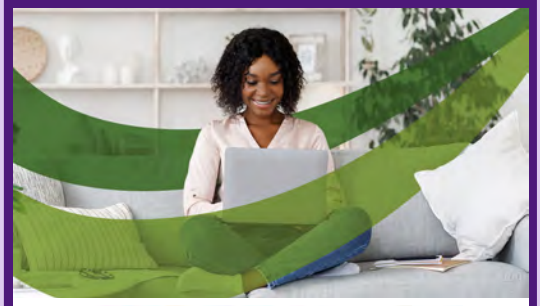
teams@work.

EVERYDAY IS BRING YOURSELF TO WORK DAY! Issue 4 | September 30, 2021

PREPARING FOR NEW WAYS TO WORK



LinkedIn Learning

FITNESS AND FLEXIBILITY

EXPLORE NEW IDEAS RELATED TO THE FUTURE OF WORK

Flexible work, generational shifts, well-being, collaboration. Learn more about innovative ways to work together in diverse environments.

Listen in your car or in the office, just remember to make sure everyone's okay playing tunes in any shared work spaces.

To listen, scan the barcode or visit your Spotify account for the playlist.

Flexibility and flexible working are more than a trend.

Flexibility is more than a policy – it's a mindset. Flexibility is nothing more than being able to quickly course correct to new circumstances.

- **Flexible employees** can change their plans in order to navigate unanticipated obstacles or solve problems.
- **Flexible managers** can rapidly pivot to address and accommodate unexpected challenges.

Fostering the ability to deal with unforeseen situations benefits all facets of our lives – professional and personal. Increasingly, flexible workplaces meet the needs of both the employee and the employer by increasing productivity, talent retention, engagement, diversity inclusion, well-being, and work-life balance.

For individuals, embracing flexibility has been shown to increase "neuro-plasticity" - the ability of our brains to change and adapt through growth and experiences. In other words, when we embrace flexibility, the more our brain learns to adapt, master new skills, store new memories and information, even recover after trauma or stress.

TALK ABOUT IT

The past 18 months of turmoil increased anxiety and stress. It also allowed individuals and teams to demonstrate resilience through their willingness to adapt and be flexible. Here are 3 key questions to establish agreement on how/what flexibility looks like in your department:

- *What does it look like for us to be more flexible as individuals and as a team?*
- *How can we redesign the way we deliver our role on campus to embrace the new working dynamics associated with COVID-19 and into the future?*
- *What is the best way to discuss and implement adjustments in how we work to improve our productivity and relationships?*

FLEXIBILITY FROM DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

Everyone at TCU falls into the category of "employee." With this in mind, what does flexibility look like from the general employee point of view?

- Being open-minded to new ideas and the possibility that there are multiple ways of doing things.
- Offering to cover responsibilities of a colleague while they are ill or on vacation.
- Making time to stay up to date with industry trends. This keeps ideas fresh and allows you to consider other perspectives, compare ideas, strengthen curiosity and protect against trying to "be right" or myopic when new or different ideas are presented.
- Taking regular breaks and using these breaks to invest in personal well-being. For example:
  - Going on a walk with a colleague or workout at the Campus Rec Center
  - Calling a mentor or a loved one to talk about interesting ideas or non-work related topics
  - Undertaking personal interests and hobbies that allow you to stay present in life

Managers have additional responsibilities and perspective on what's involved in the work of a department. How can every manager model and integrate flexibility?

Every department has core responsibilities associated with TCU's success. How this work gets done may look different based on the nature of the work, the level of face-time with students and the ebb/flow of the academic or calendar year. Leaders set the tone by clearly communicating expectations, while also considering how a team does their best work.

Talk about flexible working. TCU is seeking realistic ways to formalize flexible arrangements, some of which existed informally pre-COVID. Large interdependent or student-facing departments may be unable to implement certain options, but other approaches may work (see below). A flexible workplace is built around trusting teams to cooperatively approach department objectives in their own way and style. Flexible work arrangements in individual departments are the responsibility of TCU's managers, not Human Resources.

Encourage creativity. Create a supportive environment where colleagues are unafraid to share new ideas. A workplace that promotes creativity and lateral thinking is better equipped to navigate problems that arise.

Focus on Results, not Face Time. Avoid using face time as a proxy for productivity. Be sure goals, timelines, and projects are clearly defined for everyone. Need help? Check out TCU's Manager Foundations course.

ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL

Telecommuting: Occasional and temporarily working offsite to accommodate calendars (e.g. lots of Zoom meetings one day), needs of the office, or special conditions like inclement weather or sick children.

Remote Work: Employees who always do their work remotely have a landing spot on campus but no office. The nature of their work can successfully be done working from locations other than campus.

Modified Work Week: Fits a 40-hour work week into alternate schedules without compromising the office's core work. For example, four 10-hour days instead of five 8-hour days, or working primarily weekends or evenings.

Customized Work Hours: Altering office hours and schedules to deliver business operations at times more conducive to serving stakeholders such as later in the day, throughout the evening or even 24/7. This could also include staggering arrival and departure times as necessary or desired, with no disruption to a department's core work.

***These approaches are not to be confused as "policy" nor an expectation for employees to use leave. For unique or unfamiliar situations, send a consultation request to AskHR@tcu.edu.**

Sometimes, employees (including managers) begin seeking greater flexibility or take advantage of flexibility because they feel disengaged or undervalued. This short video provides insight when this happens.

TCU HUMAN resources

Questions?
Reach out to us:
hrtraining@tcu.edu