

ESP AT WORK

Practice activity:

The company Secretary of Elland Hughes Advertising has been asked to prepare a report on the introduction of a flexitime system. Below are four documents that you should read and understand before proceeding to write it.

DOCUMENT 1: Memo to the Company Secretary

MEMO

To: Company Secretary

From: Peters

Subject: Flexitime

The board has recently been considering the introduction of a flexitime system. Please prepare a report on the feasibility of introducing this system. The report should cover:

- Staff attitude towards flexitime
- Benefits to the company of flexitime
- Financial implications
- Disadvantages (if any)
- Conclusions and recommendations

We envisage that the new times might be from 07.00 to 21.00, and that staff could have a day off in the week in lieu of Saturday if they prefer.

Please let me have the report and your findings by October 15

DOCUMENT 2: Memo from the Accounts Department

MEMO

To: Company Secretary

From: Chief Accountant

Subject: Flexitime

You asked us to examine the financial implications of the flexitime system and our conclusions are as follows:

Overheads will increase because of the need for extra heating and lighting. This will increase the bill by approximately 7%, but this may be offset by slightly lower insurance premiums because of the increased security of having staff on the premises longer. There may be a reduction in photocopying costs if we do not need to use outside agencies so much. All these costs are relatively small.

Wages will not increase as long as staff who works on Saturdays does not require the overtime rate, which is the standard wage plus 50%.

The clocking-in system will cost approximately £1548 + VAT. This is a fixed cost and can be offset against tax.

DOCUMENT 3: Staff Questionnaire

Results of Staff Questionnaire			
1 Are you in favour of the introduction of a flexitime system?		6 If the office was open six days a week, which day would you choose to have free in addition to Sunday?	
YES	87%	Monday	16%
NO	4%	Tuesday	7%
DON'T KNOW	9%	Wednesday	23%
2 Would you prefer to have a day off in the week instead of Saturday?		Thursday	14%
YES	76%	Friday	19%
NO	11%	Saturday	21%
DON'T KNOW	13%	7 What would be the main advantage of a free day during the week for you?	
3 Which facilities do you find most crowded?		Being with partner	34%
PHOTOCOPIER	35%	Shopping	23%
FAX	24%	Making other appointments	26%
CANTEEN	21%	Other	17%
PHONE	15%	8 In what way would the company benefit most from a flexitime system?	
TOILET	3%	Overseas clients would find it easier to contact us	34%
OTHER	2%	Clients could contact us on Saturday	26%
4 What is your average journey time to work during the rush-hour?		Staff would not be tired after the rush-hour	24%
LESS THAN ½ HOUR	12%	Security would be improved	12%
½ HOUR TO 1 HOUR	48%	Other	4%
1 HOUR TO 1 ½ HOURS	29%	9 Would you be in favour of the introduction of a clocking-in system?	
MORE THAN 1 ½ HOURS	11%	YES	26%
5 If flexitime were introduced, which hours would you prefer?		NO	48%
7 to 3	18%	DON'T KNOW	26%
8 to 4	21%	10 Would you be in favour of a one-year trial period?	
9 to 5	16%	YES	76%
10 to 6	20%	NO	14%
11 to 7	10%	DON'T KNOW	10%
12 to 8	10%		
1 pm to 9	5%		

DOCUMENT 4: Extract from a letter to a friend

... and they're thinking of bringing in a new flexitime system, which would be marvellous for most of us, I mean, I hate shopping on Saturdays, don't you? I think I'll have Wednesdays off, because that's when John's free, so we'll be able to spend much more time together.

And best of all, I'll be able to get in the morning and not face that awful rush-hour! What could be better? Lots of the other girls feel the same, and I'm sure we'll all work better in the end.

Anyway, did I tell you about...

Based on the information you have read,

1. Write a report from the Company Secretary. Your report should take the following form:
 - Introduction: give details of the proposed flexitime system.
 - Outline the advantages to the company of the system.
 - Outline the advantages to the staff of the system.
 - Mention the financial costs and benefits.
 - Make your conclusions and recommendations.
2. Write a circular for the rest of the staff informing about your report.
3. Write an e-mail to your colleague in Zurich informing him/her about the new measures adopted in your company regarding the new flexitime system.