Does This Desk Make My Job Look Big?

The Design, Implementation and Impact of "All Roles Flex" in a Range of Australian Organisations

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Introduction

With the increasing focus on the value of inclusion, gender equality, shifting age dynamics and the availability of technology, expectations of where and when work happens are changing. The opportunity for flexible work brings an aspiration for new ways of working, but can be met with apprehension about what will be lost. The desire by employees and their leaders to enable more flexible ways of working and the apparent interest in retaining older models of 'face-time' and 'presenteeism' co-exist, sometimes in the same organisation and culture. The 'face-time' and 'presenteeism'-based models of work expect employees to be physically present in a particular location for long hours. They restrict flexible work options to certain needs of employees, like parenting. More progressive employers are boldly trialing and adopting approaches that provide access to flexibility for everyone, in every role, for any reason.

Organisations are mainstreaming flexible work, called "All Roles Flex", across a range of industry sectors, role types, levels of seniority and in various commercial contexts. Organisations adopting an "All Roles Flex" approach are starting to achieve sustainable benefits for their people and their businesses.

This Discussion Paper explores ways to understand and ultimately to disrupt the gendered norms on access to flexible work, enabling organisations and individuals to adopt new practices that expand flexible work to a broader range of employees and extend its well-known impacts on organisational performance and gender equality (Ali et al., 2015; Diversity Council Australia, 2012, 2013, 2018; Sanders et al., 2016).

Existing academic and industry research was reviewed, and face to face or phone interviews conducted with representatives of eight organisations in a range of industries. Data provided by these organisations was reviewed. Organisations were selected based on their size and scale, variety of role types, industry sector and evidence of the impact of "All Roles Flex".

This Discussion Paper aims to:

- summarise the experiences of organisations that have implemented "All Roles Flex" style approaches to flexible work
- demonstrate both collective and specific barriers, advantages and impacts of these approaches
- use these experiences to guide other organisations
- inspire an increase in the uptake of flexible work by men and women in Australian workplaces.

The importance of "All Roles Flex"

"All Roles Flex" was first implemented across Telstra, a major telecommunications company headquartered in Australia, in March 2014 as a new approach to flexible work to make flexibility available to employees in all roles. Flexibility became the starting point for work, meaning "yes" was the new default response to requests for flexibility. Leaders were required to explain a significant negative business impact if they wanted to refuse a team member's request. Since 2014, many other organisations including major banks, energy retailers, professional services firms, emergency service providers and the New South Wales and Victorian public sectors have introduced or signalled intentions to introduce similar approaches. There is strong interest in initiatives modelled on "All Roles Flex", but a framework for implementing the approach, taking the perspectives of all key stakeholders into account, is yet to be fully developed.

Flexible work remains an elusive practice in many Australian workplaces. Data released by the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (2018) shows that over two-thirds of Australian organisations (70.7%) in 2017-2018 have either a policy and/or a strategy for flexible working arrangements, up from 60.2% in 2014-15. At least 2 million workers work in organisations that have no flexible arrangements in place. As WGEA data covers only 40% of Australian employees in private sector organisations with more than 100 employees, the gap in practice may be much larger, for example among smaller businesses and in organisations with a policy on flexibility, but without supporting practice to make it a reality.

Extant research on flexible work

A significant body of research explores barriers to and opportunities for enabling and increasing the uptake of flexible work (Brough et al., 2009; De Cieri et al., 2005; MacDermott, 2016; Pocock, 2005; Pocock and Charlesworth, 2007), but there is a need for detailed case studies to assist practitioners and academics understand and enable a mainstreamed approach to flexible work across industry sectors, organisations and roles.

A substantial body of industry and advocacy research comprehensively examines barriers and opportunities for flexible working for individuals (Catalyst, 2013; Diversity Council Australia, 2012, 2013, 2018; Sanders et al., 2016), providing a strong foundation to explore the detailed application within specific industry, role or organisational settings.

Other current research explores the legislative settings which are intended to enable more flexible ways of working (Cooper & Baird, 2015), but the evidence of practice suggests there are still significant cultural and leader-capability barriers to realising this potential, and that organisational barriers are the primary driver of a lack of access to flexible work for all.

There is an opportunity to examine the practice of flexible work beyond parenting responsibilities and managerial or professional roles. There is emerging research on men and flexibility, particularly on the impact on the broader agenda of gender equality, but this focuses on parenting and sharing domestic care (Diversity Council

Australia, 2013). While this research is valuable in expanding the traditional focus on how women access flexible work, it could be complemented by research to guide organisations in the practical steps on mainstreaming flexible work, to drive action based on industry experience.

Access to flexible work appears to be gendered. Research shows that men are less likely to ask for flexible work and more likely to be refused, and are thus less likely than women to access flexible work (Diversity Council Australia, 2013; Chief Executive Women / Bain; Sanders et al., 2016; and Skinner et al., 2012). This impacts the opportunity for men to share dependent care and domestic responsibilities. Women's workforce participation is limited by established practices and outdated masculine and other gendered norms.

The most recent evidence suggests that only managers and professionals are working flexibly in any great numbers (Cassels et al., 2018), and that working flexibly continues to result in career penalties for many employees. There is a need to highlight examples of mainstreaming flexible work beyond management and professional roles, and to provide insight and resources to help leaders support flexible work in their teams and organisations, whatever the industry or role type.

The literature reviewed is almost exclusively based in human resources practice and grounded in a narrow definition of "work-life balance", although Tomlinson et al. (2017) highlight the need to explore more macro contexts, examining individuals and identities, organisations and institutional settings.

"All Roles Flex" in practice — emerging themes

To examine the implementation and impact of "All Roles Flex" across a range of industries and organisations, eight organisations are profiled in mini case studies. Key stakeholders in each organisation were interviewed by the author on their motivations for introducing "All Roles Flex", the specifics and the nuances of the approach taken, and the outcomes and results of mainstreaming flexible work. The eight organisations included both private and public sector employers in finance, manufacturing, transport, consulting and health services. High-level and common themes are summarised below, followed by the individual case studies on each organisation.

Some employers also indicated flexible ways of working would help them to tailor their services better to the needs of customers, match the ways of working of their customer organisations or simply stay ahead of competitors in their industry.

Why do organisations adopt "All Roles Flex"?

There are several motivators

Most organisations interviewed were very aware that access to flexibility is a key driver of employee attraction across age groups, gender and types of employment.

Employers realise that current and prospective employees expect them to be bold and creative in offering different ways to access flexible work, whether through activity-based working environments, policy shifts, and technology to enable shift swapping or innovative approaches to enable more secure flexible work. This focus on the pull-factor of flexibility has driven a range of responses from employers keen to keep the best people and manage turnover costs.

Some employers also indicated flexible ways of working would help them to tailor their services better to the needs of customers, match the ways of working of their customer organisations or simply stay ahead of competitors in their industry.

What does "All Roles Flex" mean?

"All Roles Flex" takes different shapes in different contexts

For many organisations, mainstreaming flexible work is framed as a policy approach as the key driver for action and change over time. For other organisations, the form adopted for "All Roles Flex" is a sudden and disruptive gesture that brings in change to policy and practice, and clear expectations of a new way of working more immediately. "All Roles Flex" can respond to a particularly timely opportunity (to address staff survey results or follow the practice of a customer organisation), offer a chance to be a first-mover in an industry or follow the specific nature of a type of role with technology to support flexible rostering or a new type of flexibility in a seasonal factory setting.

Go hard (or go slow), but get going

Some organisations implemented "All Roles Flex" in staged approaches, preferring to pilot, collect and analyse data and then make the case for a larger rollout. Other organisations took a deliberately 'disruptive' approach, to flick a switch and turn on "All Roles Flex" overnight. Whatever the approach – and there are pros and cons of both – the case studies demonstrate there is never a time when all the conditions are perfect and risk-free for a business, and that making a start and taking that first, but imperfect, step is well worth it.

What are the organisational enablers of effective "All Roles Flex"?

Leadership matters

In the case studies, the role of leaders is key. All the examples have a leader or team of leaders at the centre, whether a bold step forward by a CEO who adopts "All Roles Flex" as a signature initiative or a senior leader adopting a visible position to champion more flexibility and convincing others in the business to follow. Leadership operates at

both macro (whole-of-organisation) and personal (team leader and team member) levels. Good, inclusive leadership enables improved performance where mainstreamed flexible work is in place.

Expect courage, and support your leaders to lead in new ways

The case studies demonstrate that the ambition to go "All Roles Flex" must be matched by actions to develop and support leader capability to manage flexible teams. It can not be assumed that all leaders have the experience and understanding to effectively manage flexible workers, especially if they have developed their own leadership styles under other leaders with more traditional expectations. Offering support and guidance to leaders and managers, along with the opportunity for them to learn along the way, is a key condition for impact, and allows them to be courageous enough to try new ways of leading.

Remain ambitious and creative

All the case studies are based on ambitious approaches that either start with a "yes" to flexible work and expect creativity where a "yes" may be challenging for a specific request, or do not allow "no" at all and require a significant shift in mindset and practice to live up to the big expectation. At either end and within this spectrum, there must be enough flexibility to keep pushing the boundaries to create new ways of working. Technology will continue to enable new and creative approaches, and employee expectations will require employers to adopt an open and inclusive approach to flexibility. For those employers adopting "All Roles Flex" now, continuing to be ambitious will prevent complacency and ensure "employer of choice" status among increasingly discerning employees.

Keep the promise of flexibility in practice

A common feature in the case studies is that organisations have taken authentic steps to be deliberate about the promise of flexibility within their employment brand and recruitment processes.   They have matched this promise in the real employment experience inside the organisation. They work to make sure their leaders are both supportive of flexibility in their teams and are role modelling flexible ways of working themselves.

What outcomes can organisations expect and what's next?

The research plays out in practice

Each case study presents the outcomes and impacts from the adoption of "All Roles Flex" in a specific context. The collection of practical examples and data demonstrate the positive results of mainstreaming flexible work. The case studies show that the long-held and theoretical models that link flexibility to engagement, performance and diversity outcomes are supported by practical examples.

Consider the bigger picture

Although the impact data in the case studies largely focuses on the recruitment and employment outcomes of adopting "All Roles Flex", it shows the opportunity for impact beyond these aspects on societal factors such as environment, urban planning and transport, and on cultural factors such as inclusion, engagement and innovation in workplaces. The conclusion proposes elements for future consideration.

Case studies of "All Roles Flex" approaches

Aurecon

Number of employees	2800
Types of work	Office-based, client site
Work locations	Throughout Australia and New Zealand
Scheduled/non-scheduled work	Non-scheduled, no start and finish times
Industry sector:	Professional, Scientific and Technical Services
Customers/clients	Other firms and businesses
Began "Yes Flex"	Planning 2014, go-live 2015 in a staged approach

Context for flexible work

Aurecon's journey to "Yes Flex" began with the overt championship of their Managing Director Australia and New Zealand to take a disruptive step to improve the employee experience of a large number of Aurecon employees and position the organisation as a leader in being more diverse and inclusive. The leadership team also wanted to openly challenge the prevailing view within the firm that clients expected Aurecon's employees to be bound by desk-time and a presenteeism mindset. They wanted to show that this expectation was a myth. Overall, there was an inspiring objective at Aurecon to try a bold new approach and step outside the constraints of traditional ways of working.

Aurecon's exit interview data showed the business was losing talented people because of a lack of flexibility for both women and men, effectively writing the "business case" for "Yes Flex".

Overall approach

Aurecon took a staged approach to implementing "Yes Flex", knowing the ambition would require support for leaders as well as human resources colleagues in a new paradigm.

The first step was to identify a pilot group. Aurecon Brisbane office's Built Environment business unit was chosen because this group was traditional in the way it worked and was male-dominated, based on a building industry culture. After an initial reticence to trial more flexible ways of working, the leader of the Brisbane office conducted closer consultations within the team, found there was a significant opportunity to improve access to flexible work, and she became a champion for "Yes Flex". The leader also brought a major construction client into the process of exploring flexibility, focusing specifically on their experience of service levels from Aurecon. A three-month pilot revealed that the Aurecon team was happier, more engaged and still able to deliver to their client's expectations. The leader then became a more visible flexibility champion across the business, regularly conducting workshops and peer coaching conversations to enlist more supporters and teams within Aurecon. This voice of a business

leader, not human resources, was very powerful, and on 1 July 2015, Aurecon went live with "Yes Flex" across the organisation, with a variable runway for each business unit to prepare for launch.

Following the launch of "Yes Flex", small groups of line managers worked with their local senior leader and explored their individual apprehensions and needs. The impact of this purposeful, localised and meticulous approach was that line managers felt heard and became more positive about the change. As each location went live with "Yes Flex", the local leader led staff presentations for employees to share their experience of managers who were not supportive of "Yes Flex". These leaders were then coached to be more supportive and enabling of flexible work, in the knowledge that they too were supported by their own leaders to implement "Yes Flex".

Recruitment approach

To support employee recruitment and provide an external face for "Yes Flex", Aurecon obtained external accreditation of their approach to flexible work. Aurecon was the first organisation in its industry to receive accreditation, where a third party assessed their approach to flexibility against good practice, and it positioned the organisation as a first-mover in more flexible ways of working. "Yes Flex" became very visible in advertisements and in the recruitment process itself.

Types of roles

Most employees at Aurecon are office-based professionals with a large proportion who visit client sites to do engineering and surveying work, and then return to the central Aurecon location. Some employees are on client sites for longer periods. Across the hundreds of different types of roles, the main categories are engineers, drafters, scientists, surveyors and digital-based roles.

Policy settings

The main policy feature of "Yes Flex" was that leaders were not permitted to refuse a request for flexible work, unless evidence was provided that work delivery would be significantly impacted. Employees requesting flexible work were not required to give a reason for their request and every request received a positive response.

Leaders were strongly encouraged to "Leave loudly" by visibly declaring their commitments outside work if they were leaving the office to attend a family commitment earlier than the usual end of day and role model flexible ways of working, which has had a significant impact of the behaviour of other employees, and increased the level of trust on flexible ways of working.

As part of "Yes Flex" Aurecon changed employment contracts so there are no start and end times, just an agreed number of hours, and it is up to each employee and their manager and colleagues to establish the most effective working pattern to achieve results. To support this, Aurecon developed a toolkit and refreshed their flexible working policy, and is moving to "cartoon contracts", which present complex legal information in more simple terms using mind maps and illustrations.

Challenges and opportunities

Aurecon found the greatest initial challenge was supporting their line managers to move to a new and more inclusive way of leading. This challenge was met by a constant and persistent focus on the overall objective of new ways of working, and the leadership provided by leaders in various locations, who directly addressed any backlash.

Challenges that were more system-based, for example timesheets and a requirement in the HR system to enter a certain number of hours, were addressed by removing this requirement when there was the opportunity for a system reset and a retrofit was possible.

The greatest technology challenge was with the occupational group of drafters who used technology that is not multi-licensed. This made it more difficult for the technology to be made available via laptops, potentially limiting location-independence for this role. Aurecon met this challenge by purchasing a very high-speed laptop, setting it up with the required licence and enabling it to be booked and borrowed by those who wanted to work outside the office.

What made "Yes Flex" easier at Aurecon was the very clear and intentional support from the top, with senior leaders expressing a clear expectation across the business. Leaders stepping up as examples to their peers and others was also important for success of the overall approach.

Using Yammer as an internal communications tool to promote examples of flexible work also increased visibility and the embedding of more flexible ways of working.

Outcomes and impact

Aurecon does not count uptake of flexible work as it is redundant in an entirely "Yes Flex" environment and does not conduct engagement surveys. Outcomes and impact include:

- **More people say they have the flexibility they need**. As part of Aurecon's data gathering for the WGEA Employer of Choice for Gender Equality citation, employees indicating they have the flexibility they need to balance work and other commitments increased from 89% overall in 2016 (90% for men and 80% for women) to 92% overall in 2018 (91% for men and 93% for women).

- **More men are taking primary parental leave,** increasing from 7% in 2016 to 22% in 2018.

- **The representation of female employees increased** from 26% overall in 2015 to 32% overall in 2018.

- **There is significant interest in flexible work in internal communications**: the "Yes Flex" launch article at Aurecon had 200% more online traffic during its launch month than any other article.

- **Reasons for exit changed**. A lack of flexibility moved from being a top 5 reason in 2015 to not being mentioned at all within exit interview surveys now.

- **There is no negative impact on client service**. Key clients indicate they see no negative impact on the service levels they receive from Aurecon and some clients have engaged Aurecon to help them implement their own approaches to more flexible ways of working. In March 2017 Aurecon ran two Design to Innovate workshops with an infrastructure client to explore the current state of diversity and inclusion, including flexibility. One of the key

barriers identified was a lack of engagement and leadership by middle managers. Solutions included huddle groups to discuss 'the why', and provide tools to enable and identify champions.

Next steps

Three years after launch in 2015 Aurecon is planning to review the embedding of "Yes Flex" through staff and leadership consultation during the next six months. There are likely still small pockets in the Australian and New Zealand business where "Yes Flex" has not achieved its full potential. Once these pockets are identified further support will be provided to line managers and staff so that all staff can fully embrace the benefits of a truly flexible working environment.

Crown Resorts

Number of employees	12000
Types of work	Hospitality, gaming, corporate roles
Work locations	Melbourne and Perth
Scheduled/non-scheduled work	Mostly scheduled
Industry sector	Arts and Recreation Services
Customers/clients	Face-to-face customer service
Began "All Roles Flex"	2018 for "All Roles Flex", but other flex initiatives in

Context for flexible work

As a gaming and hospitality business, Crown operates venues that are open 24/7 and is very aware the vast majority of employees in these venues are required to be available across a 24/7 span of hours, often on a rostered basis. Crown employs around 5,000 people on a rostered basis in location-dependent roles, such as the gaming floor in a casino and in food and beverage outlets. Employees need to be physically present for the business to operate, so the challenging context for flexible work was how Crown could enable these employees to effectively write their own roster, maintain capacity to serve customers, preserve industrial relations elements such as minimum shift durations, ensure employees maintained enough hours to earn a good income and also ensure flexible employment was not seen as insecure work.

Overall approach

Crown negotiated with relevant unions to develop an app-based system where individual employees could swap, drop or pick up shifts, and effectively write their own roster across the hours that the business needs staff. Effectively nearly every scheduled role is now available on a flexible basis in terms of timing. This change has been supported by extensive support for managers and work on the culture of the organisation.

The second phase of Crown's work on an All Roles Flex approach was in the non-scheduled part of the business, expanding flexibility provisions beyond formal flexibility like job share and part time to look at more informal flexible arrangements. This is now in place in the Melbourne-based business, with Perth to follow.

After the initial approach with a human resources and industrial relations focus, the business itself is now becoming more involved. The Chief Operations Officer is now a key sponsor, ensuring improved business support. There is a dedicated team of senior managers working to embed flexible ways of working in all business units and looking at flexibility role by role. Crown is expanding the definition of what flexibility means for the business.

Recruitment approach

Crown ensures the availability of flexible ways of working is raised early in the recruitment process and is incorporated into recruitment information sessions for volume roles, that is, those where large numbers of employees are recruited. In the context of a 24/7 business, Crown uses the recruitment process to remind applicants that the 24/7 rhythm of operations and an openness to flexible work go hand in hand.

Types of roles

Roles include dealers, food and beverage attendants, security officers, hotel front desk, bell and valet attendants, and corporate and office-based roles.

Policy settings

Crown introduced a new policy for flexible work that focused on the availability of shift-based flexible options for scheduled roles. The organisation is currently working on language for "All Roles Flex" for office-based, non-scheduled roles.

Challenges and opportunities

One of the main challenges in Crown's implementation of more flexible ways of working was building leaders' trust. In addition, there were initially some concerns about security of IT and IP with access to systems from locations outside the workplace.

A positive aspect of the implementation was that Crown had already negotiated the flexibility for scheduled roles into their enterprise agreements. Working with the unions required very open and consultative processes on both sides, together with open consultation and engagement with employees.

Crown was also able to rely on compelling anecdotal stories on productivity, with some managers in particular reporting sales teams have been far more effective.

Outcomes and impact

Crown has observed several positive impacts:

- **Staff turnover is now below 10%** within the table-based gaming business, which is significantly lower than turnover overall, and means the business is able to maintain operations at an optimal level, and no longer needs to over-roster because employees are in control of the commitment they make to their chosen shifts.

- **There is strong feedback from employees**, particularly women, that the openness to flexibility is a visible and practical sign of inclusion and that they believe, at all levels, in the effort the organisation is making.

- **10,000 shift swaps and drops each month** is very strong evidence that the availability of flexible work and the ability to "write your own roster" is what employees want and require to balance their work with other commitments.

Next steps

Crown intends to launch a communications plan around "All Roles Flex" so that employees are aware of all their options. Crown will then review what is in place and see if there is further scope for additional flexibility options.

Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (Victoria)

Number of employees	3600
Types of work	Office-based, metropolitan and regional, land man-
Work locations	Throughout Victoria
Scheduled/non-scheduled work	Both scheduled and non-scheduled roles
Industry sector	Public Administration and Safety
Customers/clients	Internal, other agencies, general community
Began "All Roles Flex"	Go-live March 2015

Context for flexible work

In March 2015, the then Secretary of the Department made a bold statement on the adoption of "All Roles Flex" after observing examples in the commercial sector and in organisations in the "Male Champions of Change" strategy. He also believed a more open approach to flexible work would improve the representation of women within the organisation.

Overall approach

DELWP's approach was to go live across the organisation immediately, with no staged approach. This instant disruption had the expectation that, with support, leaders would grow into the ability to enable some type of flexible work in every role. This was an expansion of the original idea at DELWP to begin by considering "All Roles Part Time", which rapidly evolved into "All Roles Flex" to enable both formal and informal flexibility. The approach was instant in terms of expectation and adoption – no new concepts or types of flexibility were introduced, just an expectation that attitudes would need to change to be more open and creative about how, when and where work could be done, and outcomes achieved.

The human resources team at DELWP developed support materials for leaders including briefing packs, toolkits and a development program to manage conversations on flexible work. Over 800 managers attended this program, with storytelling as a key approach. Yammer was another useful channel, hosting the #howweflex campaign to spread the word about flexible ways of working throughout the organisation. In addition, as part of DELWP's Collaborative Leadership Program a group of high potential staff participated in action research on flexible work, adding input from across the business to the implementation approach and building a cohort of well-connected advocates for flexibility.

The next step was recognising the need for compelling data on flexibility. A year after go-live, DELWP conducted a flexibility survey, providing quantitative data on uptake and attitudes as

well as qualitative data on stories of implementation and ways to improve including having a key human resources business partner as a flexibility expert available to all employees, and implementing DELWP's Workplace 2020 strategy to improve access to technology.

Recruitment approach

All job advertisements and job descriptions for DELWP specifically mention the "All Roles Flex" approach, and the organisation uses social media to promote this. As DELWP's next talent strategy takes shape the employment brand will be more actively managed, including a more deliberate focus on promoting the availability of flexible work as a key factor in the employee value proposition.

Types of roles

Roles at DELWP include office-based roles, which are very open to a range of flexible options around time and location; and field staff (on a different Award to office-based roles) who work in scheduled and location-specific roles on State land clearing hazards, fire management, and resource management. "All Roles Flex" is more related to time flexibility in these roles and often arranged around leave provisions and the seasonal nature of the work.

Policy settings

DELWP's policy on flexible work remained relatively unchanged as "All Roles Flex" began, but the process on access to flexible work shifted with an expectation that leaders would apply an "if not, why not" approach and engage in more open conversations to find creative ways to enable more flexible ways of working based on individual and team needs, and the requirements of the work. The application of policy also shifted with a much lighter touch on oversight of arrangements for working at home or outside usual office locations.

Challenges and opportunities

Two main challenges at DELWP were:

- Initial resistance to change within some parts of the organisation, which required the business case for flexible work to be restated based on evidence and presented an opportunity for flexibility to be more embedded in systems and processes across the employee lifecycle, for example recruitment and performance.

- The opportunity to be more purposeful about the availability of technology, for example, laptop devices.

Having DELWP's then-Secretary and his team behind "All Roles Flex" from the start has been a very beneficial aspect of the program. The new Secretary has continued this strong and visible commitment, recognising that despite a recent fire in DELWP's CBD office in Melbourne, which displaced around 1,500 employees for an extended period, a practical commitment to "All Roles Flex" ensured a business as usual approach to maintaining output and service.

Outcomes and impact

"All Roles Flex" saves DELWP $31 million annually, which is 2.25% of its output appropriation. Most of these savings are due to direct labour productivity.

In addition, there have been improvements in access and attitude to flexible work at DELWP, as shown in DELWP's 2018 flexibility survey:

79% of respondents work flexibly, an increase from 57% in 2016.

- Employees indicate **three main advantages of working flexibly**: they are able to balance work and personal commitments (from 93% in 2017 to 96% in 2018), they are more productive (from 53% in 2017 to 59% in 2018), and they are more engaged at work (from 43% in 2017 to 49% in 2018).

- 73% of respondents believe that **working flexibly is role modelled by management**, up from 63% in 2017.

- **92% of managers report they are clear on their role as a manager** in supporting flexible work.

Next steps

DELWP is continuing to build its approach to implementing "All Roles Flex", by delivering a program supporting managers and their teams to focus on a whole-team based approach to flexibility. This is designed to ensure all of the team are part of a discussion about how the team will deliver, while meeting the flexibility needs and wants of team members.

DELWP has introduced an online job sharing tool to match job sharing pairs and to support them in building their careers. The organisation is investigating how it can use job sharing more effectively as a development tool to give experience and exposure in new roles and opportunities.

Medibank

Number of employees	4155
Types of work	Office-based, home-based, contact centre, medical, sales
Work locations	Throughout Australia
Scheduled/non-scheduled work	Both scheduled and non-scheduled roles
Industry sector	Financial and Insurance Services, Health Care and Social Assistance
Customers/clients	Face-to-face, online and telephone contact with customers
Began "Flex Better"	"Flex Better" started February 2017

Context for flexible work

Medibank is one of Australia's largest private health insurance providers. It also delivers a range of health services including telehealth, in home care and care management, as well as meeting the unique healthcare needs of the Australian Defence Force. Medibank employs around 1,500 health professionals who deliver clinical services. With a vast mix of roles, the challenge for Medibank was to attract and retain the best talent, particularly for roles such as nursing.

Delivery of frontline customer services, including telephone support and telehealth services 24/7, by its very nature demands flexibility to ensure coverage and consistency of service. The telehealth business in particular presented the right opportunity to enable work to be performed outside of a central contact centre or fixed location, with a viable option to perform these roles at home.

With a majority feminised workforce, Medibank was very aware of the discussion around flexible work, especially for parents. However, the challenge was how to make flexible work available to everyone, for any reason.

Overall approach

In 2014, Medibank's six offices in Melbourne moved into one location, creating an opportunity for employees to work in various locations in the building, from home if they choose or locations away from the main office. This new way of working led to a focus on outcomes rather than face -time, and an evolution to an "All Roles Flex" style of working for office-based employees was relatively simple. With senior leaders also modelling flexible ways of working, "Flex Better" was officially launched at Medibank in February 2017.

The launch of "Flex Better" was organisation-wide, not staged in its introduction, based on the belief that an all-in approach would drive the desired cultural change. If everyone was

transitioning together, they could challenge and support each other. This included the then 3,500 employees across office-based locations in Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, Perth, Brisbane, Canberra, Wollongong and 84 retail stores around Australia.

Medibank's approach was supported strongly by its executive team, using their examples of flexible work to encourage others. The central team worked with people and culture business partners and senior leaders in the divisions to set the tone, reinforce clear expectations, and learn about any issues with implementation. This meant a strong internal education campaign and highlighting leaders' practice of flexible work was key to shifting mindsets, including focusing on men who had no caring responsibilities and how they were also working flexibly to live a more balanced and healthier life, central to the Medibank brand.

Approaches used in scheduled work environments at Medibank include:

- flexible ways of scheduling in contact centre roles, where workforce planners held booth sessions where employees could understand more about flexible options

- team-based conversations around scheduling flexible arrangements within a retail store

- contact centre employees who undertook web-based chat functions with customers working at home instead of in the contact centre itself

- flexible rostering on Australian Defence Force bases

- allowing doctors, nurses and GPs to conduct their telehealth work from a range of flexible locations.

Recruitment approach

Medibank incorporated "Flex Better" very visibly within the external employment brand, including online stories written by employees on the company's careers website. These personal stories documented the difference flexible work was making to employees' lives, both professionally and personally. Medibank's recruiters are encouraged to have proactive conversations about flexibility directly with candidates.

Types of roles

Medibank employs people in professional services in central office-based roles, general practitioners and allied health professionals in telehealth, on-call nursing staff, contact centre employees for both telephone and webchat roles, and on-site medical services in Australian Defence Force locations.

Policy settings

For "Flex Better", Medibank tweaked existing policies on flexible work to include new ways of working beyond the traditional options like part-time work or job sharing. These were supported by resources helping employees put the policy into practice. The policy position is to start with "yes" and work creatively to design flexibility that works for the business and the employees, including how flexible working is applied in each role.

Challenges and opportunities

Medibank did not encounter major barriers, apart from focusing on ensuring the ambition for flexibility is realised. The values-driven culture at Medibank has enabled the positive application of flexible work, given a universal understanding that in a diverse workplace everyone's needs are different.

Outcomes and impact

Medibank's workforce is about 70% women, so "Flex Better" was less about increasing female representation overall and more about ensuring an inclusive workplace experience for all. **More than 75% of Medibank employees are now working flexibly,** an increase from around 55% when "Flex Better" began.

Medibank's measure of 88% for employee perceptions of a **diverse and inclusive culture** is significantly above the Australian national norm (83%) and global high performing norm (86%) in employee engagement. The measure of 79% for employee **perceptions of sufficient flexibility to balance personal and family needs** is also significantly higher than the Australian national norm (74%), and is close to the global high performing norm (80%).

Employees who work flexibly are significantly more engaged than those who do not, and eport higher wellbeing scores, and are more likely to provide discretionary effort. Those who do not work flexibly are 4% less engaged, report 7% lower wellbeing scores, are 2% less likely to work beyond what is required, and 6% less likely to feel energised to go the extra mile at Medibank.

Next steps

Medibank continues to embed the "Flex Better" approach across the organisation through senior leader role modelling, employee storytelling, and workshop support for all employees. Using a data-based approach, the central team continues to support businesses where uptake is lower. Medibank will also begin to focus on supporting employees in more structured, scheduled roles such as the contact centre and retail, looking to new ways of working to support these employees to work flexibly.

PwC Australia

Number of Employees	8000
Types of work	Office-based, client sites
Work locations	Throughout Australia
Scheduled/non-scheduled work	Non-scheduled roles
Industry sector	Professional, Scientific and Technical Services
Customers/clients	Client-based work, either offsite or on client premises
Began "All Roles Flex"	Pilot in April 2015, go-live June 2015

Context for flexible work

PwC Australia took the opportunity with the appointment of their current CEO in 2012 to renew their approach to flexible work and use this to attract and retain talent. The firm's data showed a correlation between flexible workers and promoters of PwC as a great place to work. PwC also knew the traditional 9-5 model was not working for employees with family or caring responsibilities and their millennial employees and candidates for graduate roles were looking for new, more flexible work patterns. Increasingly, technology is merging work life and home life, and access to more flexible ways of working are needed to set clearer boundaries. PwC also noted that key clients such as Telstra and a major bank were moving to "All Roles Flex" approaches and, from a commercial perspective, it made good sense to complement these approaches within their own teams.

Overall approach

PwC launched their approach to "All Roles Flex" as a pilot in April 2015, and as a key enabler in their 2015–2017 Diversity and Inclusion strategy. This pilot involved 25–30% of the firm in "meaningful teams", with leaders of teams nominating themselves. "Meaningful teams" were arranged at operating unit level, which might be location-based, for example, in a particular city or with national teams across different locations but working on a similar engagement.

The first stage of the pilot was heavily based on change activity and communications, with team meetings to clarify and explore the meaning of the "All Roles Flex" approach and address questions. The approach was to enable the ways of working that would deliver the outcomes required, questioning the need for physical presence in the office and adjusting policy so that the default response to a request for flexible work was always yes. The focus was on performance, enabled by technology. Teams also found their own ways to establish and maintain team connection and cohesion, despite colleagues being in various locations.

In June 2015, "All Roles Flex" was formally launched across the firm for all employees. The pilot results debunked any initial fears of the unknown. The communications for the launch focused on more informal arrangements of flexible work, encouraging people to own their time and find ways to mix work and life. This was further enabled in April 2016 with the rollout of Google technology, allowing virtual real time collaboration on documents and reports, and in mid 2017 all sites moved to true activity-based working. Technology and changes in the design of workplaces have been the key enablers for a change in attitude to flexible ways of working at PwC.

Recruitment approach

PwC uses the following wording, among other inclusion-related benefits, in their job advertisements:

> *"Our state-of-the-art offices embrace the very best technology has to offer and each person has access to flexible work options. Our dress policy is flexible too – you choose what you wear based on the kind of work you do with your team and clients."*

PwC uses social media and their careers website to share stories of employees working flexibly. Internal recruiters engage candidates and hiring managers on the issue of flexible ways of working in job briefings and during the recruitment process.

Types of roles

All PwC's roles are office-based and include roles that are also client side or functional support which are not necessarily based at a PwC location. PwC provides supporting material to their client-side consultants to discuss with their clients the flexible ways of working available to PwC employees, to ensure that flexibility does not compromise client experience.

Policy settings

Although PwC had had a flexibility policy for some time prior, "All Roles Flex" moved to a default "yes" position. PwC changed language across all policies to focus on performance and delivery of outcomes, linking to guidance materials and inviting employees to support each other in different ways of working. These policy settings mean that employees at PwC do not have to "ask" for flexibility as much now as trust levels have improved.

Challenges and opportunities

The main initial challenge at PwC in implementing an "All Roles Flex" approach was building trust. Some of PwC's clients were early adopters of "All Roles Flex" which made change relatively easy over time. In addition, office relocations into activity-based working environments, enabled through technology and the vision of a new CEO, made the transition more natural at PwC.

Outcomes and impact

Positive impacts of "All Roles Flex" at PwC include:

- **A growing percentage of employees are working flexibly,** increasing from 49% in 2010 to 64% in 2015 and 85% in 2017.

- **Employees increasingly believe that working flexibly will not impact their ability to be successful,** increasing from 68% in 2017 to 70% in 2018.

- **Representation of a range of diverse groups** improved from 2015 to 2017, such as women (from 46% to 48%), cultural diversity (from 42% to 43%) and people living with a disability (from 1.6% to 2.1%).

- E**mployees believing they can balance their work and life** improved from 68% in 2015 to 77% in 2017.

- **Revenue growth** since the introduction of "All Roles Flex" has continued to be double digit, namely 11% in FY15-16, 10.4% in FY16-17, and 10.8% in FY17-18 10.8%.

Next steps

In late 2017 PwC reviewed their Diversity and Inclusion strategy which highlighted there are opportunities to ensure the lived experience of all employees reflects the "All Roles Flex" policy framework. PwC has refreshed online guidance and included stories profiling flexibility in action across the firm. Tools to measure flexibility at a team level and a session guide have also been developed to help teams discuss what is working and where improvements can be made. The importance of physical location to promote team connection is an important part of these flexibility conversations.

NSW Transport Cluster

Number of employees	27000
Types of work	Office-based, face-to-face and virtual customer service, transport operators
Work locations	Throughout New South Wales
Scheduled/non-scheduled work	Both scheduled and non-scheduled roles
Industry sector	Transport, Postal and Warehousing
Customers/clients	Corporate and government services, direct and indirect contact with commuters and freight
Began "All Roles Flex"	Go-live in March 2016

Context for flexible work

The Transport Cluster is responsible for all modes of transport in NSW including road, rail, ferry, light rail, point to point, regional air, cycling and walking. It includes employees of Transport for New South Wales (TfNSW), Sydney Trains, NSW Trainlink, Roads and Maritime Services, State Transit Authority and Sydney Metro Authority, overseeing train, bus, ferry, metro and light rail services.

In March 2016, the then Premier of New South Wales announced that by 2019, all NSW government agencies would be approaching flexible ways of working on an "if not, why not" basis. This commitment has been retained by the current Premier, and government agencies and clusters have been working to develop localised approaches to meet this commitment.

The commitment to flexible working was part of the broader focus on diversity and inclusion. The Premier's Priority of Driving Public Sector Diversity aims to increase the representation of women and Aboriginal people in leadership positions, with ambitious targets set for NSW government agencies.

Overall approach

The Transport Cluster used a phased approach to trial flexible working. Transport for NSW (TfNSW) was the first agency to test the "if not why not" approach to flexible work, under the banner of "Flexibility Works".

Stage 1 Awareness and Desire in 2016 and 2017 focused on developing a campaign and creative approach to raise awareness of flexibility, challenging key myths and building desire to trial flexible working across three main groups: top 250 leaders, managers and employees.

Approaches for the top 250 leaders included:

- launch and Secretary commitments at senior leadership forums across the cluster
- targeted senior leader communications.

Approaches for managers included:

- Secretary commitment communications and industry case studies on "making it work"
- simple resources and tools for managers such as a toolkit and factsheets.

Approaches for all employees included:

- promotional stands in major offices to encourage positive conversations with access to resources
- internal communications and moment-of-need resources such as a toolkit and factsheets
- bring-your-own-device launched for employees
- integration into new employee onboarding materials.

Stage 2 Mindsets and Behaviours in 2017 and 2018 focused on building growth mindsets to overcome barriers to flexibility and trial flexibility at the individual and team level.

Approaches for top 250 leaders included:

- challenging mindsets through Conscious Inclusion workshops for Top 250 leaders
- partnering with Deloitte to build inclusive leadership capability using the Inclusive Leadership Assessment.

Approaches for managers included:

- providing workshops for middle managers on managing agile teams to drive team-level flexible working
- integrating key capabilities for managing flexible teams into leadership development programs.

Approaches for all employees included:

- streamlining flexible working policy, procedures and forms, shifting towards more informal flexible working agreements built on trust and outcomes orientation
- providing simple tools to understand flexible working options such as a motion graphic, case studies and factsheets
- delivering a Staying Connected Program to support parents embarking on and returning from parental leave.

This approach was refined and scaled across the other agencies within the Transport Cluster as appropriate to specific operating environments.

Recruitment approach

The Transport Cluster includes messaging in the majority of its job advertisements on the importance of diversity, inclusion and flexible ways of working, highlighting the opportunity to explore flexibility in all roles.

Types of roles

The Transport Cluster contains a wide variety of roles including frontline customer service roles involving direct and indirect contact with the public, administrative support roles, corporate services, policy, research, legal, program and project management.

Policy settings

The Transport Cluster's policy on flexible work is aligned with the principles of "if not, why not", with a range of formal and informal ways of working flexibly available for agencies within the cluster to trial and adapt according to their specific needs.

Challenges and opportunities

It was a challenge for TfNSW to shift mindsets away from traditional gender oriented applications of flexible work. TfNSW deliberately sought a diverse range of stories of people working flexibly for a variety of reasons and used these to educate the workforce about the many different ways flexible work could be accessed and used. The range of jobs, workplaces and contexts also presented some unique challenges for agencies. In Stage 2 localised forums were conducted to explore the detail of any concerns or apprehension and local approaches were tailored to address these. This is particularly challenging for frontline and customer facing roles, and continues to be a key focus for the Transport Cluster in better understanding the issue, and then working with teams to find solutions. This also applies more broadly across the Transport Cluster with the wide range of frontline roles presenting an opportunity to explore what 'working flexibly' means for different parts of the workforce.

The clear and deliberate support by senior leaders, and their commitment to change, helped TfNSW establish itself as an exemplary and early adopter of mainstreaming flexible work. Senior executives continue to fully support flexibility at work.

Outcomes and impact

The Transport Cluster's most recent employee engagement survey in 2018 had a substantial increase in the overall response rate from 46% in 2017 to 72%, including high response in operational agencies of the portfolio with frontline roles, providing the ideal opportunity to understand next steps around flexible working.

The key insight from the 2018 survey is a **substantial positive shift in some agencies** towards a greater focus on flexible ways of working. For example, the positive response to the question "how satisfied are you with your ability to access and use flexible working arrangements" in the Transport for NSW agency increased by 8% from 2016 to 2018.

Furthermore, 10% more women than men responded positively to the question "How satisfied are you with your ability to access and use flexible working arrangements?" Women were also more positive regarding the support they received from their manager with 71% (compared with 63% of men) affirming that "My manager supports flexible working in my team".

Next steps

Flexible working remains a key focus for the Transport Cluster as empowering its people to have choice in how, when and where they work achieves better outcomes for employees and customers. The organisation still has work to do, to enable customer facing and frontline employees to access flexible ways of working, recognising that flexible working means different things to different people. Transport recognises the need to better understand the reasons behind the gender disparity in the results of their recent engagement survey and why men seem to be less satisfied with flexibility, and therefore what needs to be done to ensure both men and women feel enabled and supported to access flexible working.

Unilever Australia and New Zealand

Number of employees	1272
Types of work	Corporate office-based work (internal roles or customer facing roles), factory shop floor work (manufacturing), field work (sales teams)
Work locations	Major cities and regional locations
Scheduled/non-scheduled work	Both scheduled and non-scheduled roles
Industry sector	Manufacturing
Customers/clients	Wholesale clients and suppliers
Began "All Roles Flex"	Initial steps in 2014, strengthened in 2016

Context for flexible work

Based on the need to attract and retain the best talent, and in conjunction with a move for office-based employees to an agile working model in 2014, Unilever launched a formal agile and flexible work policy. In 2016, Unilever decided to take flexible work further by being more proactive, with more leader role modelling of flexible ways of working and a more high-profile, visible approach.

Overall approach

The CEO of Unilever Australia and New Zealand formally announced an ambition to move to "All Roles Flex" in 2016, inviting leaders to adopt an "if not why not" approach to enabling flexible work. This new approach was rolled out company wide, with a wider focus on office-based locations. It was deliberately disruptive and intended to demonstrate the intention to do whatever it takes to make flexibility a reality for Unilever employees. This was supported by extensive communication campaigns, storytelling, digital signage in workplaces and high-profile role modelling by senior leaders, including by the CEO himself. At Unilever ANZ, the concept of "leaders leave loudly"" has been embraced widely with senior leaders encouraged to leave loudly, making it acceptable for other employees to do the same to balance work and personal life commitments.

Across the Unilever corporate office, this soon became a reality with employees opting for formal part time arrangements and job share arrangements, actively working from home, starting late or finishing early, and working from different sites.

Simultaneously, Unilever also put in place technology and other support options that make it feasible to work flexibly. Simple gestures of ensuring all meeting invites have a Skype option sent a clear signal across the business that it is acceptable to join meetings from different locations.

While this was immediately successful across corporate offices, some factories launched their own innovative approaches to bring flexible work to rostered roles. At the Unilever Foods factory in Tatura, Victoria, the organisation launched a comprehensive Return from Parental leave program, including keeping in touch during parental leave, proactive conversations during the parental leave period asking employees if they need any flexibility when they return to work, a forum to support new parents and help women create networks and develop their careers, and a Mother's Room at the site to support nursing mothers returning from parental leave.

In addition, at Tatura, in 2016 Unilever launched a new category of rostered roles, called Flexible Permanent Part time, which guarantees a number of hours annually to employees who work on a casual basis. This model provides flexibility and the security of a permanent role and can help employees with financial security and bank loans due to permanent employment. This opportunity is now offered proactively to all casual employees at Tatura. Unilever Streets Ice cream factory at Minto in New South Wales has launched this initiative in 2018 and is currently working through implementation.

Recruitment approach

Unilever actively advertises flexible ways of working in all job advertisements and during hiring conversations. Some of the questions that recruiters at Unilever ask include:

- I have taken you through some of the benefits of working with Unilever, with one being agile working. Is this something that you have had available to you before? How would you see this working for you?

- Where do you think you would benefit most within our agile working environment?

- Agile working is one of the many benefits that we have at Unilever, this can be working from home, flexible hours to accommodate travel or work/life balance. Do you think you would be keen to adopt this style of working?

Unilever's job advertisements include the following wording:

> *"A job at Unilever means working with purpose in an inclusive and diverse culture. We also offer "All roles flex" and believe in an approach to getting work done that allows any employee to work anytime, from anywhere."*

Types of roles

Unilever employees work in corporate office-based roles, field roles (sales teams, merchandising), customer-facing account management, and a range of roles at manufacturing sites (which are generally shift-based and can be seasonal).

Policy settings

Unilever has consciously taken the approach of "if not why not" to flexible work. Only formal flexibility arrangements such as part time or change of hours require a manager's signoff, while informal arrangements are based on trust and aligned on an ad hoc basis.

Challenges and opportunities

As with any change, some managers took longer to adapt to leading teams in new ways, while others were early adopters. Managers who displayed some resistance or needed more help were supported by HR business partners. Role modelling by senior leaders, including the CEO,

helped with this transition. Many business leaders at Unilever have the following email signature to visibly support flexible working:

"We work flexibly at Unilever. I am sending this message now because it suits me but I don't expect you to read, respond or action it outside of your normal work hours."

Outcomes and impact

Unilever's focus on flexibility has helped achieve the following outcomes:

- Across the Unilever ANZ business, 10% of white collar employees work part time and there are eight successful job share arrangements across internal and customer facing functions in sales, marketing, supply chain and HR.

- Flexibility and agility are cited as key reasons for people joining Unilever.

- In internal engagement surveys employees quote flexibility and agility as key benefits of working at Unilever.

- Data from employee surveys in 2018 shows 89% of Unilever ANZ employees believe the company actively stands for diversity and inclusion.

- Across the business, 66% of employees believe they have the flexibility to manage work and life and is as high as 87% for Sydney CBD office-based employees.

- The Tatura factory now has four women in Executive roles who have returned from parental leave and are working part time. They are in process engineering, HR business partner, planning and technology implementation roles which have traditionally been full time.

- In rostered factory operator roles at Tatura, there are five women in engineering, quality and manufacturing who have recently returned from parental leave and all five currently work their standard 8-hour shifts across fewer days in the week, through creative rostering practice and job-sharing.

Next steps

While much has been achieved, normalising flexible work continues to be a big focus as part of Unilever's Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. Two key areas for 2019 are:

- ensuring flexible ways of working extend to all parts of the business including factory sites

- encouraging more senior leaders, especially men, to take up formal or informal flexible work options making it normal for others to do so.

Westpac Group

Number of employees	32000
Types of work	Customer service, corporate, small and large business
Work locations	Australia, Asia, the Americas and UK
Scheduled/non-scheduled work	Both scheduled and non-scheduled
Industry sector	Financial and Insurance Services
Customers/clients	Retail customers, large businesses, institutional investors
Began "All In Flex"	Started planning 2014, go-live in 2015

Context for flexible work

The message from Westpac employees in 2014 was loud and clear: 89% of the workforce wanted to be able to work flexibly within the next five years. The bank recognised the need to be much more proactive and purposeful to close the gap between this level of employee desire and the reality of 60% of employees with flexible working at the time. Westpac had seen organisations like Telstra move to "All Roles Flex" and wanted to be among the fast followers.

Overall approach

Westpac's approach of "All in Flex" launched across the business in 2015, based on an internal marketing campaign, a people leader toolkit, flexibility hub on the company intranet and flexibility champions in each business unit. Westpac's approach started with "yes" for all requests for flexible work, and brought those requests to life within the recruitment process as well.

The rollout of "All in Flex" was followed by "work smart", an app that shows employees the location of their colleagues and team members, who are in the office and where available desks are located. "Work smart" was accompanied by a rollout of activity-based working, laptops and remote-working tokens for system access.

For scheduled roles in bank branches Westpac began flexibility with rostering to suit the business and the different needs of employees by, for example, opening branches in hours where there is more foot traffic within shopping centres, shifting to a later start in the day and enabling employees to take care of personal commitments with more time available in the morning.

Recruitment approach

Westpac recruiters are regularly trained in unconscious bias, so they are able to challenge traditional views around flexible work and bring the promise of flexibility that is in all Westpac

recruitment advertising to life for candidates. Recruiters and hiring managers also receive education on enabling options for flexible work and are encouraged to collaborate on each recruitment to arrive at the best flexible arrangement, based on the candidate's and business needs.

Westpac includes the following in its job advertisements:

"Westpac Group is an equal opportunity employer. As part of our commitment to creating a diverse and inclusive workplace, this role is open to experienced candidates seeking a discussion around workplace flexibility. We invite candidates of all ages, people with a disability and Indigenous Australians to apply."

Types of roles

Roles at Westpac include both scheduled (e.g. rostered) and non-scheduled roles such as bank tellers and managers, personal bankers, customer service agents, corporate roles, institutional bankers, account directors, roles on the trading floor, group technology, IT coders, project and change management, accountants, economists, business, commercial and institutional bankers, and private wealth bankers.

Policy settings

With the launch of "All in Flex", Westpac relaunched all related policies, including changing language to be more enabling, highlighting technology and safety in working at home, and changing leave policies so that leave, including long service leave, could be taken in flexible ways.

Challenges and opportunities

Shifting mindsets and cultural norms were the most challenging aspects of the introduction of "All in Flex". Education for people leaders, constant communication about examples and role models have all helped to change the culture.

Westpac was not the first large corporate to adopt an "All Roles Flex" approach which meant they had other examples to follow and, together with their own data on employees' interest in more flexible ways of working, the business case in terms of employee attraction and retention was clear.

Outcomes and impact

Outcomes and impact of "All in Flex" at Westpac include:

- **Uptake of flexible working increased** across the group from 63% in 2014 (58% of men and 68% of women) to 74% in 2017 (72% of men and 76% of women).
- **Employee engagement increased**, with a strong increase in **men taking primary parental leave.**
- The objective of **50% female representation in leadership roles** was achieved ahead of target in 2017.
- **There is a stronger focus on inclusion** through mature age and cultural diversity strategies as both these strategies contain flexible ways of working to support their objectives.

Next steps

Westpac will continue to encourage innovation for flexible work, as it moves to a more agile and mobile workforce. There is a dedicated team to reskill the workforce for the capabilities required for the "Future of Work" and the organisation continues to focus on maintaining gender equality in leadership roles. Westpac's focus is shifting towards enabling people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to develop their careers into leadership, and creating more flexible leave policies with the introduction of Gender Transition Leave for employees who are affirming their gender and Sorry Leave for Indigenous employees with responsibilities during periods of bereavement.

Conclusion

The case studies highlighting a range of organisations and industries show the mainstreaming of flexible work has contributed to a significant cultural shift both within the organisations themselves and among customers and suppliers, and also more broadly within business and government.

Although there continue to be cultural factors and change management challenges in shifting attitudes, the positive impact from flexible work approaches is clear. The outcomes and impacts from these eight examples show that "All Roles Flex" approaches have positive and sustained impacts on employee engagement, attraction and retention, productivity, profit and career advancement. A healthier balance between work and home life also reduces undue stress and pressure at work.

The willingness of forward-thinking employers to place employee experience and individual needs at the centre of their employee value proposition and make meaningful efforts to create an inclusive workplace positions them at the forefront of good practice. This creates workplaces that work for everyone, and which blend meaningful family and community life with professional achievements and secure, satisfying work.

This Discussion Paper has explored the practice of enabling flexible work in a range of Australian workplaces, through an internally-focused lens. Future work could explore how mainstreaming flexibility can also impact the 'bigger picture' of business, policy and society, including environmental and health impacts, urban and transport planning and the link between flexible work and employees' experience of inclusion and therefore benefits to innovation.

In terms of environment, urban planning and transport, working from home is often promoted as a way of taking small individual steps to reduce commuting and therefore greenhouse gas emissions. More flexible work hours, such as shifting start and finish times in central office-based locations, can reduce pressure on roads and public transport during peak times. Location-independent work can allow urban planning to become more human-centred and support satellite hubs where home and work are co-located away from congested city centres.

The links between inclusion and innovation are well-known. Employees who experience inclusion at work are more likely to be both innovative and highly engaged, and more likely to offer their discretionary effort. Given that inclusion is based on a sense of belonging and the value placed on an individual's unique circumstances, flexibility supports inclusion by ensuring an individualised employment experience. Inclusion in turn leads to more innovative and engaged employees, and more innovative and engaged organisations overall.

About the Sydney Policy Lab

The Sydney Policy Lab exists to create surprising and dynamic partnerships between communities, policy-makers and some of the world's best researchers.

The lab offers a place where people come together to identify what they share in common and work out how to build change for the future.

In short, the Sydney Policy Lab is a hub for individuals who share a common commitment to the public good and are working towards this, responding to some of the hardest questions of our age – in areas of equality, belonging and power.

The Sydney Policy Lab is committed to helping anyone who wants to lead social change for the public good.

A new major multi-disciplinary initiative of the University of Sydney, the lab provides an experimental space for people from all backgrounds to meet with researchers from the University. Working together, they create:

- opportunities to make a positive difference to many people's lives, through new ideas for effective and lasting policy change

- training and events that are designed to enable the sharing of ideas and to generate energetic discussion between people of all backgrounds

- a stronger community of changemakers, who can share their challenges and their successes – supporting each other in a community of practice

- new collaboration that enables us to build truly inclusive coalitions for change across academia, philanthropy, community action, industry and politics.

About Troy Roderick

Troy Roderick is a national and global award-winning practitioner who has specialised in Diversity and Inclusion for around 25 years. In his work with Male Champions of Change, Troy advises program directors on key insights and trends in gender equality, shaping the agenda for bold initiatives to improve gender balance in business. As Catalyst Australia's Executive Ambassador, Troy provides leadership and support to Catalyst supporter companies in Australia committed to more inclusive cultures.

Most recently, Troy led Telstra's global Diversity and Inclusion function for 10 years, with reach into customer, community and HR practice, and developed groundbreaking initiatives on flexible working as the creator of "All Roles Flex", inclusive leadership, gender equality, Indigenous employment, and workplace responses to domestic and family violence.

He is a member of:

- Australian Human Resources Institute **Reference Panel on Inclusion and Diversity**

- Global **Expert Community of Catalyst's Research Centre for Corporate Practice**

- Diversity Councils of the Australian **Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet**, and the Victorian **Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning**

- Steering Committee for the University of Sydney's **Women, Work and Leadership Research Group**

- Expert Advisory Panel (Gender) of the **NSW Council of Social Service**.

Troy is also an active **White Ribbon Ambassador** as part of Australia's campaign to end men's violence against women.

Research Team

The research team is Troy Roderick, Honorary Associate with the Sydney Policy Lab at the University of Sydney (March 2018–December 2018), under the mentorship of Professor Rae Cooper who is Professor of Gender, Work and Employment Relations, Co-director of the **Women, Work and Leadership Research Group** and Associate Dean in the University of Sydney Business School.

Study participants included key informant interviewees (industry stakeholders) who are closely involved in the implementation of "All Roles Flex" in their organisations.

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Appendix – Interview Questions

All key informant interviewees were asked the following questions:

1. What was your organisation's context for adopting an "All Roles Flex" approach to flexible work (for example, business case, business imperative, diversity challenge, cultural change opportunity, customer or supplier expectation)?

2. When did you begin planning and setting the ground work for your adoption of "All Roles Flex"?

3. When did you go live? Was this an all-in or a staged approach, and why?

4. What did you do? What was the execution strategy, and what resources did you need to bring your approach to life?

5. What are the types of roles that you have in your organisation and how have you applied / did you apply "All Roles Flex" to these occupational settings?

6. How would you describe the internal policy settings now in place around "All Roles Flex" in your organisation?

7. (If not answered in Q.4) How have you incorporated "All Roles Flex" into your external employment brand and recruitment process?

8. What barriers did you find in your planning for and adoption of "All Roles Flex" and how did you overcome them?

9. What was easy and what made it so? What beneficial circumstances or opportunities did you take advantage of?

10. What have the impacts been – gender equality, cultural or engagement indicators, productivity improvements, commercial or customer results, improvements in terms of inclusion, the uptake of flexible work, including parental leave by men?

The Women, Work & Leadership Research Group (WW&LRG) at the University of Sydney Business School provides a focal point for collaboration between leading scholars, business practitioners and policy makers with an interest in women and work, in building more equitable workplaces and more sustainable careers for women. The WW&LRG engages closely with debates about the megatrends impacting the workforce, including the feminisation of the workforce, population ageing, flexibility and technological change and emerging issues which lead to changing expectations of employers, employees and of the organisation of work. The Co-Directors of the WW&LRG Professor Rae Cooper and Professor Marian Baird have considerable expertise in undertaking engaged research and in public speaking and translating research results in the media.

Contact us

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