

Benefits of Flexible Scheduling Options



Staff scheduling can be a big challenge for some employers. Additionally, as employers and employees grapple with achieving work/life balance, scheduling can be one of the factors that leads to employee satisfaction or employee turnover. Many employers have experienced great staffing success by offering employees flexible or alternative schedules.

Flexible scheduling options include the following:

Flextime

Employees are allowed to alter the starting and ending time of the work day. Employees may be required to work during core business hours (i.e., 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.) but may vary their schedule around those hours.

Compressed work week

Employees are scheduled to work the same number of hours for the week in a shorter period of time. For example, an employee may work four 10-hour days.

Job sharing

Two employees share the responsibilities of one job. For example, one employee may work in the morning and the other in the afternoon, or the employees may alternate days worked.

Telecommuting

Employees work away from the primary work location, many times in their own homes.

Part-time employment

Employees are scheduled for less than full-time hours on an ongoing basis.

On-call workers

Employees report to work only when needed.



Flexible scheduling options

An employer considering offering flexible scheduling options needs to weigh the benefit of offering an alternative schedule against their business needs. Such a business analysis may include looking at the needs of the business, the function or position in question, any financial or legal constraints, recruiting issues, level of supervision or lack of supervision, employee availability, etc.

Benefits of flexible scheduling

Employers will benefit from offering flexible schedules to candidates and employees who cannot or choose not to work a traditional schedule. Particularly when the labor market is tight, flexible scheduling allows employers to attract job candidates they might not otherwise attract—those candidates who want to work, but can't or won't work a full-time or a traditional schedule.

Those who want or need to continue to work after retirement tend to find flexible scheduling attractive. Various forms of alternative scheduling permit them to keep their skills sharp, continue to feel productive, and earn an income while still having time to enjoy retirement activities such as travel.

As employers investigate employee needs, many have found that the departure from traditional scheduling not only benefits the employee, but also benefits the employer. Some of the benefits of flexibility in staffing include:

- Access to groups the employer may not traditionally recruit or attract, such as retirees, students, or people with childcare or eldercare responsibilities.
- Increased employee retention/decreased turnover.
- Benefit cost savings.
- Reduced overtime pay.
- Lowered absenteeism.
- Increased productivity.
- Higher employee morale.


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As employers implement flexible scheduling arrangements, many soon discover that what may appear to be a significant departure from traditional staffing becomes a business strategy that benefits both the organization and its staff. And that helps employers meet one of their biggest business goals—to have the right staff, with the right skills in the right place at the right time to respond to customers' needs.

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