

Negotiating with your employer

Whether it's your current employer or a new employer that you need to approach to agree a flexible working arrangement, it's important you feel prepared and confident about negotiating a 'deal' that will work for you.

The following steps will give ideas on how to handle a negotiation situation effectively.

1. PREPARE

Preparing in advance is essential. Know the facts about your situation - be clear in your own mind about what it is you are trying to achieve or gain from your employer.

How might your needs affect your employer, both positively and negatively? Consider what your employer's needs are before you initiate a meeting to discuss your own situation and needs. For example you may wish to negotiate shorter working hours, a pay rise, or you may wish to reduce your work responsibilities. How will this impact your job, team and manager?

2. APPROACHING YOUR EMPLOYER

To start the negotiation conversation, seek an appropriate time to book in a time to have a meeting with your employer to discuss the matter. Explain the topic you wish to raise to alleviate the element of surprise - this also allows your employer to prepare for the meeting. During the discussion state your situation and needs.

Proactively ask questions to clarify the needs and initial concerns of your employer.

3. EXPLORE OPTIONS

Consider ALL the options by brainstorming as many options, ideas and alternatives as possible. Be realistic about your expectations, and acknowledge the issues you and your employer face. Focus on solving any problems that have been raised by your employer. Shortlist the most mutually agreeable options.

4. SEEKING AGREEMENT

Work with your employer in partnership to try and help one another achieve a win/win outcome. Be prepared to 'give way' or 'give up' some points. If you approach the conversation with a positive conciliatory attitude and show that you are prepared to be somewhat flexible, your employer is more than likely to respond in kind. Don't be afraid to stand your ground on your important needs or critical issues. An unsatisfactory outcome is only unlikely to unravel or fail later on.

If you are having trouble reaching the 'right' outcome or solution, suggest to your employer that you agree to a 'trial arrangement' and review this after a period of time eg: 3 months to see what's working and what could be arranged differently.

Agree next steps even if you haven't reached a firm conclusion so you can continue the conversation at a later stage.

Contact us for more information at
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