

# Enfield College

## Work-Life Balance Toolkit



EUROPEAN UNION  
European Social Fund



Leading learning and skills

This Toolkit is one of a series produced for Third Sector organisations by the pan-London European Social Fund project 'The Capacity Building Toolbox' co-financed by the London LSCs. The series covers six topics.

- Consultation and Representation
- Events Management
- HR Policies and Procedures
- Developing and Running a Training Course
- Sustainability
- Work-Life Balance

Each Toolkit takes a practical, hands-on approach to the topic providing the user not only with information and guidance but also with a series of interactive activities key to the topic covered. The user will learn by doing.

Led by Enfield College, the Capacity Building Toolbox Project also produced management standards and training materials specific to the Third Sector. Further details of these can be found on Enfield College's website under the 'for employers'/'Capacity Building Toolbox' link or by email to [toolbox@enfield.ac.uk](mailto:toolbox@enfield.ac.uk).

Training materials for the three-day training courses - which cover topics different to the Toolkits - are available for use by Third Sector organisations. The slideshows in PDF format are freely available for download from the College website (see link above). Contact [toolbox@enfield.ac.uk](mailto:toolbox@enfield.ac.uk) regarding use of the full material, including trainers' guides and handouts, in its original form or consultancy support developed by the Project.

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## INTRODUCTION

### OVERVIEW

Welcome to the 'Work/Life Balance' Toolkit. This toolkit has been designed to help you to

- Identify what work/life balance is
- Recognise you and your staff's current work/life balance
- Develop ways to create a balance between working life and home life for you and your staff.

We have made no assumptions about your experience and understanding of work/life balance so this Toolkit should be suitable for all managers both with and without experience of implementing policies in this area. The aim throughout will be on the practicalities of achieving a work/life balance for the benefit of the employee, the employer and the customer.

### HOW TO USE THE TOOLKIT

The Toolkit has been designed as a journey that you go through.

- First, we'll look at what work/life balance is
- Second, we'll look at managing people to work at their best
- Third, we'll be looking at your own work/life balance
- Then, we'll look at the benefits of flexible working practices
- Finally, we'll focus on how to implement an action plan introducing a greater work/life balance for you and your staff

Although we recommend that you follow the order of the toolkit, you can also use it to look up certain areas of interest by referring to the table of contents.

On the way through this toolkit you will find the following items to help you.



- At various points we have left space in boxes like this one for you to
- Add your own notes and learning points
- Complete an exercise: sometimes these will be based on your own experience and examples, some will have correct answers which you will be directed to - these may be on the following page, and some will be in the appendix at the back of this document.
- Think about questions we pose.



#### Key Points

In here you will find key quotes or statement to sum up the topic we are looking at.



## Further actions

In here you will find lists of further actions you could take to practice your skills or imbed what you have learnt.



## Further resources

In here you will find useful websites or books to help you find out more about various topics.

## WHAT YOU NEED TO USE THE TOOLKIT

We have tried to keep the toolkit varied and have included exercises, case studies, checklists, quizzes and games to help you to learn. As you go through you will fill in various items in this document but you may also like to have a notebook handy so that you can capture key points or ideas separately too. There is a recap puzzle at the end and spare charts at the back of the toolkit for you to use.

**SETTING YOUR OWN OBJECTIVES**

**WHAT ARE YOUR PERSONAL OBJECTIVES FOR THIS COURSE?**



In this box write down what you would like to learn from this Toolkit

## WORK/LIFE BALANCE

### OBJECTIVE

By the end of this session you will be able to identify and understand what is meant by work/life balance.

Give yourself a score for how confident you feel about being able to do this objective at the moment. Circle the relevant number, 10 being the highest confidence, 1 being the lowest.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

### YOUR CURRENT SITUATION AT WORK



To get us focused let's begin by thinking about the organisation you work for and what currently happens.

In what way does your workplace currently encourage work/life balance for its staff?



Read the statements and decide if they are true or false for your workplace.

- 1 Your organisation actively encourages work/life balance for its staff.
- 2 Your organisation encourages flexible working for reasons other than childcare.
- 3 Your organisation has never turned down a request for flexible working.

If the answers for an organisation are all true what do you think this says about that organisation?

These statements identify what is happening in some organisations. If the statements are all true for an organisation this shows that there is a good work/life balance culture in place.

### WHAT DOES WORK/LIFE BALANCE MEAN?



Let's now get your own thoughts on work/life balance.

How would you define work/life balance?

Look at the thoughts of other people, which do you think is the one that best matches your definition of work/life balance?

#### **Julian, a very hard-working architect**

What you do in your work life and personal life is in balance and the pressure in one doesn't have a detrimental effect on the other.

#### **Rachael, a happy trainer**

Work/life balance is feeling in control of your work hours and having a life outside work. You can organise things in the evening without the fear of having to cancel because of work.

#### **Paul, who sometimes works from home**

The split between the amount of time I lose to work, at work, travelling to or thinking about work compared to the amount of 'down' time I have.

#### **Jo, who works for a bank**

It's working to live rather than living to work. Working to have the means to do what you want outside your workplace.

## Simon, who works for a well-known building society

Ensuring that there is the right balance between enjoying work and sufficient time to enjoy the family whilst still having time for yourself.



Look at these questions that people have asked about work/life balance. How would you answer them?

1 Isn't work/life balance just for parents?

2 What about the people who love work and working long hours?

3 Shouldn't some people have a greater degree of flexibility than others?

4 Shouldn't you be at work longer the more senior you are?

Here are the answers to the questions



Match each of these answers to the questions on the previous page ...

a Many people love their work and so a good balance for them is to work long hours. People will find their circumstances change at different points in their life and working longer hours may be more desirable at one stage in their life than another when they may want to work fewer hours e.g. for study or childcare and therefore the balance will shift. Work/life balance is about responding to individuals and their circumstances. It's about choice and helping individuals to fulfil their responsibilities.

b Everyone is responsible for the choices they make in their lives. The reasons people have for flexibility in their work to have a balance in their life are irrelevant as it's not the place of the company to judge.

c People should be judged on the outcomes of their job and not the hours spent on achieving the outcomes. Working long hours discriminates against, for example, working mothers, who feel they cannot gain promotion as they cannot work the long hours perceived to be necessary by many for senior roles.

d No, it is becoming an issue for everyone. Surveys have shown that when looking for a job, skilled workers and graduates are looking for work/life balance and the flexibility that comes with it over good pay.

How do these answers compare to yours?

## A definition

Here is a definition of work/life balance from the Work Foundation

Work-life balance is about people having a measure of control over when, where and how they work, leading them to be able to enjoy an optimal quality of life. Work-life balance is achieved when an individual's right to a fulfilled life inside and outside paid work is accepted and respected as the norm, to the mutual benefit of the individual, business and society.



We can refer to work/life balance as life balance. Why do you think the term life balance is more accurate?

Go onto the next page to find out



Life balance  
 The term life balance is more accurate because work is a part of our life not separate from it.

**SO WHAT DOES LIFE BALANCE ENCOMPASS?**

- What is right for one person may not be right for another
- What is right now may not be right at another time
- It's about flexibility for individuals to choose

**CHECKING YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF LIFE BALANCE FLEXIBILITY**



For what reasons should an organisation allow its staff to work flexibly to help their life balance?  
 Choose the reasons that you would allow your staff to work flexibly

Fitting in a college course and work	Religious reasons	Childcare issues
To reduce stress	Because they are a carer	To allow driving at non busy times
To spend one morning per week helping children with their reading at their daughter's school	To spend time with a partner	To recover from a busy weekend clubbing



Did you choose them all?

Why did you choose the reasons you did?

If you didn't choose them all what was your justification for not choosing them?

These are all reasons that have been accepted for flexibility in working within some organisations.

The reason itself should not be relevant, what are the 2 key issues?



**The 2 key issues are choice and non-judgement**

Seek to respond flexibly to each individual need and reach a solution that helps everybody (parents and non-parents) to work to their full potential and be fulfilled in their private life.

Reasons for wanting flexibility are irrelevant; it is not our position to judge.

**BACK TO THE OBJECTIVE FOR THIS SECTION**

We've reached the end of this section, so give yourself a score for how confident you feel about being able to identify and understand what is meant by work/life balance now.

1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10

Has your score increased?

## MANAGING PEOPLE TO WORK AT THEIR BEST

### OBJECTIVE

By the end of this section you will be able to recognise and understand what empowers people to work at their best.

Give yourself a score for how confident you feel about being able to do this objective at the moment. Circle the relevant number, 10 being the highest confidence, 1 being the lowest.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

### HOW WE MANAGE AND LIKE TO BE MANAGED



What represents good management? Note down a few words that come to you.

Concepts that often come up are

- Setting clear objectives
- Being consistent
- Being firm and clear

## WHEN DO PEOPLE WORK AT THEIR BEST?

When do you work at your best?



Think about when you performed well and not so well and the factors affecting your work.

Bad experiences - When I've not performed at my best ...

What I did (or didn't do) ...

What the manager/colleague did badly ...

Good experience - When I've performed at my best ...

What I did ...

What the manager/colleague did well ...



Conclusions

What helps me to perform at my best?

What gets in the way of me performing at my best?

**YOUR STAFF WORKING AT THEIR BEST**



Let's think about when your staff work at their best.

In what circumstances have members of staff worked at their best?

What did they achieve?

How did they achieve it?

How did they feel afterwards?

Conclusions

What helps them to perform at their best?

What gets in the way of them performing at their best?

People normally come up with times when they

- Had control of their job
- Had freedom to do it their way
- Believed in what they were doing
- Were trusted
- Were pushed and supported
- Were given recognition.

*"They left me alone to get on with it"*

*"I was given the freedom and trusted to get on with it"*

*"I was able to do it my way"*

*"I felt really well supported"*

*"I was pushed to do things I wouldn't have otherwise"*



## Talk to others

Talk to other members of staff and find out about their experiences of working well and not so well, looking at the factors affecting their performances. You can use the ideas here.

## HOW DO MANAGERS SEE THEIR ROLE?

Many managers see their role as:

- Setting objectives
- Showing people how to do things
- Correcting people when they get it wrong
- Keeping firm control of things (if a little old-fashioned)

### At our best



Let's turn our attention to other times when you have performed at your best.

What have you achieved in your life outside of work that you are really proud of? Note down these things.

Did any of these events come to mind?

- Buying a house
- Learning to drive
- Having a family
- Putting yourself through college
- Independent travelling



What do these types of things have in common?

People are not managed to reach their proudest and greatest achievements. They are self-motivated and, because of this, they are often able to perform far better than they normally do at work.

Most people we are working with are taking responsibility in a whole range of areas of their lives. However, all too often at work they are not really trusted. The result is that they perform at far less than their best.



### Working best

People work best when they feel good about themselves.

THE KEY ROLES OF MANAGERS



What do you see as the key role of managers now?

Henry, CEO of Happy Ltd

The key role of managers, I suggest, is to create a working environment where people feel good about themselves, about their colleagues and about the place where they work.

If you can successfully create this environment and give people the freedom to perform at their best, then the results can be as powerful as the best examples you just quoted from your own working life.

This may seem a simplistic solution. You may be thinking of examples where people have been given power and responsibility and have fallen flat on their face. The truth is that the process I am outlining is not simple.

This is no easy option: at Happy we have been striving to follow this route but are nowhere near where we would like to be. However, going along that road the performance that people are able to achieve is often amazing. The results make it all worthwhile.

**WAYS OF MANAGEMENT**

There are different ways of managing people. Here we look at the more traditional methods and their modern equivalents.

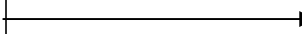
Match up the old ways of management to the new - one has been done for you as an example.

**The Old ways**

- Direction and control
- Hierarchy
- 1 brain, 10 pairs of hands
- Levels of approval
- Pressure to get it right

**The New ways**

- Celebrate mistakes
- Power to Act
- 10 brains, 10 pairs of hands
- Freedom within clear principles
- Flexible structure



The answers are in the Appendix at the end of this Toolkit.

**Henry continues ...**

Henry, CEO of Happy Ltd

It's a challenging route for managers. But ultimately it is much more fulfilling and much less stressful than the traditional role. When we started on this route at Happy, we only employed three people. However, I was a typical stressed small businessman, working long hours and afraid to delegate the 'important' elements of my work.

My holidays were punctuated by calls back to check everything was going all right. I knew it wasn't working when a client took me aside and told me he had rung to book a course and been told he would have to wait until I got back the next week.

By autumn 1994 things had changed. I was off sick for three weeks with pneumonia and completely out of contact. On my return I had only three calls to deal with. Bookings had reached a record level in my absence and the training quality was also the highest it had ever been.

That is the great thing about this course of action: The more you succeed in following it, the more people enjoy their jobs, the more initiative and responsibility they take and the less you have to do yourself.

## PRINCIPLES AND TARGETS

In order for you, as a manager, to follow the new ways of management you need to agree and set principles and targets as a framework in which to give members of staff the freedom to innovate, develop and succeed.

What are principles and targets?

Principles are the non-negotiable aspects of a job. Certain jobs need to be done in a certain agreed way.

Targets are set to provide a standard to aim for.

### Examples of principles and targets at Happy Ltd

At Happy the trainers develop and train their courses within a set of principles that embody our beliefs about how people learn and the best way to teach:

- Tell me and I will forget
- Show me and I may remember
- Involve me and I will understand.

The trainers can use their own best thinking using these principles to find the best way to give people a fun day's training leaving them confident and capable.

Another example of a principle that our administration team work to is the staffing of our phones - our people know that the phones need to be staffed between certain hours and it is their decision between themselves as to how this is achieved.

Happy also works to the principle that people work best when they feel good about themselves.

At Happy all staff have targets to aim for. For example, the delegates evaluate trainers after each course indicating exactly how the course went for each person. The feedback is received directly without interpretation by a manager and enables the trainers to work out how they did and whether any new techniques they tried actually worked. There is a level of excellence set for achievement as an individual target for each trainer.

Other targets set by staff can include taking on new responsibilities and gaining professional qualifications, eg IT exams.



Let's have a look at the benefits of having principles and targets and what happens in your organisation

What are the benefits of working to principles?

What are the benefits of setting targets?

What are the key principles within which your organisation works?

What are the key targets in your job?

What are the key targets for your staff in the jobs they do?

A set of principles allows people to work independently to a set of guidelines. With a clear set of principles, staff can use their own best thinking, individually and working with others, to find the best way to do the job in hand.

Agreed clear targets also act as a guide to how a job can be done. With feedback staff can work out how they did and see if their way of thinking works and if not it can prompt them to come up with new ideas to achieve success. If staff members are able to set their own targets, they are likely to be higher than those set for them by their manager.



What principles could be agreed in order to help people take more control of their jobs within your organisation?

What targets would you set yourself in your job?

What targets do you think members of staff would set themselves in your organisation?

**JOB OWNERSHIP**



Let's get your ideas on this

What is job ownership?

See number 1 on the next page

How can you give members of staff job ownership?

What role will you have to take as a manager?

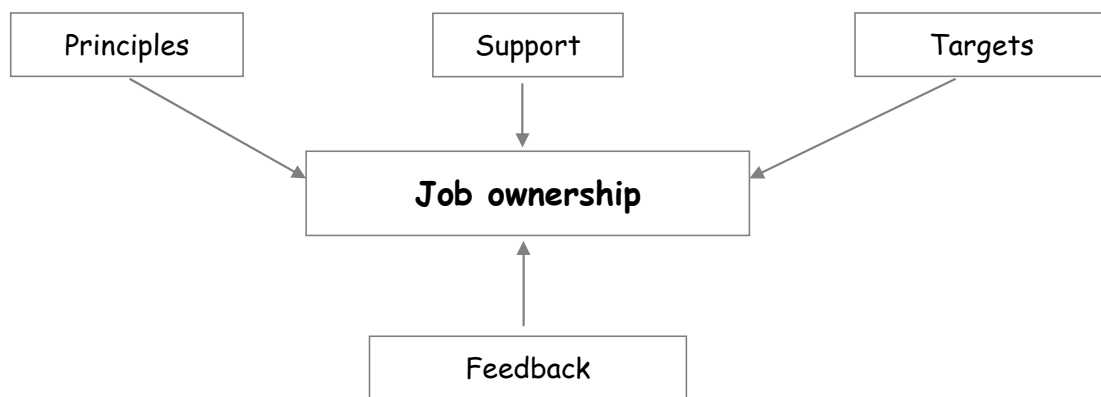
What challenges would you, as the manager, and the staff, have with job ownership?

See numbers 2 and 3 on the next page.

1 Job ownership means having complete control over your job. You have the power to change the way you work if you can think of a more effective way to reach your goals. You have the budget to implement those changes. And you receive feedback directly from those who receive the benefit of your work, rather than just through your manager.

2 For workers to fully own their jobs and take real responsibility, managers have to hand over power (not always easy for either managers or workers). People are used to their traditional roles and will seek to pass responsibility back to the manager. Managers have to create an environment where job ownership can take place. If it is their solution, people will own it and have a big interest in making it work. Any intervention by the manager reduces that ownership and reduces the commitment to making it work.

3 People will need encouragement and support with their job ownership but what they won't need if they get stuck is to be told the solution. Managers need to ask strategic questions to guide them to a solution they can formulate themselves.



Now go back to the questions on the previous page - How would you answer them now?

**DO YOUR PEOPLE 'OWN' THEIR JOB?**

Here are questions to ask, to check on full job ownership

**Are there clear agreed principles to work within?**

Without clear agreed principles you either have anarchy (where people do whatever they feel like) or a situation where people don't have ownership because they don't know what they can and can't do.

**Are there clear agreed targets?**

There must be clarity about what is the desired end result. Without this, job ownership is doomed because improved results cannot be delivered.

**Do they receive direct feedback on how they are doing?**

Without clear feedback people cannot know how they are actually doing. If that feedback comes via a manager, then it is a clear block on their ownership.

**Do they have the power to change their work?**

The core of job ownership is the ability to change the way you work, if you can think of a better way to serve your customer. If changes have to be approved by anybody (manager, committee or whatever) then you don't have full ownership.

**Do they have the power to spend?**

If they don't have a budget that they can spend as they wish, it is unlikely that they can really implement any changes they think are necessary. If spending has to be approved that is an immediate barrier. The message is clear, 'We don't really trust you to do this yourself'.



If your answer to any of these questions is no, what does that mean with regards to job ownership?

It would suggest that your people do not have full job ownership.

**BACK TO THE OBJECTIVE FOR THIS SECTION**

We've reached the end of this section, so give yourself a score for how confident you feel about being able to recognise and understand what empowers people to work at their best now.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Has your score increased?

## RECOGNISING YOUR WORK/LIFE BALANCE

### OBJECTIVE

Here we'll be looking at your own current work/life balance and how it can be in the future. By the end of this section you will be able to recognise your current life pattern and formulate a plan to create a balance in your life.

Give yourself a score for how confident you feel about being able to do this objective at the moment. Circle the relevant number, 10 being the highest confidence, 1 being the lowest.

1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10

### THE HOURS YOU WORK

Let's start off by thinking about the number of hours you actually work at the moment.

Tick the number of hours you approximately work per week no matter if you work full or part-time (these are the hours you actually work not the hours you are contracted to work).

- Less than 30
- 30 - 40
- More than 40

Read the case study below about Julian who used to work long hours.

## JULIAN'S STORY OF WORK WOE

I'm an architect and when I worked at one company I had to travel all around the country attending meetings, visiting sites and clients as well as being actively involved in completing projects to tight deadlines set by others. This meant working long hours as unpaid overtime with the potential reward of time off in lieu but due to a lack of staff resources there was never a right time to take the time off from work. I felt that my employer was preying on my need to act professionally, as expected of someone in my position, so that I felt pressured into getting the job done at any cost to my personal life. I was often away from home and regularly got home after 7.30 in the evenings having left before 8am.

Now look at Julian's first life balance chart on the next page and see his life balance as it was



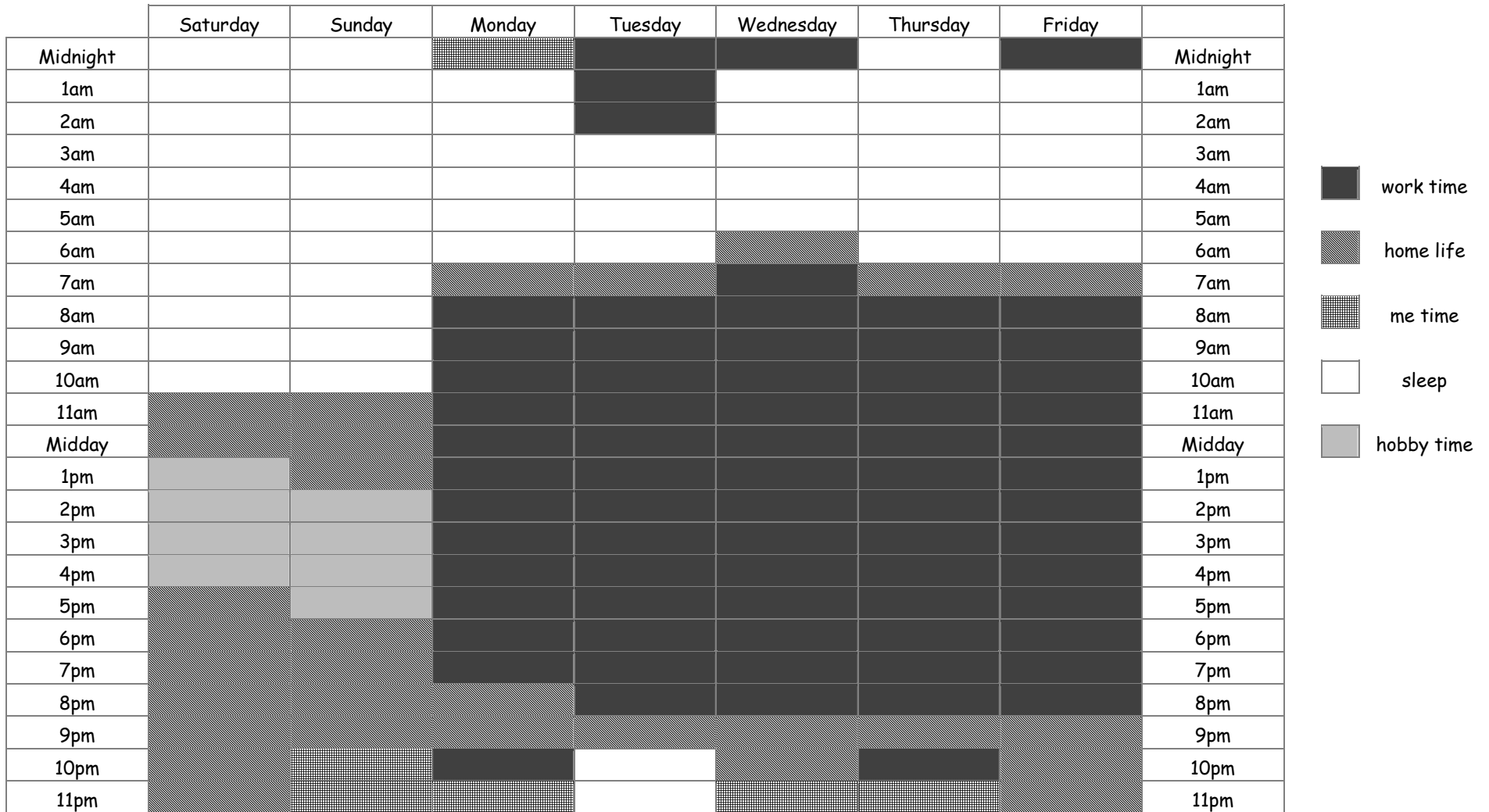
As you look at Julian's chart think about these questions

What do you think of the life balance that Julian used to have?

How do you think he felt and why?

What do you think he was missing out on?

How do you think this might have affected his work?



Julian's Life Balance chart before

## Julian's story of work woe continued ...

I came to a point where I realised the combination of travelling and lack of resources meant I was living to work rather than working to live. I was stressed and unhappy and constantly complaining at home and at work much to the detriment of personal relationships. Regardless of how hard I worked and the deadlines reached I felt my employer undervalued me, giving no recognition for my considerable efforts. My home life was suffering as I was often never there and when I was there all I could think and talk about was how ridiculous the situation was. I lost respect for my managers at work and tiredness meant I was prone to mistakes and if mistakes were made you knew there was no recognition of why the mistake was made just an apportioning of blame. Not the best way to get the best out of people.

## YOUR LIFE BALANCE CHART



Now it's your turn

Use the blank life balance chart on the next page.

Complete your life balance chart for your life as it is now.

- 1 Colour in your average working week and include travel time. Also include any work you do from home, eg checking your emails at 3am.
- 2 Colour in the next biggest thing you spend time on in your life not including sleep, eg being with your family, cleaning.
- 3 Colour in your sleep time, on average.
- 4 Colour in your 'me' time (time spent just for yourself).
- 5 Colour in any other activities that are a part of your life.

# Work/Life Balance Toolkit

	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday		
Midnight								Midnight	
1am								1am	
2am								2am	
3am								3am	
4am								4am	<input type="checkbox"/> work time
5am								5am	
6am								6am	<input type="checkbox"/> home life/family
7am								7am	
8am								8am	<input type="checkbox"/> me time
9am								9am	
10am								10am	<input type="checkbox"/> sleep
11am								11am	
Midday								Midday	<input type="checkbox"/> other
1pm								1pm	
2pm								2pm	
3pm								3pm	
4pm								4pm	
5pm								5pm	
6pm								6pm	
7pm								7pm	
8pm								8pm	
9pm								9pm	
10pm								10pm	
11pm								11pm	

## My Life Balance chart CURRENTLY



Now take a look at your chart. As you do so, think about these questions.

What do you notice? Is there too much time spent on anything? Is there too little time spent on anything?

Would you choose it to look like this?

How does your current life balance affect the work you do?

Are you happy with your life balance?

### ACTION PLAN FOR YOU



If you're not happy with the amount of time you spend at work or thinking about work, here are some questions for you to ask yourself

1 How long do I want to continue working these hours?

2 What forces my working week to look like it does? (For example, is it the amount of work, is it deadlines, is it that only I can do certain things etc ...)

3 What is missing from my life that I want to be doing or, what would I like to be spending more time on?

### Julian's story continues

Look at his current life balance chart on the next page

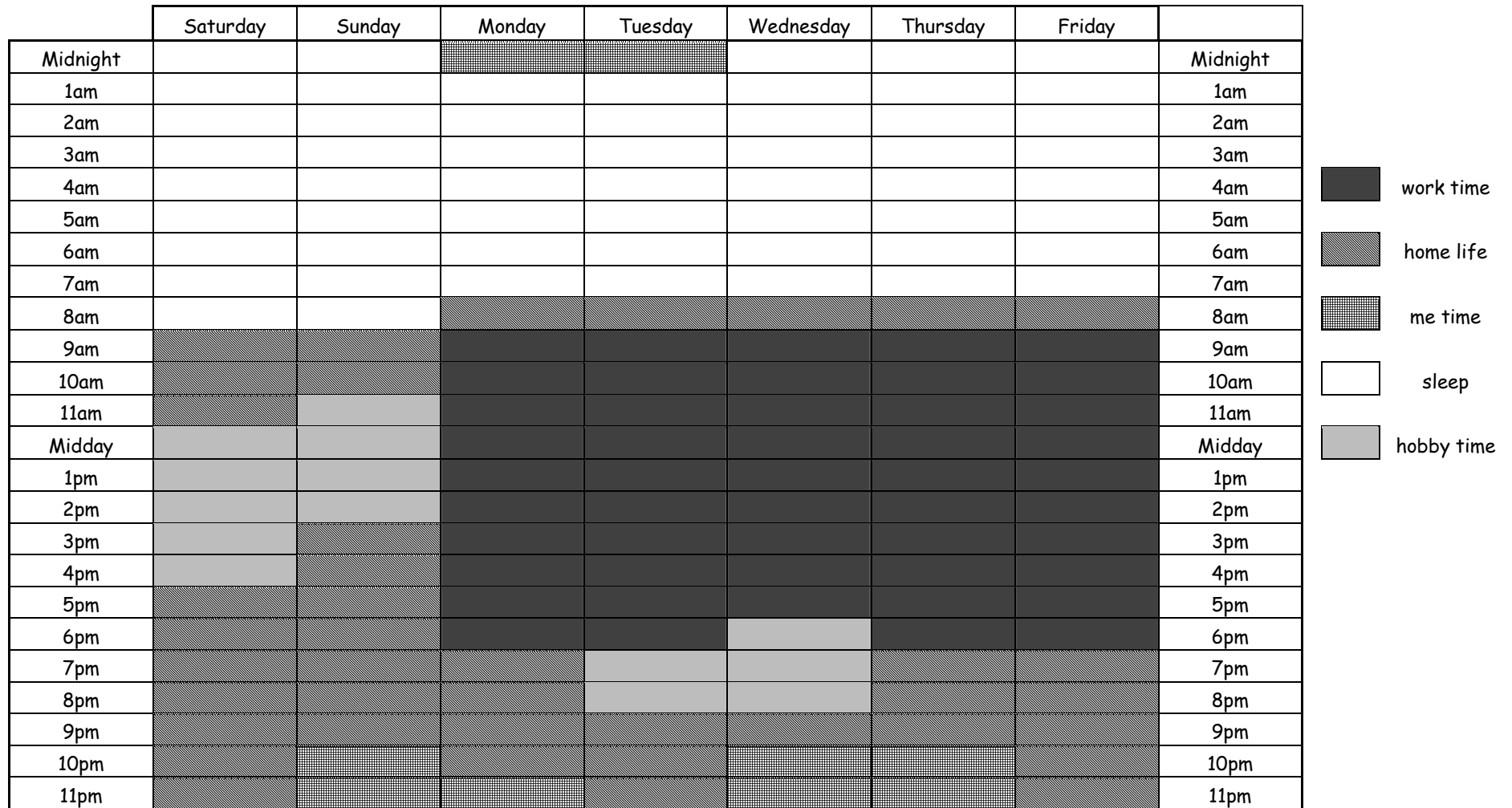


As you look at Julian's chart think about these questions

1 What differences do you notice between now and then?

2 How has his life changed?

3 What effect do you think this has had on Julian and his work?



Julian's Current Life Balance chart

## Julian decided it was time for a change ...

When I decided to leave my old job I knew the new one had to be somewhere local that I could travel to on public transport and work on local projects as travelling time was one major thing that was skewing my balance of life.

Now I have found such a job meaning I have more time in the office as well as more time at home. Working on local projects also means I have more pride in what I do and therefore I am working to my best ability.

I read far more while travelling to and from work and feel relaxed once I step through my front door. While occasionally I need to work late, I balance that by finishing early to go sailing on a Wednesday. Also, when the tides are right I am home in time to follow another hobby, kite-buggying.

I now work to live and my family don't have to listen to me whingeing about my work anymore - so everyone is happy.

## BACK TO YOUR ACTION PLAN



Now it's your turn again. Use the blank life balance chart on the next page. (There are two further blank charts at the end of this Toolkit.)

Complete your life balance chart for your life as you would realistically like it.

- 1 Colour in your average working week as you'd like it to be and include travel time.
- 2 Colour in the next biggest thing you'd like to spend time on in your life not including sleep e.g. being with your family.
- 3 Colour in your desired sleep time on average
- 4 Colour in the 'me' time you'd like to have
- 5 Colour in any other activities you'd like to have time to do

# Work/Life Balance Toolkit

	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	
Midnight								Midnight
1am								1am
2am								2am
3am								3am
4am								4am
5am								5am
6am								6am
7am								7am
8am								8am
9am								9am
10am								10am
11am								11am
Midday								Midday
1pm								1pm
2pm								2pm
3pm								3pm
4pm								4pm
5pm								5pm
6pm								6pm
7pm								7pm
8pm								8pm
9pm								9pm
10pm								10pm
11pm								11pm

work time

home life/family

me time

sleep

other

**My Life Balance chart as I would like it to be**



Looking at your chart, think about these questions.

What differences do you notice between now and what you would like?

How would your life change if it were to really represent your second chart?

What effect do you think this would have on you and your work?

### THREE MORE CASE STUDIES

#### **Cathy, a busy MD**

Six years ago I was working loads of hours and staying longer and later in the office. I like doing different things and took on more and more, gaining and enjoying recognition and credit for all that I achieved. My belief at that time was that I had to do certain things rather than delegate, I liked having control over things.

It came to the point when I realised I was missing out on quality time with my partner as well as 'me' time. I decided to take stock of the situation and asked myself how long I wanted to go on doing this. Did I want to do it forever? I really enjoy my work but I wanted more family time.

What I realised was that I had to rethink my beliefs if I was to have the lifestyle I wanted. So I recognised and exploited other people's strengths and delegated far more. My CEO suggested working compressed hours freeing up Mondays. I now have quality time with my partner on Mondays plus time for myself.

Working compressed hours has made me more effective at work; I am more focussed and less stressed. It is also good to be a role model for members of staff who have the same choice of flexibility that I do. We work in a company that judges people on results achieved not on hours spent in the office. I wouldn't go back to a 5-day working week for twice the salary!

#### **Joanna, a hard-working IT project manager**

The company I was working for at the time had just moved from the centre of Liverpool to the outskirts of Runcorn meaning I spent more time getting to work and having to drive instead of take the train. We often had to work longer hours to meet tight deadlines of projects and I found I was having less and less time for my own life and was more stressed and tired. I also started to dread the drive to work on the motorway.

After working at the company for a year I decided to ask for compressed hours and work from Tuesdays to Fridays. The company accepted my proposal and this meant that I was able to indulge more in my hobby of sailing as well as complete some mundane chores thus leaving me free time at the weekends to spend valuable time with friends and family.

I found that I was less tired at work and more motivated, with the long hours and drive to work being far more bearable 4 days a week instead of 5. I'm waiting until I've been in my new job long enough before I propose the same idea as I miss my Mondays off.

**Eugene, a Happy trainer**

Eugene started as a trainer on four days a week having Fridays off to continue his work with creative therapy. Later he decided to work full-time by adding Saturdays to his working week, still having Fridays off. Following the birth of his son Eugene decided to work a 7-day fortnight.

'I'm not made to feel disloyal or guilty about requesting flexibility in my work hours at Happy. It's seen as something that might benefit the company. For me, I feel the development of myself as a trainer benefits my group therapy and my therapy work benefits my training. It's a great way to keep work interesting and fresh.'

**BACK TO YOUR ACTION PLAN**



Answer these questions to complete your action plan to make changes happen in your life balance.

4 What impacts on the amount of hours I work? (what am I telling myself - for example, I want control, I don't trust others, I want all the credit etc ...)

5 What jobs do I struggle to do and why? (for example, which jobs do I put off and why etc ...?)

6 What can I change?

7 Who can I train up or delegate work to?

8 What could stop me training them up?

9 What can I do to MAKE it happen?

**BACK TO THE OBJECTIVE FOR THIS SECTION**

We've reached the end of this section, so give yourself a score for how confident you feel about creating a balance in your life now.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Has your score increased?

## ENCOURAGING LIFE BALANCE THROUGH WORKING PRACTICES

### OBJECTIVE

In this section we'll be looking at what we can do to encourage life balance through working practices. By the end you will be able to identify the benefits of encouraging a life balance for you and your organisation.

Give yourself a score for how confident you feel about being able to do this objective at the moment. Circle the relevant number, 10 being the highest confidence, 1 being the lowest.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

### WHERE WOULD YOU PREFER TO WORK?



To start off we'll look at where you would prefer to work. Look at the questionnaire on the next page - 'Where you would prefer to work'.

When you've completed the first questionnaire, complete the second - 'Which is your workplace closest to?'

Please mark on scale of 1 (totally agree with left-hand side) to 10 (totally agree with right-hand side) which environment you would prefer to work in ...			
1	Your organisation offers some flexibility around core set hours.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Your organisation offers part time and flexible working, compressed hours, job share, working at home, and any other ideas the staff come up with.
2	People are judged on the number of hours they work.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	You are judged on WHAT you achieve, not how long it took to achieve it.
3	People who work long hours are seen to be dedicated and hard working.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	The culture of the organisation is such that working long hours is discouraged and would need to be addressed if it happened regularly.
4	Only senior staff should be allowed to choose the hours they work, based around what needs to be achieved in their job.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	All staff, at all levels, choose the hours they would like to work, based around what needs to be achieved in their job.
5	Family/home life should never have an impact on your working life.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	The culture of the organisation is such that its people are recognised to be committed to work and to other things outside of work.
6	Your organisation WOULDN'T agree that regularly working long hours can affect staff morale.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Your organisation recognises that staff morale would be affected if you were expected to regularly work long hours.
7	Your organisation's clients and customers are seen as its most valuable assets.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	The people in your organisation are seen to be its most valuable asset and are treated as such.

**Where you would prefer to work**

Please mark on scale of 1 (totally agree with left-hand side) to 10 (totally agree with right-hand side) which environment you would prefer to work in ...			
1	Your organisation offers some flexibility around core set hours.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Your organisation offers part time and flexible working, compressed hours, job share, working at home, and any other ideas the staff come up with.
2	People are judged on the number of hours they work.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	You are judged on WHAT you achieve, not how long it took to achieve it.
3	People who work long hours are seen to be dedicated and hard working.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	The culture of the organisation is such that working long hours is discouraged and would need to be addressed if it happened regularly.
4	Only senior staff should be allowed to choose the hours they work, based around what needs to be achieved in their job.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	All staff, at all levels, choose the hours they would like to work, based around what needs to be achieved in their job.
5	Family/home life should never have an impact on your working life.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	The culture of the organisation is such that its people are recognised to be committed to work and to other things outside of work.
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7	Your organisation's clients and customers are seen as its most valuable assets.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	The people in your organisation are seen to be its most valuable asset and are treated as such.

Which is your workplace closest to?

**THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN REALITY AND YOUR WISHES**



Looking at the 2 surveys you have filled in what differences are there?

Note down what happens and what you would like to happen. You don't have to fill in all the boxes.

What happens at my workplace	What I'd like to happen

**FLEXIBLE WORKING PRACTICES**

**What flexible working practices can encourage life balance?**



Time for some brainstorming.

How many flexible working practices can you think of that can encourage life balance for you and your staff? You have five minutes for this and here are a couple of ideas to get you started.

*working part-time*

*working compressed hours*

Now look at this list below, which ones did you come up with?

- ✓✓✓ Tick the ones already in use at your workplace.
- ✓✓ Tick the ones you really like and that can be implemented at your workplace easily.
- ✓ Tick the ones you like but may take some time to implement at your workplace.

## Working practices to encourage life balance

- Working part-time
- Term-time working
- Having flexibility around holiday length and number of instances
- Providing the opportunity to buy more holiday spreading the cost through yearly salary
- Regular appraisal and one-2-one meetings to monitor performance and hours being worked
- Judging outcomes not hours
- Compressed hours - working fewer but longer days in the week
- Annualised hours - working the hours needed during the year but choosing when
- Flexi-time
- Banking time - time off in lieu
- Working at home
- Unpaid leave
- Diversity days - days off for cultural/religious events - respecting differences in religion and culture
- Job share - across departments as well as in the same departments
- Paid and unpaid sabbaticals
- Paternity leave
- Dependency leave
- Carer's leave
- Compassionate leave
- Birthdays off
- Study leave
- Timebank - creating community projects that combine internal needs with the needs of the local community, bringing mutual benefit
- Leading by example especially from the top - staff need to see management being flexible with their own jobs

## COMPLETE FLEXIBILITY

### Is complete flexibility possible?

Complete flexibility will not always be possible, for example, although trainers can work partial weeks, it would be very hard for them to work partial days given the need to train between particular course times.



Think about flexibility in your workplace.

Write down the job titles/roles in your work place.

Which of these jobs may be restricted in the flexibility that can be offered?

Why are these jobs restricted in the flexibility that can be offered?

What flexible solutions could be offered?



### Seek a solution

Aim to always seek a flexible solution and only decline requests if it can be specifically identified how a job cannot be fulfilled, ie the onus is on the employer to prove the job cannot be done, not for the employee to prove it can.

## HAPPY LTD, TRAINING WITH A SMILE: CASE STUDY

Read the following case study and find out about the life balance policies at Happy

The key principle is that Happy staff shall always be judged on the work they do (including being supportive of other members of staff) and not an adherence to any fixed regulations.

### Part-time working

Happy welcomes part-time working. We work with all members of staff to seek to ensure they can work however many days per week that suits them. We shall seek to support requests for part day working, although this is likely to be difficult for classroom trainers. The appraisal, promotion and salary review shall be based on performance not where and when the work takes place.

Examples: Part-time work has ranged from one day per week (when a member of staff was studying for a degree the other four days) to four days a week. One member of staff works alternate three and four day weeks

### Flexitime

All Happy members of staff can work whatever hours they like, provided they meet the requirements of the job. For some staff, notably in Happy eLearning, hours can be extremely flexible. However for trainers, hours generally need to be based around a core of 9am to 5pm on the days they actually train.

Examples: Many smoothies (Happy's customer services and admin team - its smooth operators or smoothies for short) and trainers choose slight differences in start and end times. Some smoothies start at 8.30am, some at 9am, one not until 12 noon on a Monday. One member of staff finds it convenient to work Saturdays. Although training rarely takes place then, they have been given a special responsibility of manuals, which can be written then.

### Home working

Happy recognises that it is often possible to get far more work done at home. Requests to work at home are welcomed, and any response is based on whether the job requires a person to be in the office. All Happy staff are expected to be self-managing and to work out with their co-ordinators (what they call their mangers) what balance of home and office working makes sense.

Telephone and Internet use for work purposes, at home, will be paid for by Happy. The company will also seek to provide a computer or laptop where a substantial amount of home working takes place.

Example: Many members of staff work at home when it makes sense. Several, notably in Happy eLearning, work up to 3 days a week at home on a regular basis.

### Compressed working week

Happy is open to proposals to work longer days to compress the working week into fewer days. However, the company is cautious on this point, as long hours are not in general encouraged. We would wish to ensure this working arrangement does not cause additional stress for members of staff.

Example: Six members of staff work 38 hours over 4 days including the managing director.

## Job share

The aim at Happy is that no one job be the particular preserve of one person or of one position. It should generally be possible for a member of staff to work part-time without a formal job share. However, where a job share does make sense, Happy welcomes applications to work on this basis.

Example: Two members of staff share a job in that both do it for 3 days each week (one of these days they work together). This arrangement benefits the company enormously as a previously distinct role now has holiday cover available. We have trainers who can cover smoothie responsibilities. One member of our eLearning staff works on our helpline and another member of this team provides cover for our techies (technical staff).

## Annualised hours

Annualised hours normally occur where staff want to take extra unpaid holiday at particular times of the year. Happy welcomes requests to work on an annualised hours basis. Providing this does not affect the ability to do their job (and normally we would expect it not to) the company will seek to agree to payment on an annualised hours basis.

Example: Members of staff, both parents and non-parents, have taken extra unpaid holiday and had their pay annualised.

## Term-time working

Happy welcomes requests to work only term-time. The company will seek to agree to these on the basis of payment on an annualised hours basis.

Example: One member of staff currently takes most school holidays off.

THE BENEFITS OF CREATING LIFE BALANCE

How does each of the following benefit?



We will be looking at the benefits of life balance from the viewpoint of the employee, employer and customer.

First, we'd like your ideas, there's an example provided to start you thinking for each viewpoint.

**The employee**

What are the benefits of creating life balance for the employee?

*flexibility*

**The employer**

What are the benefits of creating life balance for the employer?

*flexible workforce*

**The customer**

What are the benefits of creating life balance for the customer?

*happy staff = happy customers*

**Who benefits?**

Mark the ideas in the table below according to who they benefit.

The employee - **E**; the employer - **Em**; the customer - **C**

There may be benefits to more than one person.

Flexible workforce	Less stressed workforce	Reduced absenteeism
Faster response times	Having the freedom to choose	Resourceful team to deal with
Happy staff = happy customers	Staff have a sense of well-being and loyalty	Happier, more productive workers
Increased staff retention	Focused and committed workforce	Staff and customers feel cared about and well looked after
Happy and respectful interactions	Continuity of staff/customer relations	Efficient and motivated team to work with
Lateral thinking workforce	Creativity utilised	Happy and motivated staff
Longer opening hours (better coverage generally and especially around lunchtime)	Increased staff commitment, loyalty and motivation	Likely to attract job applicants from a wider pool of people
Flexibility in working hours	Increased team spirit	Reduced costs for staff recruitment
Feel respected as a whole person, willing to go the extra mile	The service provided is based around a flexible and solutions focused mindset	Happier families and more family time

Now check your answers from the following lists

## Benefits to the employee

- ✓ Flexibility in working hours
- ✓ The freedom to choose
- ✓ Creativity utilised
- ✓ Free from judgement based on hours worked and instead judged on what is achieved
- ✓ Focused and committed
- ✓ Happy and motivated
- ✓ Feel respected as a whole person, willing to go the extra mile for the company
- ✓ Sense of well-being and loyalty
- ✓ Less stressed workforce
- ✓ Happier families and more family time
- ✓ Happy and respectful interactions
- ✓ Increased team spirit

## Benefits to the employer

- ✓ Likely to attract job applicants from a wider pool of people
- ✓ Reduced costs for staff recruitment
- ✓ Increased staff commitment, loyalty and motivation
- ✓ Focused and committed workforce
- ✓ Flexible workforce
- ✓ Creativity utilised
- ✓ More skilled workers if people can cover each other's jobs
- ✓ Reduced absenteeism
- ✓ Lateral thinking workforce
- ✓ Happier, more productive workers
- ✓ Less stressed workforce
- ✓ Longer opening hours (better coverage generally and especially around lunchtime)
- ✓ Increased team spirit
- ✓ Efficient and motivated team to deal with
- ✓ Happy and respectful interactions
- ✓ Happy staff = happy customers

## Benefits to the customers

- ✓ Happy staff = happy customers
- ✓ Focused and committed workforce
- ✓ Longer opening hours (better coverage generally and especially around lunchtime)
- ✓ Staff and customers feel cared about and well looked after
- ✓ Sense of being a customer and not a number
- ✓ Happy and respectful interactions
- ✓ The service provided is based around a flexible and solutions focused mindset
- ✓ Resourceful team to deal with
- ✓ Efficient and motivated team to deal with
- ✓ Feel cared about and well looked after
- ✓ Faster response times
- ✓ Continuity of staff/customer relations



What ideas did you have for benefits additional to ours? Note them here.

For the employee

For the employer

For the customer

## REASONS BEHIND THE BENEFITS



Look at some of the benefits we have already mentioned and think of reasons behind the benefits.

What reasons can you come up with for the benefits that will result from creating life balance?

1 The staff are happy, motivated, more skilled and aren't feeling stale in their jobs

2 Greater staff retention and lower recruitment costs

3 Extended working days

4 Reduced levels of absenteeism and stress

5 A lateral thinking workforce who feel respected as whole people and whose creativity is being utilised

6 Happy customers

Here are some ideas - match them to the benefits on the previous page.

A Staff have the flexibility to work around their lives and will not necessarily find this in another organisation. As staff turnover lowers, the need for recruitment also reduces thus freeing up funds for further flexible working practices. Your organisation can become known for its flexible working practices meaning people will want to work for you, making advertising for jobs redundant.

B Judging people on the tasks they achieve and not the hours they do, giving them the responsibility to complete whole tasks and setting them up to succeed will increase motivation and the willingness to go the extra mile. They will feel respected for the valuable contribution they are making and feel satisfaction at what they have achieved.

C With flexible working practices such as dependency leave, compressed and annualised hours and the ability to buy extra holiday, staff won't feel the need to take extra days off as 'sickies'. They will have enough time to balance their lives and focus on the tasks in hand.

D Job sharing both in and between departments keeps members of staff fresh, interested and wanting to come to work in order to use the variety of skills they have. Job sharing is rewarding as it enables staff to further develop and add to their skills set.

E Flexitime can extend opening hours with some members of staff opting to work earlier hours and others later hours. Compressed hours mean that staff members come in earlier and leave later on the days they work.

F Happy staff will provide a better service to your customers. If staff are motivated, focused, efficient and loyal to the organisation this will be passed onto to the customer. If your staff are respected for the job they do, they in turn will show respect for the customers. Staff retention means that customers can build relations with the staff and know who they are dealing with. Extended opening hours means a faster response time.

## BACK TO THE OBJECTIVE FOR THIS SECTION

We've reached the end of this section, so it's time to score your confidence now in understanding the advantages of encouraging life balance through working practices for the benefit of you, your staff and your organisation.

1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10

Has your score gone up?

## PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER SO FAR

### PERSUADING THE SCEPTICS



Imagine you have to persuade a sceptic to buy into encouraging life balance in the workplace

First, what questions may the sceptic have?

Now, think of 10 good reasons for encouraging life balance for your staff

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

## This is what we thought of ...

### **1 Improved morale among employees**

The ability to tailor the working day to fit in with personal commitments releases extra energy to be channelled into work.

### **2 Retention of valuable skilled staff**

Good life balance encourages employees to stay with the organisation and not seek work elsewhere.

### **3 Reduced absenteeism**

There is no need to be absent from work since personal commitments can be fulfilled in one's own flexible time.

### **4 Greater continuity of staff, and therefore reduction in recruitment costs**

The increased retention of highly skilled staff cuts down the need for, and the cost of, taking on new employees.

### **5 Increased hours of business**

Extended business hours may be covered due to flexible work schedules.

### **6 Improved productivity**

A motivated workforce is a happy workforce; happy employees are more productive, which is then reflective on the organisation's success.

### **7 Competitive edge - 'Employer of Choice'**

Life balance offers a greater ability to attract high calibre new staff in an increasingly competitive labour market. The organisation which can show that it values its employees as whole people, gains an enviable reputation.

### **8 Long term cost saving**

There can be a reduction in overheads and running costs through more efficient use of facilities.

### **9 Pro-active strategy in response to demographic changes in the labour market**

With ever-changing composition of the labour pool over the next few decades, groups with special needs will form a major part of the future labour market.

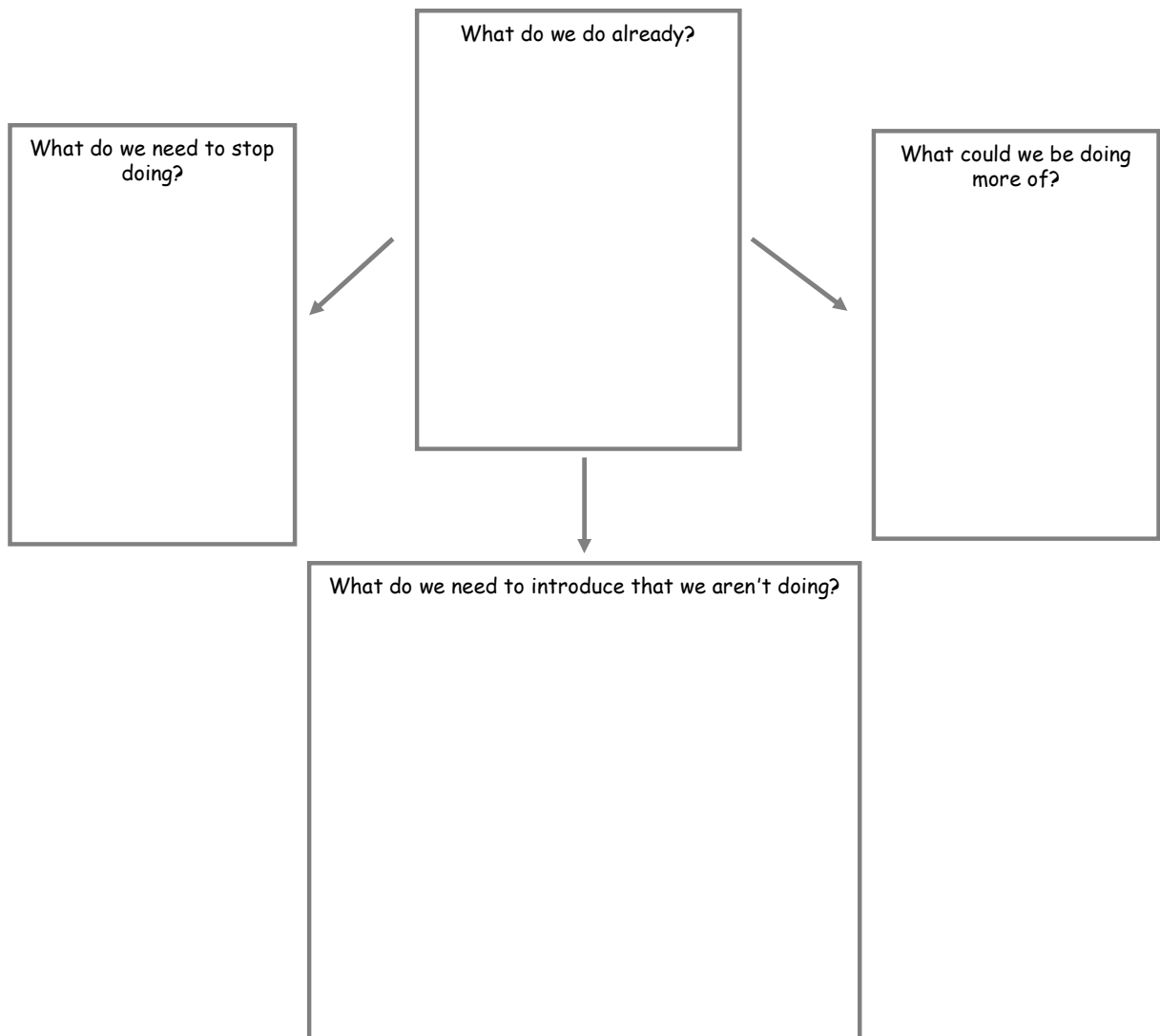
### **10 And above all ...**

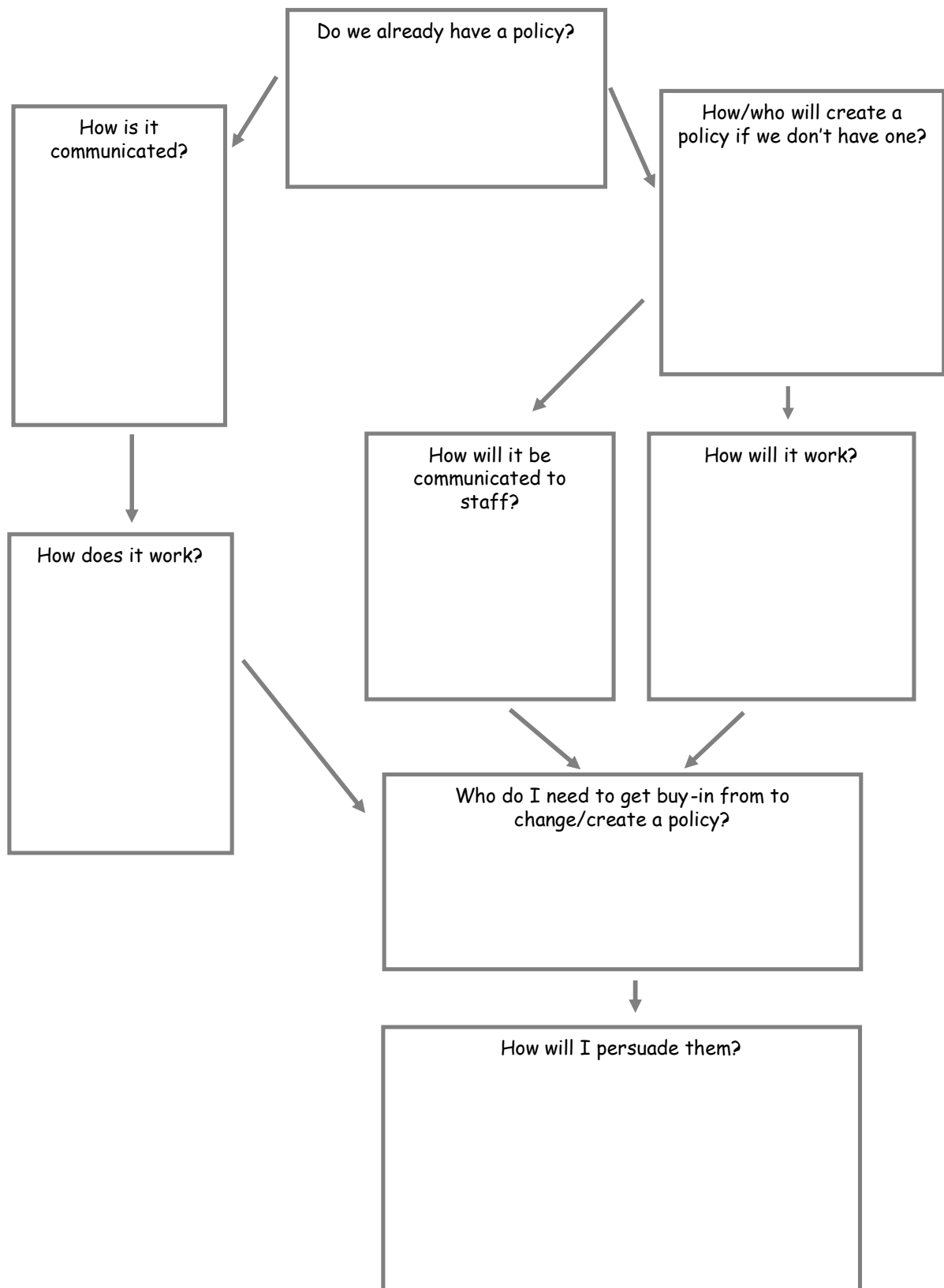
Many organisations state 'our workforce is our most important asset', so treat it as such!

### ACTION PLAN FOR YOUR ORGANISATION



Now it's time to think about an action plan to encourage greater life balance in the workplace  
Use the questions to start your action plan





**ACTION POINTS**



How are you going to **MAKE** changes happen?

List 10 action points (however small) that you will commit to taking beyond this toolkit to ensure life balance for you and those who work within your organisation.

1

2

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**Produce a policy**

Produce a policy document that can be used through an induction process, at staff meetings and in one to one meetings with staff and their managers, which will provide clear guidelines for the opportunity of greater flexibility and fulfilment for your staff.

THREE YEARS DOWN THE ROAD

HOW WILL YOUR ORGANISATION HAVE CHANGED?



Let's time travel to three years into the future. How has your organisation changed?

We have looked at working practices to encourage life balance. We've also looked at benefits to the employee, employer and customer.

Which will be actively happening in your organisation in three years' time? Which of these can realistically be features in your organisation? ✓ the ones you can envisage happening.

- judging tasks not hours worked
- lateral thinking workforce
- reduced absenteeism
- committed, focused and unstressed staff
- people working from home
- extended working days without long hours for individuals
- flexibility around holiday length
- regular appraisals/meetings monitoring performance and hours being worked
- annualised hours
- flexibility for individual choice
- people working compressed hours
- term-time working
- people buying extra holiday
- birthdays off
- carer's leave
- more productive workers
- part-time working
- job share across departments
- role models of flexible working from management
- sense of well-being and loyalty by staff
- flexi-time
- happier staff and happier customers



c Your organisation

d Your customers/clients

6 How do you know your family friendly employment policies are effective?

7 What do employees think of your family friendly employment opportunities?

8 Do you know what the children of your staff think about your family friendly employment policies?

9 Do you offer any other opportunities that recognise the importance of valuing children and young people?

10. What are your bosses doing to demonstrate support for the initiative?

11 What has been the most important factor that has contributed to changing the culture?

## A SUCCESSFUL COMPETITION ENTRY

### Happy Ltd, Winner of the NSPCC/Parents at Work Family Friendly Employer of the Year 2003

This was Happy's application for the Family Friendly Employer of the Year

#### 1 Which measures to support parents are you most proud of?

We are very proud that we are able to offer a range of flexible working to all our parents, irrelevant of the age of the child.

For example:

- One member of staff bought 24 days additional annual leave (deducted from her salary at 2 days per month), so that she could spend all school holidays with her children.
- Two trainers arrive at work between 9.15am and 9.30am (most other trainers arrive prior to 9.15am) so that they can meet their childcare needs.
- One member of staff works a 7-day fortnight, (Mon, Tues and Sat one week, followed by Mon, Tues, weds and Sat the next), so that he can share childcare responsibilities with his wife. One member of staff works a 3-day week only, after returning recently from maternity leave. She can choose the days and hours. One member of staff compresses his full time hours into 4 days (instead of 5) so that he can look after his young son one day a week.

#### 2 How do you promote your family friendly employment policies to your staff?

Through our induction process, at staff meetings and in one-2-one meetings with staff and their managers.

#### 3 Are your family friendly employment policies targeted at any particular group of parents?

Our flexible working policies are targeted at ALL staff, including parents.

#### 4 How do you make sure that staff wanting to make use of your family friendly employment can do so?

We are so in favour of our staff achieving work/life balance our policy states that the onus is on us (the organisation) to prove the job cannot be done, not for the employee to prove it can. We have never turned down a request for flexible working.

#### 5 What do you think are the advantages of your policies and practice for the following people?

##### a Children

Children have more quality time with their parent(s) or guardians. I use the word 'quality' because the parent is able to more easily juggle their home and work responsibilities and is therefore less stressed. Consequently, they are likely to have happier parents and therefore a happier family life.

##### b Parents

Parents have more choice and control over their job and the hours they work. They are able to prioritise their responsibilities accordingly. Stress levels and absenteeism are reduced. They are likely to be happier, more motivated and confident to perform well in their job. They are more likely

to respond flexibly to organisational needs because the organisation has been flexible with them. They are likely to be more focused at work and committed to the organisation.

#### **c Your organisation**

The organisation gains increased productivity, staff commitment, loyalty and motivation; plus a more flexible workforce. Additionally, absenteeism is reduced and staff retention increased. The money saved in recruitment and training of new staff alone is worth every penny spent on looking after the staff who work for you. Our customers continue to book training with us based on the quality service they receive, and all of our business relies on this because we rely on 'word of mouth' recommendations rather than employing sales people. We have also found that when new job positions arise we do not need to advertise because our reputation has preceded us and applicants are clamouring to work here.

#### **d Your customers/clients**

Our customers receive a quality service that is happy and energised, because that is how our staff feel. We are able to offer training at the weekend and early or later in the day, because our staff are prepared to be flexible and responsive to the clients needs. Additionally, we have opened our phone lines to our clients for an extra half hour per day because of the flexible working we offer to our customer care staff. The atmosphere at Happy is so positive that our clients are always asking if we have any jobs going and we are regularly asked to speak about and promote our policies and procedures.

### **6 How do you know your family friendly employment policies are effective?**

Because our parents and staff tell us they wouldn't work anywhere else. Because occasionally you will see some member of staff's child in the office because it was the only way their parent could come to work. Because we no longer need to advertise for new staff - they approach us. Because of our external reputation, we are asked to speak at seminars and run training courses for other organisations on how to do it!

### **7 What do employees think of your family friendly employment opportunities?**

One staff member (mother of a 12 and 17 year old) says 'As a single parent I really appreciate the support and flexibility Happy provides me with. This flexibility allows me to work full time whilst still being around for my children if they need me.'

One staff member (father of a 9, 11 and 17 year old) says 'It's the place to work for parents! It's so flexible and accommodating with regards to family needs.'

In the March 2003 survey of staff, when asked 'How good is your organisation at helping you maintain work/life balance?' all staff scored excellent or fantastic.

### **8 Do you know what the children of your staff think about your family friendly employment policies?**

One staff member has brought her 12-year-old son into work when she has not been able to provide childcare (this has happened at least 5 or 6 times in the last couple of years) and he thinks it's great that we have let him do this.

One staff member's children say - we love Happy, it's an excellent company - because we get to have our dad around when we need him.

## 9 Do you offer any other opportunities that recognise the importance of valuing children and young?

These are some examples of the sort of things we do:

- We offer all staff one paid day per month to volunteer for any charity of their choice. A number of our staff have chosen to use this time, to assist local school leavers in practising their interviewing skills in preparation for seeking work in the job market.
- Our Chief Executive spends every Wednesday morning in his daughter's school, helping the children with their reading.
- One staff member's teenage nephew needed a two-week work placement from school, and he spent his time shadowing and working with our technical team and shadowing our help-line team.
- We offered a two-week work placement for two young teenagers from a local school, in response to a newspaper request. Again, they spent time shadowing and working with our technical team, shadowing our help-line team and additionally, testing our on-line course materials.
- A while back on 'National Bring Your Kids to School Day', we took part in a local project whereby two young teenagers of unemployed parents came into our workplace to get a feel for what working life is about.

The following questions were for short listed entrants

## 10 What are your bosses doing to demonstrate support for the initiative?

Our Chief Executive works one morning a week in his daughter's school helping the children with their reading.

Our Managing Director works a compressed week over only four days. She is also regularly asked to speak at external seminars and conferences promoting Life Balance Policies (as we like to call it) within organisations.

They both strongly believe that you need to lead by example - if the bosses work long hours, then whatever policies you may have, the message staff hear is we expect you too work long hours too! Instead we believe staff should not be judged on the hours they work, but on the results they achieve.

## 11 What has been the most important factor that has contributed to changing the culture?

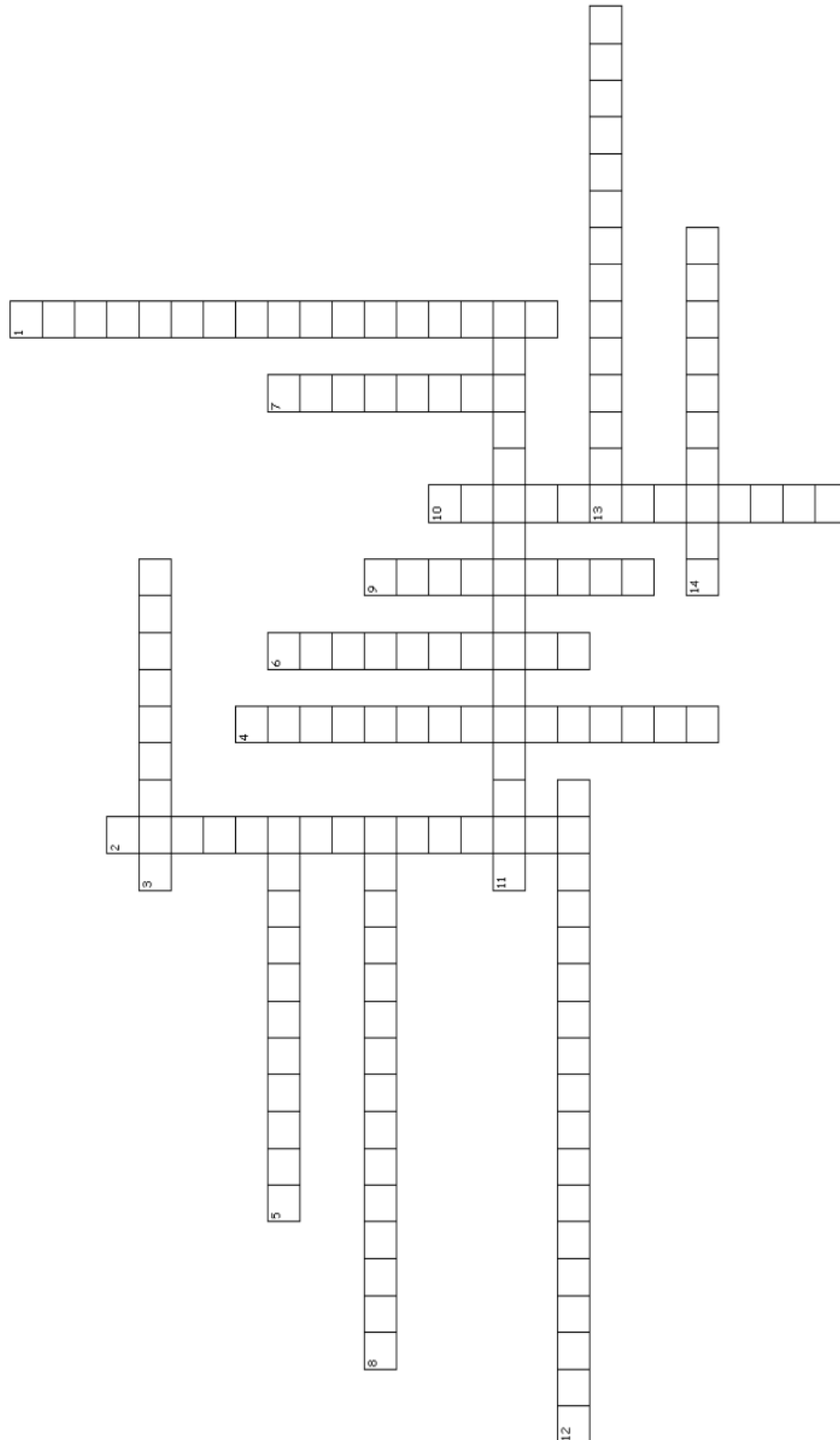
Our guiding principle has always been - People work best when they feel good about themselves.

We have always tried to set everything up for our people to feel good about themselves and part of that is ensuring that our policies are more than just 'family friendly' but are 'life friendly'.

However, about 6 years ago, when we were less than 20 staff, one of our employees became pregnant, and in setting up practical and supportive working practices for her, it became clear that we could actively widen this opportunity out to all staff - whatever their reason for wanting more flexibility at work.

### LIFE BALANCE RECAP PUZZLE

To recap on some key **words** and **phrases** complete the crossword by reading the clues, eg 3 across is **role model** - there are no spaces between the words



## Across

- 3 Be this and do as you would like your staff to do
- 5 Time off for those who care for people other than children
- 8 Time off to take care of dependants due to illness for example
- 11 Look at outcomes not the hours worked
- 12 A benefit of flexible working for the employer with fewer people feeling the need to take a sickie
- 13 This is higher with flexible working practices and so reduces recruitment costs
- 14 Have extra holiday by spreading the cost throughout your salary

## Down

- 1 Tap into the resourcefulness of your workforce
- 2 Working standard hours in less than 5 days per week
- 4 A contract which specifies the normal number of hours to be worked over the period of a year and is useful for staff wanting extra unpaid holiday at particular times of the year
- 6 A period of time away from work be it paid or unpaid with people returning to their job at the end
- 7 Where it is possible for more than one member of staff to carry out a particular duty be they in the same or a different department
- 9 Working the hours you want providing you meet the requirements of the job
- 10 The recognition of special days in different cultural calendars

Answers are at the end pf the Toolkit.

## ROUNDING THINGS OFF

### YOUR PERSONAL OBJECTIVES REVISITED

At the beginning of the toolkit we asked you to set down your personal objectives for this course.

Now we're at the end we'd like you to refer back to these objectives on page 4.



Looking back at your objectives note down answers to these questions.

How far have you gone in achieving your objectives?

What have you gained from this course?

What two things will you put into practice immediately as a result of this course?

## FURTHER RESOURCES

**Websites and Books**

Useful websites to visit for further information on work-life balance with case studies, forums, issues and links:

[www.employersforwork-lifebalance.org.uk](http://www.employersforwork-lifebalance.org.uk)

[www.flexibility.co.uk](http://www.flexibility.co.uk)

this website allows you to download for free

the book [The Complete Guide to Flexible Working](#) by Andy Lake and Bob Crichton

[www.workingfamilies.org.uk](http://www.workingfamilies.org.uk)

<http://82.195.132.41/index.asp> - an Irish work/life balance website

[www.unison.org.uk/worklifebalance/index.asp](http://www.unison.org.uk/worklifebalance/index.asp)

The following books are readable and give some enlightening ideas on management, staff empowerment and making organisations great places to work:

*Maverick*, Ricardo Semler

*Flight of the Buffalo*, James A Belasco and Ralph C Stayer

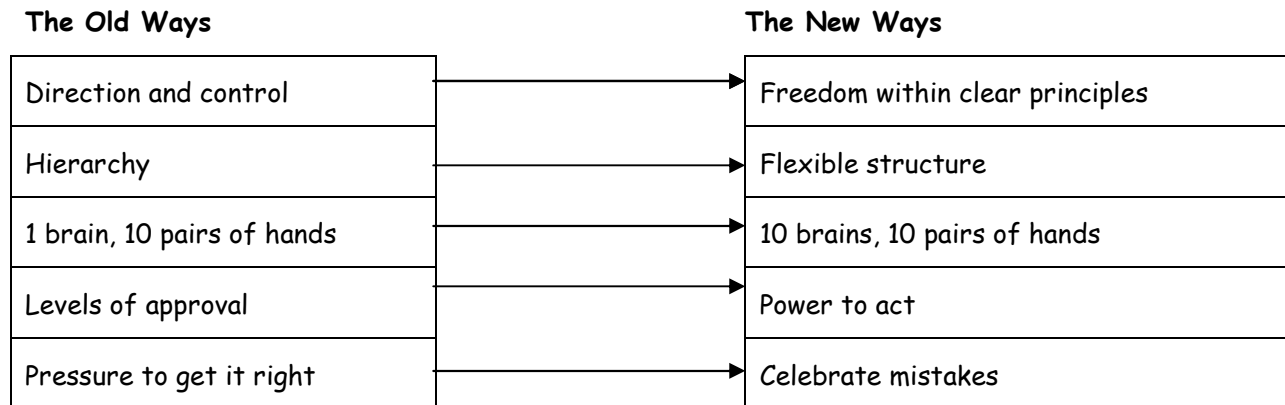
*Zapp: The Lightning of Empowerment*, William C Byram with Jeff Cox

*Heroz: Empower yourself, your co-workers, your company*, William C Byram with Jeff Cox (the sequel to Zapp)

*The Customer Comes Second*, Hal R Rosenbluth

**APPENDIX**

**OLD WAYS OF MANAGEMENT WITH THEIR MODERN EQUIVALENTS ANSWERS**



**ANSWERS TO THE RECAP PUZZLE**

**Across**

3 role model    5 carer's leave    8 dependency leave    11 judge achievement  
 12 reduced absenteeism    13 staff retention    14 buy holiday

**Down**

1 utilise creativity    2 compressed hours    4 annualised hours    6 sabbatical  
 7 job share    9 flexitime    10 diversity days

# Work/Life Balance Toolkit

	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	
Midnight								Midnight
1am								1am
2am								2am
3am								3am
4am								4am
5am								5am
6am								6am
7am								7am
8am								8am
9am								9am
10am								10am
11am								11am
Midday								Midday
1pm								1pm
2pm								2pm
3pm								3pm
4pm								4pm
5pm								5pm
6pm								6pm
7pm								7pm
8pm								8pm
9pm								9pm
10pm								10pm
11pm								11pm

- work time
- home life/family
- me time
- sleep
- other

# Work/Life Balance Toolkit

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10pm								10pm
11pm								11pm

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