

Flexible Working: To Pilot or Not to Pilot?

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Background

- Launched new Flexible Working Policy for Communities
- Based on research of DTI guidance and best practice
- Over 160 senior staff trained in new policy prior to launch
- Considered a success by Board and staff generally
- No piloting undertaken

Legal Considerations

- The Flexible Working (Procedural Requirements) Regulations 2002
- Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Best Practice Guidance
- Duty to deliver on Equalities issues

Ministerial Pressure

- At the time the Department had responsibility for equalities policies
- Ruth Kelly – committed to delivering ‘work-life balance’ within the Department
- Wanted flexible working to be made available to all staff

Workplace Culture

- Traditional views on working patterns
- Challenging the idea that it is a revolutionary concept
- Cutting edge vs. catch up

Communications

- Big publicity launch
- Demonstrate commitment of Minister/SCS
- Address the perception that 'flexible working' means 'home working'
- Prevent misunderstandings by staff

Social Responsibility

- Commitment to staff welfare and equality
- Deliver work-life balance
- Demonstrate best practice
- Encourage staff loyalty

Conclusions: Is a pilot scheme right for you?

No if you are:

- In a catch-up situation
- Introducing the basics
- Best practice
- Nothing too innovative
- Minimal resource investment

Yes if you are:

- Building on the basics
- Developing cutting edge strategies
- Beyond best practice
- Highly innovative
- Increased demand on resources e.g. IT