

Having It All: How to Find Work Flexibility

presented by



Below you can find tips on how to find work flexibility in your next career by examining flexible work options, common flexible career fields, and where to find flexible companies! We've also included tips for asking your current employer about flexible work options, and how to approach other employers about flexibility during a job search.

Flexible Options

There are a number of flexible work options available, but before starting to search, decide the type of flexible work that will integrate best into your life. For each person, [it will vary based on life circumstances](#). Here are flexible work options commonly offered by employers:

- [Part-Time Schedules](#)
- [Flexible Schedules](#)
- [Alternative Schedules](#)
- [Freelance Contracts](#)
- [Temporary/Seasonal Jobs](#)
- [Telecommuting/Remote Work](#)

Most Flexible Career Fields

The career fields below have offered the most flexible jobs over the last three months, and are based on the listings in over [50 job categories on FlexJobs](#).

1. [Medical & Healthcare](#)
2. [Administrative](#)
3. [Customer Service](#)
4. [Sales](#)
5. [Computer & IT](#)
6. [Education & Training](#)
7. [Accounting & Finance](#)
8. [Web & Software Development](#)
9. [Research](#)
10. [Project Management](#)

Researching Companies

- **Company Websites:** Although many employers hide their flexible work options, there are many that do advertise it. Take a look at a company's career page or follow its blog. If a company is dedicated to a flexible workplace, it will usually include a snippet about how it's used and why it is important.
- **Social Media:** Some companies have active social media pages where customers and job seekers can stay up to date on company happenings and trends. Consider following your favorite companies on Twitter and Facebook, or checking their pages often to see what they post.
- **Accolades:** For both sets of employers (those that do and do not advertise flexible work options), the company's accolades can speak volumes. Check out their awards, recognitions, and achievements to see if they are related to flexible work practices.
- **Professional Organizations:** In addition to being a great place to network, professional organizations can provide some insider scoop on flexible employers.
- **FlexJobs:** Through FlexJobs, you can find and research over 40,000 flexible employers around the world. Here are a few of the best places to start looking:
 - [Guide to Flexible Companies](#)
 - [Company Directory](#)
 - [FlexJobs Blog](#)
 - [FlexJobs Featured Employers](#)
- **1 Million for Work Flexibility:** [The 1MFWF coalition](#) is made up of more than 90 organizations that promote flexible work, including flexible employers.

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Approaching Employers

While there is always the potential to approach your current employer about flexible work options, knowing how to approach future employers about their flexible work is important if you are looking to change careers. And, while the flexible options may be at the forefront of your mind, don't let them rule all of your interactions with employers.

A good rule of thumb is to follow the employer's lead. When it comes to the flexibility offered for any given job, it is okay to inquire if there is any flexibility available. However, don't let the flexibility component guide every phone call, email, or interview. Similar to short discussions about salary and benefits, flexible work options should be discussed along the same lines.

Asking Your Current Employer

1) Get clear about exactly what you want. Flexible work arrangements can mean telecommuting, part-time schedules, flexible work hours, job sharing, a compressed workweek, or any combination of those. Which type of flexwork do you want AND which type is best for your job duties?

2) Craft a plan. Plan ahead and practice your pitch—after all, you are trying to sell your boss on an idea, and one they might not be too keen on at first. Preparation increases your chances of getting a “yes.” The most important thing when proposing a flexible work arrangement to your boss is to be prepared. Be over-prepared, if you can. The number one fear bosses have about flexible work is that their employees won't take work seriously working out of the office or without a normal schedule. Take your proposal seriously to show your boss you'll take flexible work seriously.

3) Calm their fears. Bosses are concerned about several issues when it comes to telecommuting: Trust, Communication, and Productivity are three biggies. How will you show them you can be trusted to work independently at home? What methods of communication will you use, when, and how often? Are you ready to keep track of your work and demonstrate your productivity to your boss? How? Even if your boss doesn't ask about these things specifically, bring up the topic and answer the questions they haven't even thought to ask.

4) Be specific about how this benefits your boss and the company – NOT just yourself. Tell them how you'll get more work done, be less distracted, and save the company money. This is a business issue, so present a business case for it.

5) Suggest a trial run. Some bosses will be hesitant to allow a flexible work arrangement at first. Ask them if you can test your plan one or two days per week for a month, then meet to evaluate your performance and move forward.

Here are some additional resources on requesting flexibility:

- [Video: Requesting Telecommuting, Part-Time, and Flexible Arrangements from Your Employer](#)
- [Video: Making Flexibility Work, Hosted by Catalyst](#)
- [NBC News Life Ed: How To Negotiate Workplace Flexibility](#)

More about 1 Million for Work Flexibility and FlexJobs:



www.workflexibility.org



www.flexjobs.com