



A GUIDE TO JOB FLEXIBILITY AT MIT:

Tools for Employees and Supervisors Considering Flexible Work Arrangements

A Collaborative Project of the
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At the recommendation of the Council, a Job Flexibility Team was then established within MIT's Human Resources Department to revise, publish, and disseminate these guidelines. Members of this team are also listed below.

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INTRODUCTION

Job flexibility is a critical resource for maintaining job satisfaction and quality of life among MIT employees, according to a recent survey.¹ Because of the many benefits to the MIT community, MIT encourages and supports flexible work arrangements when they meet the needs of both the organization and the individual.

Work arrangements define when, where, and how work gets done. Flexible work arrangements are alternatives to the traditional “9-to-5” workday, the standard workweek, or the traditional workplace. Flexibility enables individuals to make adjustments to changing circumstances. These alternatives can assist employees in balancing work, personal commitments and retirement planning, while meeting business needs and objectives. Additionally, supervisors/managers can use flexible schedules as tools to promote productivity, enhance job satisfaction, and develop management and leadership skills. These same alternatives can enhance recruitment and retention of valuable employees.

This guide is designed to assist the MIT community in maximizing the benefits while reducing the risks associated with job flexibility. It addresses the needs of support, administrative, and sponsored research staff. Unionized staff is covered by individual collective bargaining agreements. It provides a framework for employees and supervisors/managers to explore work arrangement flexibility and to develop a plan for determining if a flexible arrangement will work in a specific situation.

For employees, the tools and suggestions in this guide are designed to help navigate the steps in considering and negotiating flexible work arrangements; to create a proposal, when appropriate; and to open a dialogue with their supervisor/manager.

For employers, this guide is also intended to assist in evaluating proposals and assessing the value of job flexibility as a supervisory tool. Not all job circumstances lend themselves to alternative work arrangements, and the final decision in each case is that of the supervisor. However, surprisingly often, alternative arrangements can be identified that create positive outcomes for both supervisors and employees.

WHY FLEXIBILITY?

Recent studies suggest that job flexibility can offer many benefits to both employers and employees, including improved job satisfaction, reduced absenteeism, greater commitment, and reduced turnover.² For example, in a Boston College Center for Work & Family study of six large companies, 70% of managers and 87% of employees reported that working a flexible arrangement had a positive or very positive impact on productivity; 65% of managers and 87% of employees reported that a flexible work arrangement had a positive or very positive impact on the quality of work; and 76% of managers and 80% of employees indicated that flexible work arrangements had positive effects on retention.³

Consistent with national trends, MIT employees place a very high priority on job flexibility as a tool for improving their job satisfaction and quality of life. A Quality of Life Survey conducted by the Council on Family and Work in 2001 found that:

¹ Council on Family and Work. *Quality of Life Survey: Findings of the Staff Survey Conducted in October 2001*. Report of the Council on Family and Work. Massachusetts Institute of Technology, December 2002. Available at <http://web.mit.edu/faculty/reports/sqol.pdf>

² Bailyn, Lotte, Robert Drago, and Thomas A. Kochan, *Integrating Work and Family Life: A Holistic Approach*. Report of the Sloan Work–Family Policy Network. MIT Sloan School of Management, September 2001.

³ Pruchno, Rachel, Leon Litchfield, and Mindy Fried. *Measuring the Impact of Workplace Flexibility*. Chestnut Hill, MA: Boston College, Center for Work & Family, Wallace E. Carroll School of Management, 2000, p. 3.

- Well over half of most categories of staff, including support, administrative, and research staff, felt that flexible full-time hours were among the most valuable programs at MIT.⁴
- Over half of administrative, support, and research staff indicated that flexible full-time hours were the first or second most important program/policy in continuing employment at MIT.⁵
- About three-quarters of nonacademic staff indicated that they had the flexibility they needed to manage work and personal and/or family responsibilities.⁶
- The most frequently cited barriers to getting flexibility were the nature of the work and immediate supervisors.⁷

WFD Consulting, Inc., which assisted MIT's Council on Family and Work in conducting the 2001 Quality of Life survey, concluded that, of all the programs and policies suggested in the survey, flexibility was the one most highly valued by staff.⁸

If flexibility offers so many organizational benefits, why is it not even more commonplace? Lotte Bailyn, MIT Professor of Management and Co-Director of the MIT Workplace Center, comments about American companies: "Rather than organizing work around the needs of the task, in most American companies the work gets organized by means of the cultural expectations surrounding time . . . somehow one must always be at work, even when the job may not require it." Employers are struggling with a mismatch between the lives of their workers and the structure of the workplace, a mismatch in which far fewer workers are "unencumbered" by family and other responsibilities than in the past, and in which workplaces are left needing to catch up with these changes.⁹

Lack of knowledge about the benefits of flexibility and options for implementing flexibility undoubtedly also reduce its use. Furthermore, some positions do not easily lend themselves to flexibility, requiring supervisors/managers to make individual decisions and to balance the needs of the employee with the needs of the job. This can indeed be a difficult task, one that this guide has been designed to assist both supervisors/managers and supervisees in addressing.

⁴ WFD Consulting, *Quality of Life Assessment: Data Tables*. Council on Family and Work, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, February 2002, p. 150.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 154.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 98.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 98.

⁸ WFD Consulting, *Quality of Life Assessment Report*. Council on Family and Work, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, February 2002, pp. 7, 75.

⁹ Bailyn, Drago, and Kochan, 2001.

ELIGIBILITY AT MIT

The primary criterion for determining approval at MIT is whether a flexible work arrangement meets the business needs of an employee's workplace.¹⁰ Eligibility may vary for different types of flexible work arrangements, as some alternatives may not be appropriate for particular jobs or for certain employees, depending on individual office needs of location. All proposals should be treated equitably, regardless of the employee's reason for requesting flexibility. The following are a few suggested guidelines to explore when thinking in terms of a flexible work arrangement. The process is discussed in more detail under the "Guidelines for Flexible Work Arrangements" section, which follows.

- In any flexible work arrangement, employees will be expected to meet the same performance standards as they did previously, and supervisors/managers will be expected to use the same measurement criteria that were previously in place.
- Typically, an employee will not be granted flexibility unless his or her prior performance has demonstrated the skills and qualities necessary to succeed in the proposed flexible work arrangement. However, a supervisor/manager may choose to consider a proposal if a flexible arrangement will contribute to improving performance.
- New employees may be hired into a flexible work arrangement if the arrangement meets the business needs at the time of hire, with the understanding that such an arrangement may be changed if business needs dictate.
- Employees who propose a telecommuting arrangement should ensure a safe and suitable workspace that is appropriately confidential and free of distractions and interruptions that may interfere with work. Where applicable, telecommuters will need to find ways to maintain a distinct separation between work activities and personal activities.
- All flexible work arrangements are subject to ongoing review and may be terminated at any time, given cause, or when business needs dictate.

¹⁰ In addition, employees may be entitled to some change in work schedule or arrangement as a result of legal requirements under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) or Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Supervisors who are unfamiliar with these laws or have questions regarding their application should consult their Human Resources Officer.

FLEXIBILITY OPTIONS

Many employees might describe their current schedule as “somewhat flexible.” Occasionally, with approval from his or her supervisor/manager, an employee might come to work late to keep a dental appointment, leave early to attend a child’s soccer game, or work on Saturday instead of Wednesday to study for graduate school exams. Such informal flexibility often exists where there is respect and trust between supervisor/manager and employee - trust that job commitments and responsibilities will be met. These arrangements that are occasional or modest in nature without significant impact on supervisor/manager, co-workers, or clients probably will not require a formal request in writing, but are likely to require an informal check-in with the supervisor/manager.

The formal proposal process outlined in this guide is designed for those employees and supervisors/managers who want to institute a different category of arrangement that *consistently differs* from their department’s or office’s standard hours or work location, as in the examples described below. Employees may wish to consult their supervisors about whether a formal proposal is required in a given case.

The following is a brief description of flexible work options. A more detailed description of each is given in Appendix B: 1–6.

<i>Compressed Work Week</i>	A work schedule that condenses one or more standard workweeks into fewer, longer days.
<i>Flextime</i>	A work schedule with variable starting and ending times, within limits set by one’s supervisor/manager. Employees still work the same number of scheduled hours as they would under a traditional arrangement.
<i>Job-Sharing</i>	An arrangement in which two or more part-time (or occasional) employees share the responsibilities of one full-time job at a pro-rated salary.
<i>Part-time Work</i>	A work schedule that is less than full-time but is at least half of the regularly scheduled full time workweek.
<i>Personal or Family Leaves</i>	A block of time off while retaining one’s job. These leaves may be paid or unpaid.
<i>Telecommuting</i>	A work arrangement in which employees regularly work at home or at an alternative worksite during part or all of a work schedule.



GUIDELINES FOR FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS

Flexible work arrangements may arise at MIT as a result of individual negotiations between employees and supervisors/managers, when these arrangements are mutually beneficial and meet or exceed business needs.

MIT is a decentralized organization with diverse work environments. No one alternative fits all situations, and no guidance can be appropriate for all situations. However, many MIT environments can use at least one form of workplace flexibility, provided that the following principles are met:

PRINCIPLES FOR EFFECTIVE WORKPLACE PRACTICE

1. The arrangement must support the office or department's goals, including productivity, cost effectiveness, and service to internal and external clients. For example, the arrangement should be achieved without: curtailing normal MIT service hours; incurring overtime costs; impairing the unit's effectiveness in carrying out its research, teaching, service, or administrative function; placing undue burden on others in the unit, whether individual employees or supervisors/managers; or creating problems of safety, security, or supervision.
2. The individual's work style and work history must support the requirements of the arrangement.
3. The job tasks must be adaptable to the flexible arrangement.
4. Special arrangements for communication and accountability should be established to assist successful implementation of the new flexibility arrangement.
5. To assure that all parties understand the expectations of the arrangement, a written proposal and agreement should be developed.
6. Approval should be based on the business merits of the individual proposal.
7. A trial period should be established in some cases to provide an opportunity for employee and supervisor/manager to work together in good faith to implement the proposal and to work out minor problems. The proposal should be re-negotiated at least annually. Some jobs do not lend themselves to flexibility. Consequently, both parties should be prepared to agree that an arrangement either may need some sorting out or may need to be discontinued if it is not working.
8. It should be made clear that approval is subject to change or revocation at any time, should business or performance concerns arise. Impacts of alternative work policies and arrangements should be well understood with an overall consideration for all employees in the office or department who may be impacted by such a change.
9. Alternative work policies and flexible arrangements should be well communicated to all employees in the office or department.

HOW EMPLOYEES CAN DEVELOP A PROPOSAL: ELEMENTS TO INCLUDE

If an employee is interested in a flexible work arrangement, a written proposal describing how it is to be implemented must be developed and submitted to his or her supervisor/manager for consideration. A proposal form, along with a sample proposal, is included. **See Appendix C: 1-2.**

There are a number of critical questions that the proposal should address. (See Table I.) The employee and supervisor should discuss the proposal, and the critical questions should be reviewed. Improvements can thus be made wherever necessary. Both partners should be prepared to discuss alternatives and to ask for assistance from others whenever necessary.

Before submitting the proposal, the employee should be sure to understand what, if any, impact the proposed arrangement might have on his or her pay, benefits, and MIT status.

YOUR PROPOSAL SHOULD INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS:

- ✓ The exact type and schedule for your flexible work arrangement.
- ✓ A description of how you will accomplish the major components of your job.
- ✓ The business case for your flexible work arrangement: what benefits it offers to your work team, office, or the Institute (e.g., greater efficiency, increased productivity, expanded hours of service).
- ✓ An explanation of how client and co-worker needs will be handled (e.g., backup, voicemail, pager, fax) without sacrificing quality or responsiveness.
- ✓ A description of how you will handle regular communications with clients, co-workers, supervisees, and supervisors/managers without sacrificing accessibility or quality.
- ✓ An acknowledgment that it is your responsibility to make this arrangement work.
- ✓ An expressed willingness to consider alternative arrangements and solutions with your supervisor/manager.
- ✓ An acknowledgment that you will be flexible and willing to make adjustments to ensure success.
- ✓ A start date for transitioning to a new schedule if your proposal is approved.
- ✓ A recommendation for a trial period with regular intervals of evaluation.
- ✓ An acknowledgement that the arrangement is subject to termination at any time should business needs change or performance issues arise.

TABLE 1: QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

A successful proposal should adequately address each of the following questions as applicable:

<i>Your Job</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What are your key responsibilities and what are the tasks required for success in your job? ▪ Do you supervise others? How will a flexible work arrangement affect your supervision of others? ▪ What goals did you establish through the performance development process? How will this arrangement help you to meet those goals? ▪ How will a flexible work arrangement sustain or enhance your ability to get your job done? ▪ Will you be able to adequately protect any confidential information that you handle?
<i>Your Clients</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How will business needs be met (or exceeded)? ▪ How flexible can you be to changing business needs? ▪ Who are your key clients? ▪ How will clients be impacted by your restructured schedule? ▪ How will you ensure that customer service needs will be met?
<i>Your Co-Workers, Supervisor/Manager, and Supervisees</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What will the impact be on your co-workers and your supervisor? ▪ What will the impact be on those you supervise? ▪ How will your restructured schedule affect work volume, peak periods, projects in progress, and/or overtime? ▪ What will be the impact on coverage within your work group (co-workers' illnesses/leaves/vacations)? How does your plan address this?
<i>Tools and Resources for Your Job</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What are the tools, resources, and best working environments required for success in your job? ▪ What equipment/technology will your flexible work arrangement require? ▪ How will resources you need be supported or funded? ▪ What are the cost implications? ▪ Are there any cost savings for you or MIT that might result from your flexible work arrangement?
<i>Your Performance</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How will your work/performance be reviewed and evaluated? ▪ How will your success be measured?
<i>Yourself</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Are you self-directed and comfortable working without close supervision? ▪ Do you manage your time well? ▪ Are you comfortable working alone for long periods of time? ▪ How do you manage those employees who report to you?
<i>Your Pay Benefits and MIT Status¹¹</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What are the benefit implications (e.g., if your flexible work arrangement includes a request for reduced hours)? ▪ What impact, if any, will a flexible work arrangement have on your MIT status and your salary, job grade, vacation, and projected age of retirement, etc.? Note that, if the arrangement involves a reduction in hours, it may not be possible to increase those hours later. (See page 12.)

¹¹ Make sure you understand the impact a reduced schedule will have on your compensation and benefits. Call the Human Resources Department for more information.

REQUEST AND REVIEW PROCESS FOR EMPLOYEES AND SUPERVISORS/MANAGERS

Decisions regarding the appropriateness of an arrangement should be made on a case-by-case basis. Business needs are a priority in the consideration and evaluation of an employee proposal. There are no standardized rules for what will make an arrangement acceptable or unacceptable; however, personal opinions and biases should not influence decision making. If a supervisor/manager declines to accept the proposal, then he or she must make every effort to ensure that the employee fully understands the reason(s).

STEPS FOR THE EMPLOYEE TO FOLLOW

- Think through which option makes sense and whether that option provides the flexibility you need. It is important to consider how the arrangement may impact your work and the work of your colleagues. It is also a good idea to talk to other individuals who have flexible work arrangements before deciding on your ideal plan.
- Ask for assistance or guidance from Human Resources. (**See Appendix D.**)
- Once you have decided on your ideal plan, write up a proposal and fill out a proposal form, (**Appendix C 1–2**) if required, to present to your supervisor/manager. Schedule an appointment with him or her to talk about it. In this meeting, finalize any details and develop a compromise plan if necessary.
- Once the proposal is approved, you, together with your supervisor/manager, should communicate the new arrangement to co-workers, clients, and supervisees. Determine milestones for checking progress and measuring success.
- Agree upon the trial period (usually 3–6 months).
- Create a contingency plan to respond to unexpected circumstances or changes that may result and affect your flexible work arrangement.

STEPS FOR THE SUPERVISOR/MANAGER TO FOLLOW

- Respond to each proposal in a timely manner, to keep the employee informed of its status.
- Consider each proposal for a flexible work arrangement on its own merits, and give equal consideration to all requests. If you have questions, ask for assistance or guidance from a Human Resources Officer and for counsel from colleagues, especially those experienced with flexible work options.
- If the employee's proposal seems to address any health issues, contact your Human Resources Officer for assistance.
- Consult your own supervisor/manager and others as required to ensure consistency within your office or department.
- Gain approval from your own supervisors/managers for the proposal.
- Keep focused on the organizational benefits derived by supporting flexible work arrangements, which potentially include reduced absenteeism and turnover and increased productivity and commitment.
- If the request is unacceptable, be supportive, and, if practical, suggest alternatives. Encourage the employee to rework the proposal if possible.

- If the request is denied, clarify with the employee why you cannot approve it.
- If the request is approved, both you and the employee should sign the proposal form together.
- Communicate the new arrangement to other staff in the department, as this makes it easier to work through problems and/or obstacles that may arise. This way everybody is operating from the same set of expectations.
- Develop and communicate clearly defined tasks and expectations. **For example, ensure that job descriptions are current and performance reviews are conducted annually.** Your Human Resources Officer can provide assistance with job descriptions and performance reviews.
- Submit all necessary change on a change of status forms to Human Resources.
- Meet regularly with the employee to review the success of the arrangement, especially within the initial trial period. Discuss and re-approve the arrangement at the conclusion of the trial period and then annually.

MODIFICATION OR TERMINATION OF A FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENT

Since a flexible work arrangement is a business decision, it can be modified or terminated if necessary. Terms and conditions of the arrangement should be clear up front. Some examples follow that could trigger a modification or termination of a flexible work arrangement:

- Business needs are no longer being met.
- Job or job requirements change.
- Performance rating falls below an acceptable level.
- Current coverage or staffing needs change.
- An unexpected staff shortage develops.
- Valid negative client or co-worker feedback is received.

As circumstances, business needs, and job requirements evolve over time, adjustments and modifications may become necessary. As with any other work arrangement, flexible work arrangements should not be considered permanent. Both supervisors/managers and employees must be responsive to change and should monitor the arrangement to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of the department, laboratory, or center. In some situations, it may be necessary to discontinue the original plan or seek an alternative. The process used in revising or ending a work arrangement should be just as carefully thought through as when initiating one.

The supervisor/manager and employee should review both the original proposal and the contingency plan at the end of the trial period. If a change seems to be necessary, refer to the contingency plan that was discussed during the proposal process. If an altogether different flexible work arrangement seems necessary, then a new proposal should be prepared. Finally, if a supervisor/manager sees a need for a new long-term schedule change, he or she must inform the employee.

If at some point the employee wishes to return to a standard work schedule, he or she must give notice to his or her supervisor/manager. In some cases, budgetary or staffing limitations may eliminate opportunities to increase hours. It may not be possible for an employee to return full-time if the flexible work arrangement resulted in reduced hours.

In general, both a supervisor/manager and an employee should give at least 30 days notice in advance of ending or changing arrangement.



CONCLUSION

The preceding pages are intended to serve as a reference guide for employees and supervisors/managers who are considering a flexible work arrangement at MIT. It is important to remember that flexibility can be a valuable tool for any department or office.

There is no one arrangement that fits all situations. This guide is a suggested starting point, introducing the options that fall under the general heading of flexible work arrangements. More detailed information and examples are included in the appendices that follow. These appendices offer guidelines, not only to supervisors/managers and employees, but also to senior administrators and other key decision makers. It is hoped that reviewing these guidelines will clarify and facilitate the process for all concerned.

APPENDIX A: MIT POLICY REGARDING HOURS OF WORK AND FLEXIBLE WORK SCHEDULES FOR SUPPORT, ADMINISTRATIVE AND SPONSORED RESEARCH STAFF

(Excerpted from MIT Personnel Policy Manual, section 3.1.1, Conditions of Work and Personal Conduct)

HOURS OF WORK AND FLEXIBLE WORK SCHEDULES

It is the general policy of M.I.T. to allow for the existence of flexible work schedules for individual employees where it is to the mutual advantage of both the employee and the department or laboratory. Hours of work for any individual may be arranged by each department or laboratory in consultation with the Personnel Officer. Before changing an employee's schedule, the supervisor/manager must notify the appropriate Human Resources Officer. (See Section 5.2, Implementing Changes in Employment Status.)

It is recognized that certain offices can most conveniently operate on irregular or flexible schedules because of academic commitments, seasonal operations, extended experiments, peak loads, or other operational reasons. In such situations, all employees should be aware that efficient accomplishment of assigned work is the primary consideration of any office or laboratory, and that the convenience of others, including other areas of the Institute, students, and the public, overrides personal convenience.

The Institute will seek to accommodate the needs of those for whom an alternative work schedule has distinct advantages, whether for reasons of transportation, religious obligations, children's schooling, family, phased retirement, or other needs. Supervisors/Managers are encouraged to give favorable consideration to requests for alternative schedules as long as the accommodation can be achieved without changing the basic M.I.T. office hours during which services are provided (9 a.m. - 5 p.m.) or without incurring overtime costs; without impairing the unit's effectiveness in carrying out its research, teaching, service, or administrative function; without placing undue burden on others in the unit, whether individual employees or supervisors/managers; and without creating problems of safety, security, or supervision.

In the event of a paid absence such as vacation or sick leave on a day that an employee with a flexible schedule would ordinarily be scheduled to work, the employee will be paid, through the normal process, for the number of hours he or she would have been paid had he or she not been absent, with appropriate deductions from the vacation or sick leave balances. (See also Section 4.1.3, Computation of Holiday Pay.)

It is incumbent on each supervisor/manager to report work times exactly as attended in order to assure equity among all employees and compliance with the governing policies, procedures, and regulations. (See Section 5.1, Supervisor's Responsibility in Payroll Matters.)

Should any flexible scheduling arrangement prove incompatible with a department's or laboratory's operational needs, the arrangement may be unilaterally terminated by the department in consultation with the Human Resources Officer.

APPENDIX B.1: FLEX SCHEDULE (“FLEX TIME”)

Flex time allows employees to begin and end work at nonstandard times within limits set by management.

Examples

- Staggered hours within a fixed schedule: Employees establish starting and ending times that differ from the department’s norm, but keep the same schedule each day (e.g., Monday–Friday, 11–7).
- Core hours within a variable schedule: Employees must be present during specified core hours determined by the supervisor/manager, but may adjust their arrival and departure times each day (e.g., set coverage 10–2 every day, but the other four hours per day vary). It is expected that the employee will work a set number of hours each week.
- Variable day: Employees may work a consistent schedule of a different number of hours each day as long as they achieve the expected number of hours within the week (e.g., Monday, Wednesday ten hours; Tuesday, Friday eight hours; Thursday four hours).
- Mid-Day Flextime: Employees may take a longer scheduled break than usual if they make up the extra time by starting work earlier or staying later (e.g., work 8–12; break 12–2; work 2–6).

Benefits	<p>Employee keeps full pay and benefits, unless number of hours worked each week decreases</p> <p>Employee’s working and time off hours more closely meet their needs</p> <p>Provides a low-cost employee benefit</p> <p>May ease employee’s commute</p> <p>Often enhances employee’s productivity</p> <p>May facilitate recruiting and retention</p> <p>Can reduce absenteeism and tardiness</p> <p>May improve coverage or extend hours</p>
Challenges	<p>May not free as much time as employee needs</p> <p>May not provide supervision at all hours</p> <p>May cause understaffing at times</p> <p>Key people may be unavailable at certain times, requiring cross-training to ensure coverage</p> <p>May create difficulty in scheduling meetings, coordinating projects, etc.</p> <p>May make it more difficult to keep track of hours</p>
Flexible schedule proposals need to address:	<p>How department or office coverage will be maintained (possibly establish core hours)</p> <p>How effective channels of communication will be established and maintained</p> <p>How work hours will be tracked</p> <p>Definition of tasks during times when supervisor/manager is absent</p>

APPENDIX B.2: COMPRESSED WORK WEEK¹²

A compressed work week allows employees to work full-time hours in fewer than five days per week.

Examples (for a 40-hour-per-week employee):

- A full-time schedule of work is accomplished by working four 10-hour days.
- A full-time schedule of work is accomplished over two weeks by working 80 hours in nine days (eight 9-hour days plus one 8-hour day, for example).
- “Summer Hours”: Longer hours Monday through Thursday and shorter hours on Friday (often during summer vacation months).

Benefits	<p>Employee keeps full pay and benefits unless number of hours worked each week decreases</p> <p>May reduce employee’s child-care or elder-care costs</p> <p>Provides employee with larger blocks of time off</p> <p>May reduce commuting time and costs</p> <p>Provides a low-cost employee benefit</p> <p>May enhance productivity, with fewer interruptions during atypical office hours</p> <p>May enhance the use of facilities or equipment</p> <p>May increase total staff hours on especially busy days</p>
Challenges	<p>Employee may or may not be as productive on longer-day schedule</p> <p>Employee may not receive supervision at all hours</p> <p>May cause understaffing at times</p> <p>Key people may be unavailable at times, require cross-training to ensure coverage</p> <p>May create difficulty in scheduling meetings, coordinating projects, etc.</p> <p>For exempt staff, difficulty defining a full work load</p> <p>For non-exempt staff, the need to be careful not to incur overtime</p>
Compressed work week proposals need to address:	<p>How office coverage will be maintained</p> <p>How to coordinate schedules</p> <p>How effective channels of communication will be established</p> <p>Definition of tasks during times when supervisor/manager is absent</p> <p>For exempt staff, possible issue of equity (justifying a part-week schedule as full-time, particularly if nine-hour days are common among five-day-a-week staff)</p>

¹² The Fair Labor Standards Act requires that weekly paid staff receive time and a half for work over 40 hours in a week.

APPENDIX B.3: PART-TIME HOURS¹³

Reduced work hours increase free time and can increase flexibility. However, employees may be reluctant to consider temporary, and especially permanent, part-time schedules due to financial considerations or to the perception that working part-time could negatively affect career advancement. Because of this, employee/supervisor discussions should address the employee’s career goals and opportunities.

In addition, it is important to carefully analyze the requirements of the job for managing and evaluating a part-time employee, particularly an employee who moves from full-time to part-time.

Examples

- Three or four days a week, 8-hour days.
- Five days a week, 4- to 7-hour days.
- Two days a week, 10-hour days.

Benefits	<p>Provides more time for personal responsibilities</p> <p>Provides flexibility to alter schedule in response to home or work demands</p> <p>Can reduce absenteeism and tardiness</p> <p>Often enhances employee’s morale, productivity, and commitment</p> <p>May facilitate recruitment and/or retention</p> <p>May allow employer to reduce costs without reducing staff</p> <p>Can be used for phased-in retirement to reduce employee’s hours over time and train his or her replacement, enabling MIT to benefit from the retiring employee’s experience and knowledge of the job</p>
Challenges	<p>Employee loses income and possibly some benefits (many are pro-rated)</p> <p>Re-assigning the rest of the employee’s job duties</p> <p>Employee may be viewed as less committed by colleagues or supervisor/manager</p> <p>May cause understaffing at times</p> <p>May create difficulty in scheduling meetings, coordinating projects, etc.</p> <p>Measuring the performance of part-timers</p>
Regular part-time work proposals need to address:	<p>What work will be accomplished in the employee’s reduced hours</p> <p>How the rest of the employee’s work will be handled</p> <p>How the employee’s performance will be evaluated</p> <p>The impact on the employee’s future (career advancement, future hours, etc.)</p>

¹³ MIT offers full health benefits to all employees working at least 50% time. Some MIT benefits are pro-rated for part-time staff, including Tuition Assistance and paid time off.

APPENDIX B.4: JOB SHARE

Job share is a form of regular part-time work in which two people share the responsibilities of one position, splitting hours and responsibilities evenly or unevenly.

Examples

- Two employees work half of a regularly scheduled full-time job with no overlaps (e.g., 2 ½ days each).
- Two employees work 3 days per week, with one day overlapping when both employees work.

Benefits	<p>Employees have the advantages of part-time work in a position that requires full-time coverage</p> <p>Both job-share partners, if working at least 50% time receive health coverage</p> <p>Each employee gains a partner with whom to share ideas and responsibilities</p> <p>May facilitate retention of valued employees</p> <p>Often increases breadth of skills and experience of both parties</p> <p>Often increases productivity and morale</p> <p>May decrease absenteeism (partners might cover for each other)</p> <p>May provide coverage by two people during peak hours or when two projects or activities demand simultaneous attention</p> <p>No additional expense to department</p> <p>Creates a talent pool that may fill future full-time openings</p> <p>Can be used for phased-in retirement to reduce employee's hours over time and train his or her replacement, enabling MIT to benefit from the retiring employee's experience and knowledge of the job</p>
Challenges	<p>Finding a compatible partner</p> <p>Replacing a partner who leaves</p> <p>Dividing the work equitably to achieve a balanced team</p> <p>Added effort to supervise job-sharers as individuals and as a team</p> <p>Additional systems for communication with supervisor/manager(s), co-workers, clients</p> <p>Difficulty in reversing the arrangement</p> <p>Additional space required if overlap days are chosen</p> <p>Making sure each works at least 50% time</p>
Job share proposals need to address:	<p>Implications for pay and benefits</p> <p>Division of responsibilities between partners</p> <p>Hours of work for each partner, including possible overlap</p> <p>How job-sharers will communicate with each other, their supervisor/manager, co-workers, and clients</p> <p>How each partner will be evaluated, both individually and as a team</p> <p>What happens when a job-share partner leaves</p> <p>What happens if the trial job-share arrangement doesn't work</p>

APPENDIX B.5: PERSONAL AND FAMILY LEAVES

Leaves provide time off in a block while retaining one’s job and certain benefits. Leaves, paid or unpaid, may be approved at MIT for a variety of purposes. (Refer to MIT Personnel Policies for information on various leave policies). Some employee requests for leave, such as educational leave or personal leave, may be negotiated with the supervisor/manager and submitted for required approvals.

Examples

- Time to relocate an ill relative.
- Time to attend an educational program.

Benefits	<p>Offers employee a temporary arrangement, usually with a return to a regular schedule</p> <p>Provides a block of time with family or for coursework, extended travel, community service, or other activities</p> <p>For employees anticipating retirement, may offer a chance to “try out” life outside the current job, establish new interests, reestablish connections, etc.</p> <p>May help retain trained and valued employees</p> <p>May provide an opportunity for employee to enhance skills</p> <p>Often enhances employee’s morale, productivity, and commitment</p>
Challenges	<p>Employee’s leave is almost always unpaid</p> <p>May not address employee’s ongoing need for more time outside of work</p> <p>Duties need to be reassigned while employee is on leave</p> <p>Employee requesting leave may be viewed as less committed by colleagues or supervisor/manager</p>
Non-mandated leave proposals need to address:	<p>Type of leave being requested</p> <p>Duration of leave being requested</p> <p>How employee’s work will be handled during the leave</p> <p>If and how employee will be available to the office during leave</p> <p>Impact on benefits, including payment of employee portion of health insurance</p>

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

Some leaves are covered by state and federal law, such as the Family and Medical Leave Act, which provides up to 12 weeks of job-protected leave for qualifying events. Such events include the employee’s own serious health condition; the birth and care of the employee’s newborn child; the placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care and to care for the newly placed child; and the serious health condition of the employee’s child, parent, spouse, or, at MIT, spousal equivalent. If you believe that you might qualify for a leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act, contact your Human Resource Officer in Employee Services. See Appendix D or contact the FMLA Leave Administrator at 617-324-0082.

APPENDIX B.6: TELECOMMUTING (“FLEX-PLACE”)

Flex-place means part or all work is done from home or remote location; telecommuting means being connected by computer, fax, and/or telephone to the department or office.

Examples

- Regularly work at home part of week, as negotiated with supervisor/manager
- Regularly work part-time at another work location designated by supervisor/manager
- Temporary arrangement for a personal need (e.g., after birth or adoption of a child)
- Temporary arrangement for a specific project (e.g., writing a final report)

Benefits	<p>Employee keeps full pay and benefits</p> <p>Employee saves commuting time and costs</p> <p>Enhanced productivity: some tasks may be better done away from the office, less interruption</p> <p>May enhance the use of facilities or equipment</p> <p>May facilitate compliance with environmental legislation</p> <p>May ease parking demands</p> <p>May provide extended hours of service</p> <p>May assist employees with disabilities</p> <p>May provide heightened sense of autonomy and enhanced capacity for setting, achieving objectives</p>
Challenges	<p>Fewer networking opportunities for the employee</p> <p>Employee needs organized work space at home and may incur some additional hidden expenses (increased heat and electric bills, etc.) while saving on commuting costs</p> <p>Not all employees may work as productively in this arrangement</p> <p>Not all jobs are performed easily off-site</p> <p>May be more difficult to supervise and evaluate</p> <p>Possible equipment purchases</p> <p>Possible liability issues regarding at-home site may need to be researched.</p> <p>May create difficulty in scheduling meetings, coordinating projects, etc.</p>
Telecommuting proposals need to address:	<p>How work will get done and how meetings and joint projects will be handled</p> <p>How communication with co-workers and supervisor/manager will continue uninterrupted</p> <p>How much time will be spent in the office, and when</p> <p>What equipment is needed and who will provide it</p> <p>How arrangement will be supervised and evaluated</p> <p>What technical support is needed</p>

APPENDIX C.1: FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENT PROPOSAL FORM

Name: _____ Date Submitted: _____
 MIT Address: _____ MIT Phone: _____
 Title: _____
 Current Status Full Time or Part Time Exempt or Non Exempt
 Department: _____
 Supervisor/Manager's Name: _____ Requested Start Date: _____

Type of Flexible Work Arrangement Being Proposed (see page 2 for description):

Flexible Hours Telecommuting Part-Time Schedule
 Compressed Work Week Personal Leave** Other***
 Job Sharing*

* **If you are proposing a job-sharing arrangement, indicate who your job share partner will be and submit your proposals together.** _____

** **Special forms are required for leave requests under the Family & Medical Leave Act. (See Appendix B.5.)**

*** **If your flexible work arrangement is other than those described above, please attach a description.**

CURRENT AND PROPOSED WORK SCHEDULE

(Please indicate location if it is not a MIT workplace, e.g., home on Thursdays).

Current Work Schedule

	Start-End	Total	Location
Sunday	_____	_____	_____
Monday	_____	_____	_____
Tuesday	_____	_____	_____
Wednesday	_____	_____	_____
Thursday	_____	_____	_____
Friday	_____	_____	_____
Saturday	_____	_____	_____

Proposed Work Schedule

	Start-End	Total	Location
Sunday	_____	_____	_____
Monday	_____	_____	_____
Tuesday	_____	_____	_____
Wednesday	_____	_____	_____
Thursday	_____	_____	_____
Friday	_____	_____	_____
Saturday	_____	_____	_____

On a separate piece of paper, please answer the following questions. Please be as specific as possible.

1. Describe the business rationale associated with your proposed flexible work arrangement.
2. Describe how you will accomplish your job under the proposal arrangement. Be specific.
3. Describe the impact your proposed flexible work arrangement will have on the following groups: clients (external and internal), co-workers, supervisors/managers, supervisees, MIT, and your department or office (e.g., space, cost, retention, savings, morale).
4. Describe the solutions you propose to overcome any challenges presented by this arrangement.
5. Explain how client needs will be handled in your absence if applicable (e.g., backup, buddy system, voicemail).
6. Describe how regular communications will be handled.
7. Describe how and when your work will be reviewed and measured, and how your performance will be assessed. (The arrangement should support any goals or objectives you have set for the year.)

I understand that MIT is not obligated to approve a proposal for a flexible work arrangement for any employee. The decision is at the discretion of my supervisor/manager. Flexible work schedules are subject to ongoing review and may be subject to termination at any time based on performance concerns or business needs. Generally, the supervisor/manager or the employee should give at least 30 days notice in advance of ending or changing an arrangement, business needs permitting. In some instances, a resumption of the original schedule may no longer be possible and alternatives should be identified.

Employee Signature

Date

Supervisor/Manager's Signature

Date

Request Approved Request Denied*
Note: change of status may be necessary

Trial period: Arrangement will be reviewed on _____

Arrangement should be re-approved in no more than a year.

*If request is not approved, please attach an explanation indicating your business reasons

Following completion of the process, copies of this form and any attachments should be provided to the employee.

APPENDIX C.2: SAMPLE FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENT PROPOSAL

TO: Jan J.
FROM: Chris S.
DATE: November 26, 2003
POSITION: Human Resources Officer
STATUS: Full-Time/Administrative Staff
DEPARTMENT: Human Resources
SUPERVISOR: Kim K.

FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENT PROPOSED: TELECOMMUTING
CURRENT WORK SCHEDULE: M-F HOURS 8:30-5:00

PROPOSED SCHEDULE:	Monday	8:30-5:00	In Office
	Tuesday	8:30-1:00	In Office
	Tuesday	2:00-5:00	Telecommuting
	Wednesday	8:30-12:00	In Office
	Wednesday	1:00-5:00	Telecommuting
	Thursday	8:30-5:00	In Office
	Friday	8:30-5:00	In Office

I am proposing a flexible telecommuting work arrangement. This arrangement will allow for quiet working time to accomplish writing assignments, respond to e-mail, conduct research for special projects, and prepare for presentations. I propose a trial period of three months.

During the proposed telecommuting hours, I plan to perform many routine aspects of my position. I will continue to be available to my clients and colleagues via e-mail and phone, and will check my voice mail regularly. Client questions are a significant portion of my work, and I can answer client questions through phone calls and e-mail at home as I would at the office. In addition, I will more effectively use the time at home to create workshops that have been proposed by my work group, and create the resource guide that I have been asked to complete over the next three months.

Challenges that I may face include: how to handle employees in distress who drop in to the office without an appointment who may have a specific problem requiring immediate assistance; how to handle questions from the employees that I supervise; less one-on-one contact with my colleagues; and how to access the databases I use regularly.

These challenges can be overcome. Since I will continue to be in the office every day, I will have many opportunities to interact with my colleagues, clients, and the employees I supervise. I believe my role as a resource for colleagues and the employees I supervise will not diminish, as I will be available by phone and e-mail to answer questions or solve immediate problems. For employees that stop in without appointments, my assistant will be the first point of contact and will be able to set up appointments for those that need them. If an employee is in extreme distress, the colleague who covers for me during my vacations is willing to provide backup. This does not happen routinely, and I normally know when problems may be arising.

I believe this arrangement can work smoothly, as I will be accessible and can handle significant aspects of my work through phone calls and e-mail. The new arrangement will also significantly assist me in completing projects, since I will be able to concentrate in a quieter atmosphere for work that needs focused attention for significant periods.

APPENDIX D: MIT RESOURCES FOR RESEARCHING AND MANAGING FLEXIBLE WORK OPTIONS

HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT:

BENEFITS OFFICE

Information on the impact of flexible work arrangements on benefits eligibility.

On campus contact: telephone 617-253-6151, or on the web at <http://web.mit.edu/hr/benefits/contact.html>

At Lincoln Laboratory: telephone 781-981-7072 or refer to the MIT website

CAREER PLANNING AT MIT

Career planning services include workshops, courses, groups, self-assessment, and consultation.

On campus contact: telephone 452-2670, or on the web at <http://web.mit.edu/hr/careers/contact.html>

At Lincoln Laboratory: call the Education and Training Office at 781-981-7044

CENTER FOR WORK, FAMILY & PERSONAL LIFE

Consultations, workshops, lending library, and other programs to assist with work/family issues including family leave and the development of an alternative work proposal.

On campus contact: telephone 253-1592, or on the web at <http://web.mit.edu/hr/worklife>

At Lincoln Laboratory: call Human Resources at 781 981-7068

DISABILITIES SERVICES

Regarding American Disabilities Act, on campus contact: telephone 253-6110, Barbara Roberts, Manager of Disabilities Services or on the web at http://web.mit.edu/hr/benefits/dis_obtain.html

Regarding Family and Medical Leave Act, on campus contact: telephone 324-0082, Marie Noel or e-mail menoel@mit.edu

At Lincoln Laboratory: call Human Resources at 781-981-7068

EMPLOYEE SERVICES

A full range of employee relations services, including job counseling, conflict resolution, and guidance in relation to flexible work arrangement requests.

On campus contact your individual **Human Resource Officer**: for general information telephone 253-4251, or on the web at <http://web.mit.edu/hr/empservices/index.html>

Regarding unions, contact: telephone 253-4264, Marianna Pierce, Director of Employee and Labor Relations

At Lincoln Laboratory: call Human Resources Office at 781-981-7068, or, for Service Staff, call Angelo “Rod” Rodriguez at 781-981-7053.

ORGANIZATION AND EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT

To schedule an appointment with a career consultant on campus or on-site at Lincoln Laboratory: telephone 617-252-2670, or e-mail progress@mit.edu.

To discuss organization development needs, on campus contact: telephone 617-253-0217, Margaret Ann Gray or e-mail mag@mit.edu. At Lincoln Laboratory: call Shelton Forrest at 781-981-2717.

If you have questions about professional development programs, on campus contact: telephone 617-253-4253 or e-mail pctrain-reg@mit.edu. At Lincoln Laboratory: call the Education and Training Office at 781-981-7044.

For information or questions about the Professional Learning Center, on campus contact: telephone 617-258-9511. At Lincoln Laboratory: call the Education and Training Office at 781-981-7044.

For more information see: <http://web-mit.edu/hr/oed/contact.html>

ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH AND SAFETY OFFICE

Safety information and guidelines on healthy work environments at MIT and home offices (“Health & Safety Guidelines for Computer Use at MIT”) or email environment@mit.edu. Information is available on the web at: <http://web.mit.edu/environment>.

On campus, contact: telephone 617-252-3477
At Lincoln Laboratory: telephone the Safety Office at 781-981-2380

HEALTH EDUCATION RESOURCE CENTER

Information on health issues and medical care including stress management, parenting, exercise and wellness; offering a library, workshops and support groups. On the web at <http://web.mit.edu/medical/healthed/>.

On campus contact: telephone 617-253-1316
At Lincoln Laboratory: call the Health and Wellness Center on-site at 781-981-7080

INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Help with technical issues related to telecommuting, including a description of MIT resources.

On campus contact: telephone 617-253-1724, Customer Services Manager, Telecommunications
At Lincoln Laboratory: see your Group Leader or Systems Administrator

MIT COUNCIL ON FAMILY AND WORK

A presidential-appointed committee established in 1992 to identify, assess, and evaluate family- and work-related issues and to make periodic recommendations to MIT Senior Officers.

On campus contact: e-mail co-chairs Rae Simpson, rsimpson@mit.edu, or John Maeda, maeda@media.mit.edu.
At Lincoln Laboratory: contact your Human Resources Representative or call the Human Resources Office at 781-981-7068.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE

Individual, couple, child, and family counseling and referral services; Personal Assistance Program

On campus contact: telephone 617-253-2916 for all services

At Lincoln Laboratory: telephone the on-site Health and Wellness Center at 781-981-7080 or 617-253-2916.

Regarding elder care, on campus contact: telephone 617-253-4911, Dawn Metcalf

At Lincoln Laboratory: telephone Child and Eldercare Programs at 781-981-7028, Deb McEniff

OMBUDS OFFICE

Ombudspersons offering confidential consultation, referral, and informal or formal mediation regarding problems at MIT.

On campus contact: telephone 617-253-5921, Toni Robinson, Mary P. Rowe

At Lincoln Laboratory: contact the on-site Ombudspersons: Karen Challberg (x0858), Erv Davis (x4106), or Denise Kelly (x1800).

WORKING GROUP ON SUPPORT STAFF ISSUES

Employee group working toward solutions to problems of concern to support staff and the MIT community; open to all employees, with supervisor approval.

Contact information available on the web at <http://web.mit.edu/committees/wgssi>.

APPENDIX E: QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT JOB FLEXIBILITY AT MIT

<p>HOW WILL A FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENT AFFECT MY PAY AND BENEFITS?</p>	<p>If you request a work schedule that reduces your regularly scheduled hours, your pay will be pro-rated accordingly. Depending on the total number of hours worked, some benefits may be affected. Additional information on how flexible scheduling could impact benefits and paid time off is available by calling your Human Resources Officer.</p>
<p>CAN ALL EMPLOYEES APPLY FOR A FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENT?</p>	<p>Any employee may submit a proposal for a flexible work arrangement. However, not all jobs are suitable for such an arrangement. Unionized staff should consult their individual collective bargaining agreements. Depending on the nature or location of a particular job, some types of alternative work schedules may not be appropriate. Also, it is possible that, due to their specific requirements, some types of jobs may not accommodate flexible work options at all. Nevertheless, supervisors/managers are encouraged to give positive consideration to requests where they meet the needs of both MIT and the individual.</p>
<p>I AM AN EMPLOYEE WHO ASKED MY SUPERVISOR ABOUT A FLEXIBLE SCHEDULE LAST YEAR AND WAS TOLD IT WAS NOT AN OPTION FOR MY JOB. MAY I TRY AGAIN?</p>	<p>Yes, you may try again. However, first consider why your proposal was denied last year. (If you don't fully understand the reason your proposal was denied, ask your supervisor to clarify the business or performance reasons.) Then review the guidelines and determine if you can build a case for an alternative that might work for your particular situation. Ask your supervisor/manager to consider your new proposal and to discuss other alternatives. If you still have questions, call your Human Resources Officer.</p>
<p>WILL A FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENT HURT MY CHANCES FOR PROMOTION?</p>	<p>Employees on an alternative schedule will be expected to meet the same performance standards, and supervisors/managers will be expected to use the same measurement criteria that are currently in place for full-time employees working standard schedules. Criteria used for consideration of promotion (e.g. job performance) should be no different. In some cases, though, the responsibilities of the promotional opportunity may not be compatible with your current flexible work arrangement. Be sure to explore your options thoroughly and discuss alternatives with your supervisor/manager.</p>
<p>WILL MY REQUEST AND PROPOSAL BE CONFIDENTIAL?</p>	<p>Your proposal provides the framework for a discussion between you and your supervisor/manager. There is usually no need to share the details of that discussion with others. However, once a request has been approved, it is important to communicate the results to any affected co-workers or clients and to provide information regarding the change wherever necessary in order to implement official changes in your status. A copy of the proposal will be kept in your department personnel file.</p>
<p>DO I HAVE TO GIVE A REASON FOR WANTING A FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENT?</p>	<p>Flexible work arrangements are primarily evaluated on how business needs will be met and how work will get done as well as on an employee's likelihood of success with the arrangement, based on his or her recent past performance. Your reason for requesting an alternative schedule is not a required part of the proposal. However, there may be times when providing the reason will be helpful, such as when it involves a disability or a health matter for you or your family. It may also make sense when a supervisor/manager is trying to sort through multiple requests for flexible work arrangements, or when the supervisor/manager would have to implement significant workplace changes in order to accommodate the request. However, supervisors/managers should not deny a request based solely on your reasons.</p>

<p>AS A SUPERVISOR, HOW DO I FUND TECHNOLOGY FOR SOMEONE WHO WANTS TO WORK AT HOME?</p>	<p>Unless the arrangement to work at home is mandated by MIT, there is no requirement to provide any technology or to pay for any technology costs for telecommuters. In some cases, however, supervisors/managers may agree to pay for or provide some technology. As with any budget decision, supervisors/managers need to determine if there is a benefit to the office that would justify the expense. The issue of fairness for all staff also needs to be addressed. Any agreements to pay for technology or resources should be clarified and documented when the proposal is approved.</p>
<p>WHAT IF I, AS A SUPERVISOR, SIGNED AN AGREEMENT AND I DON'T THINK IT'S WORKING? CAN I TERMINATE THE ARRANGEMENT?</p>	<p>If, as a supervisor/manager, you signed a formal agreement and agreed to a trial period, efforts should be made to honor that commitment unless business needs or performance issues compel the suspension or termination of the agreement. Make sure you maintain an open dialogue during the trial period and discuss issues or questions that come up along the way. If, during or at the end of the trial period, the arrangement is not meeting expectations or customer needs, you should discuss the issues with the employee, not renew the arrangement, and return to the previous schedule, as long as that schedule still meets the business needs of your department.</p>
<p>AS A SUPERVISOR, CAN I SAY "NO" TO AN EMPLOYEE'S PROPOSAL?</p>	<p>Accepting or rejecting a proposal is a supervisor/manager's decision and should be based on sound business reasons, which include performance issues. It is helpful to discuss with the employee whether any alternatives to the original proposal might work better. If you do not approve a request, document the business case for your decision and discuss your reasons with the employee. This documentation should be attached to the proposal and given to the employee. It may be helpful to keep a copy in your supervisory file as well.</p>
<p>WHAT IF MY SUPERVISOR SAYS "NO" TO MY PROPOSAL?</p>	<p>MIT is not obligated to provide flexible work arrangements to any employee. Each proposal will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Make sure you clearly understand the business reason(s) that your supervisor/manager presented when he or she was unable to approve your proposal. If you have further concerns, you may call your Human Resources Officer.</p>
<p>IS THERE A LIMIT TO THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN ONE AREA WHO CAN SUBMIT A PROPOSAL?</p>	<p>Each proposal is reviewed on its own merits. Decisions are made on a case-by-case basis. Naturally, a supervisor/manager will assess the needs of the office as the foundation for approving a flexible work arrangement. Since it is important to provide coverage to meet the demands of the office, it may be useful to establish a process for handling multiple requests before any alternative work schedule program is implemented. Often teams can work together to find alternatives that will work for the whole group.</p>
<p>CAN I CHANGE MY SCHEDULE IF IT'S NOT WORKING OUT FOR ME?</p>	<p>To request a different flexible work arrangement (e.g. change from compressed work week to job sharing), a new written proposal should be submitted to your supervisor/manager for consideration. A written request should also be given to your supervisor/manager if you would like a return to your previous work schedule. This return is not always possible. For example, in some cases budgetary limitations may eliminate opportunities to increase hours (e.g. if you have been part-time and want to return to full-time, your hours may have been reassigned.)</p>
<p>CAN MY SUPERVISOR CHANGE MY FLEXIBLE SCHEDULE BACK TO A REGULAR SCHEDULE AT ANY TIME?</p>	<p>Part of the agreement you reach with your supervisor/manager when requesting a flexible work arrangement is that your work schedule is subject to change based on business needs. Your supervisor/manager will try to provide you with reasonable notice before altering the current arrangement.</p>

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