

INTERACTIVE BEST PRACTICE GUIDE WORK AND FAMILY

Presenter

Did you know there are lots of advantages in having a family-friendly workplace ... both for the worker, and the boss?

Let me introduce you to Suzie.

Suzie has recently come back from maternity leave and been working for the same company for 8 years, successfully juggling her career and a young family.

However, her personal circumstances have recently changed.

Suzie

I have to go and speak to the boss about the possibility of working part time **cause** my husband's got a new job which is pretty full on and I can't get my parents to look after little Sophie while I'm at work ... I have no idea what I'm going to do.

Presenter

Suzie is entitled to request family-friendly workplace arrangements under the Fair Work Act – but for many people, that can be an awkward conversation and difficult to initiate.

Manager

I remember hearing rumours that Suzie wanted to go part time. You know, everyone hears gossip.

I simply didn't want to know about it. I don't have the time to find someone else, train them and start all over again.

Suzie to Camera (To Camera)

I love working here and I don't want to leave, but I thought, I'm simply going to have to find something else. Walking into that meeting was the hardest thing I've done.

Manager

Suzie was really hoping to work part time ... two days a week ... but her position really was a fulltime role.

She suggested we could keep the temp who was here while she was on maternity leave ... sort of job sharing . . .

Suzie

Alan said Penny had been doing a really great job, but lacked the experience and networks that I've managed to build up over the past eight years here. He said he'd need me for more than 2 days.

Actually, it was his idea for me to work from home for a day a week as well as two in the office . . .

Manager

We got some advice from the Fair Work Infoline about the best way to set up this arrangement and we set up an agreement so we both understand our respective responsibilities...

Presenter

As with Suzie's case, the most successful flexible workplace arrangements are those which are tailored to the individual workplace and where there has been consultation with the employees concerned.

Remember that all Family-friendly arrangements should be well documented so both parties understand their obligations.

So Suzie is happy - but what's in it for the Employer?

Presenter (To Camera)

There are many benefits not only the Employee but the Employer as well, like being seen as an employer of choice, Retention of company knowledge, improved morale, reduced staff turnover and training costs. There are many more and these can be found in the work and family Best Practice Guide, on the Fair Work Ombudsman's website.

There is also advice on developing flexible workplace strategies, communicating family-friendly initiatives and the importance of reviewing and assessing family-friendly policies and procedures.

To implement a family-friendly environment make sure Managers are trained in managing flexible workplace arrangements.

So remember Fostering Work and Family flexibilities is a win/win for all involved.