

Responding to Flexible Work Arrangement Proposals

Where operationally feasible, flexible work is a key component of engaging your employees. Conversations related to flexible work should be approached with an open mind and a willingness to find a mutually beneficial solution. The outcome of this conversation is to develop a common understanding of the considerations for flexible work arrangements and how those can be incorporated into a successful arrangement. Be clear on expectations and how the employee can be successful in a flexible work arrangement. Provide employees the opportunity to express why a flexible work arrangement is important to them. Be open with any concerns you have with a proposal and how you believe they can be addressed. You are encouraged to work with your employees to amend a proposal and develop a plan that works for both of you.

The GROW Model guides your conversation so it is purposeful and two-way. The use of open-ended questions helps conversation flow. Employees feel heard and valued because they share their thoughts, insights and are receptive to feedback. The GROW model helps to build trust, is supportive and empowering of others. It's all about the conversation.



Agree on the topic and specific objective of session; set long term aim if appropriate

Invite employee self-assessment; offer specific feedback with examples; avoid or check any assumptions

Brainstorm options; invite suggestions from employee; offer suggestions carefully; ensure choices are made

Commit to action; identify any barriers and solutions; make steps specific with timelines; agree to support

Modify as it fits your speaking voice, communication style and relationship with your employees.

Sample Conversation Starters
Thanks for preparing this flexible work proposal. Let's review it together to ensure there's an understanding of the expectations and what a successful flexible work arrangement looks like.

- Can you outline why a flexible work arrangement is important to you?
- Is there anything else you would like to add to your proposal?

Sample Conversation Starters
Manager invites self-assessment and provides their feedback on the proposal and, if applicable, why they believe amendments are necessary for success.

- Be clear in your rationale when providing feedback.
- Resist the urge to give a hard no.
- Work with the employee on a plan that works for everyone.

Sample Conversation Starters
Based on our discussion, how do you think we can adjust your proposal.

- How do you think the proposal impacts deliverables, other team members, or stakeholders?
- What can be done to minimize those impacts?
- Consider starting with a little flexibility, with a plan to transition to more over time.

Sample Conversation Starters
Tell me how you will proceed with this.

- How will you chart your progress?
- What measures will you use?
- Have a copy of the template hybrid work arrangement on hand to review and ensure understanding of the expectations.
- Schedule regular meetings for feedback in advance.
- How will you support your employee to ensure they're successful?

Topic and objective of discussion is confirmed.

Goals are reviewed against priorities and employee role and capabilities.

Set and confirm goals for next cycle.

Commitment and action plan is confirmed.