



Personal Tool *Harnessing Flexibility*

Whether you are working from home, still in the workplace or doing a blend of the two – there is always work to be done. Like the words agile, pivot and ‘new normal’, flexibility can mean different things to different people. When reading this tool, it is important to remember that being flexible in the workplace also means greater flexibility personally, in your thoughts and behaviours, which should lead to greater resilience and life satisfaction. If you are able to adjust and move with changes in life, this lessens those feelings of stress or drama. Another reason is that flexibility means changing plans and adapting to new situations and avoiding disappointment or pressure. People across the globe report wanting flexibility in their careers so that there is a consideration for caring responsibilities, personal needs (like exercise or recreational pursuits) and the ability to be a lifelong learner.

The benefits of flexibility are:

- The ability to reduce the feelings of being overwhelmed and feeling stressed
- Less black and white thinking and broader and wider perspectives
- Feeling less angry at the way that situations turn out
- Deeper feelings of being resilient to change
- Managing unexpected outcomes
- Higher life and relationship satisfaction
- Remaining employed

If there was a news item on the 1st of December 2019 that said that the world would dramatically change come the end of March 2020, many people would have laughed. Most, if not all, humans have been taken by surprise by the COVID-19 pandemic. There will be further changes to come and although no-one has the capacity to say exactly what they are - we all agree that this is not over yet. To assist those who are seeking to learn some skills on being flexible and adaptable; we have found the following tips:

- Move to accept that change is a constant part of life and it will inevitably happen in your work and home life
- Build confidence around prioritising, time management and communication skills to ensure you feel ready for the change/s ahead
- Say “I’ll get back to you” rather than “no.”
- Be open to new ideas and approaches to how you see and do things
- Be curious in your approach to how things work



- Set some impossible goals and challenge yourself in both work and personal pursuits
- Look at overcoming limitations, blocks, and speed bumps when it comes to getting things done. Develop a “can do” attitude.
- Keep asking open-ended questions and seek assistance and/or guidance on how others see the world
- Identify what arrangement you want and then be realistic in what is possible
- Research options so that you are not stuck on one outcome or solution
- Listen to what others are saying and what their feedback is around possible outcomes or solutions
- Rest recuperate and regenerate where you can. A healthy mind allows for further discussion and thought.

Practicing any of the above will strengthen your coping skills and make you feel more resilient. Seeking assistance from others or from us here at AccessEAP is a step in the right direction to hear another person’s point of view. We are professionally trained mental health professionals whose job it is to listen and find strategies to assist. Our role is to see the other person’s point of view and to discuss ways of finding mutual understanding. If you need assistance with flexibility, change and/or resilience, you are not alone, and we can assist you in moving forward. For a confidential conversation with one of our experienced clinical professionals, please contact **AccessEAP** on **1800 818 728**.

AccessEAP acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land we work on and their continuing connection to land, culture and community. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and future.

