes helping them retain existing talent and attract the best new people.



# What is the current situation

Employees have experienced lots of flexibility during COVID.....a large proportion of employees want to keep some of that

It is expected that employers will see an influx of flexible working requests over the coming months.

A recent survey showed that 30% of employees intend to take action and look for other work if they couldn't work more flexibly with their current employer.

**Can your business provide what your current and future employees want?**



# What might flexible working look like...

There are a lot of potential ways of working employees might request such as:

- Condensed hours
- Flexi – time
- Reduction of working hours per week
- Job sharing
- Working remotely (fully or partially)
- Term time working



# **Flexibility to fit the work environment**

**Flexibility has for many years been associated with office based roles.**

**Some workplaces may not be able to accommodate working remotely BUT there could still be opportunities to offer flexibility in other ways such as condensed hours, flexi-time and job shares to allow employees to balance work with other elements of their lives.**



# Right to request flexible working

- Flexible working is not new.... Employees with 26 weeks services can make one request per year for flexible working as a permanent change to their employment terms.
- Applications must be given full consideration and handled in line with a robust process
- Declines can only be made for permitted reasons
- Consistency is key – avoid the potential of claims of discrimination due to a protected characteristic such as age, sex or disability.

**Consideration – how has working flexibly been used during COVID?**



# Permitted reasons to decline

There are only 8 Permitted reasons to decline:

- planned structural changes
- the burden of additional costs
- quality or standards will suffer
- unable to recruit additional staff
- performance will suffer
- Inability to reorganise work among existing staff
- Challenges around meeting customer demand
- lack of work during the periods you propose to work.

.....Remember, if you have doubts you could agree to a trial period



# How could your business benefit from being more flexible?

Increased employee retention

Greater employee engagement

Higher levels of productivity



# What is hybrid working?

Hybrid working is a work style that allows employees to blend working from different locations: home, on the go, or the office. Working in this way is intended to encourage:

- Autonomy
- Flexibility
- High performance
- Collaboration
- Positive work relationships
- Effective work habits

**Company wide approach - rather than by individual**



# Checklist following this session ...

**Do you have a policy around flexible working requests in your Company handbook?**

**Are you / your line managers familiar with your own policy?**

**Do you / your line managers feel confident to handle requests if they comes in?**

**Do you have access to specialist support if required to avoid taking action that could lead to claims or disputes from employees.**



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