

STEP 4: IMPLEMENT THE STRATEGY

The following examples show how two companies undertook to implement work-life balance in their organisations.

Work-Life Balance Implementation Plan (example one)

Purpose

The goal of this project is to help our employees achieve a happy work-life balance to benefit them and (name of company).

Background

The strategies included in this implementation plan have been developed by the Work-Life Balance Project Group, in consultation with the Executive Management Group. They are based on the findings of a company wide survey, focus groups and interviews with managers. They are designed to address four key areas:

- communication
- leave
- rosters
- managers' skills, knowledge and availability.

Time frame

This work-life balance implementation plan covers an 18 month period. The strategies will be in three phases.

The full implementation of some of the strategies may flow over subsequent phases.

Goal One: Improve communication on work-life balance issues

Strategies	Phase	Target date	Responsibility
<p><i>Induction</i></p> <p>Identify employees who have not yet attended Induction and send a letter to them</p> <p>Develop an A4 information sheet on the work-life balance policies and initiatives for use at induction</p>	Phase 1		
<p><i>Intranet</i></p> <p>Develop a work-life balance section on the intranet and update monthly</p> <p>Develop more detailed 'question and answer' information on work-life balance for inclusion on the intranet</p> <p>E-mail our users to ensure they are aware of how to access the intranet</p> <p>Place an additional PC in the cafeteria for employees to use to access the intranet</p>	Phase 1		
<p><i>Ongoing information needs</i></p> <p>Investigate and monitor the need for seminars or presentations on relevant work-life balance issues</p>	Phase 3		

Goal Two: Enhance the transparency and effectiveness of annual leave arrangements

Strategies	Phase	Target date	Responsibility
Use a workshop process with (name of group) to develop a draft set of guiding principles and processes for managing leave	Phase 1		
Consult on draft plan with EMT for approval			
Find department to volunteer for trial			
Agree an acceptable timeframe for approving/declining leave			
Trial principles and processes in one department			
Assess the outcomes of the trial, meet with (name of group) to discuss	Phase 2		
Use results of trial to finalise principles and processes			
Sign off principles and processes & implement company wide			
Communicate principles and processes to all employees, managers and supervisors			

Goal Three: Ensure that as far as possible roster arrangements meet the needs of employee and the team as well as (name of company)

Strategies	Phase	Target date	Responsibility
<p><i>Rostering Committee</i></p> <p>Develop terms of reference for a rostering committee</p> <p>Convene committee</p> <p>Research current strengths and weaknesses of current rostering arrangements with the aim of sharing good practice</p> <p>Develop a set of rostering principles and processes based on best practice to increase roster flow and predictability</p> <p>Develop and implement a communication strategy for employees on how the rosters work and how they can make best use of the roster process</p> <p>Monitor satisfaction levels with rostering arrangements</p>	Phase 1		
<p><i>Part-time employees</i></p> <p>Research the potential for increased use of part-time employees in different departments</p>	Phase 2		
<p>Recommend appropriate strategies based on this research</p>	Phase 3		

Goal Four: Enhance managers and supervisors skills, knowledge and availability in responding to work-life balance issues

Strategies	Phase	Target date	Responsibility
<p><i>Work-life balance Statement</i></p> <p>Develop work-life balance statement</p> <p>Have EMT and CEO support and approval</p> <p>Communicate to employees, managers and supervisors – requires a plan</p>	Phase 1		
<p><i>Training</i></p> <p>Ensure that management training encompasses work-life balance issues and managers and supervisor responsibilities in implementing the work-life balance policy</p> <p>Develop information on WLB for managers training</p>	Phase 2		
<p><i>Employee Advisors</i></p> <p>Develop terms of reference for Employee Advisors, programme outline and evaluation criteria</p> <p>Identify department to trial programme</p> <p>Appoint and train Employee Advisors in trial department</p> <p>Run trial for six month period</p> <p>Review trial programme</p>	Phase 1		
<p>Develop recommendations based on the results of the trial</p>	Phase 2		

Goal Five: Ensure the implementation and monitor the impact of work-life balance strategies

Strategies	Phase	Target date	Responsibility
<p><i>Work-life balance Committee</i></p> <p>Establish a working group drawn from the original project team to coordinate and oversee the implementation and assessment of work-life balance strategies</p>	Phase 1		
<p><i>Monitoring and Assessment</i></p> <p>Track retention data, exit interview results and other relevant information on a six monthly basis</p>	Phase 2		
<p>Undertake wider review in 18 month's time to assess impact. This may include a repeat of some of the survey or focus groups.</p>	Phase 3+		

Encouraging Work-life Balance Implementation Plan (Example Two)

Objective One: To enhance communication on work-life balance issues

Action	Responsibility	Suggested date of commencement
<p>Provide training for managers and staff on effective communication, in particular on giving and receiving information</p> <p>Develop a question and answer forum to address work-life balance issues</p> <p>Use discussion prompts to encourage discussion and information sharing on work-life balance issues (work-life balance to be added to pilot area team meeting agendas)</p> <p>Ensure that job descriptions include responsibilities and desired behaviours related to effective communication and teamwork</p> <p>CEO/EMT discussion/communication on work-life balance</p>		

Objective Two: To organise work so that it is easier for people to get a satisfactory work-life balance

Action	Responsibility	Suggested date of commencement
<p>Monitoring and planning i.e. development of a toolkit to assist managers with consistency of annual leave planning, succession planning, training attendance planning and subsequent backfilling</p> <p>Implement a programme to encourage pilot teams to identify and rectify inefficient work practices that impact negatively on work-life balance</p>		

NB: Identification of measures is key to this objective.

Objective Three: To strengthen team work to facilitate work-life balance

Action	Responsibility	Suggested commencement date
<p>Gather existing work being undertaken which identifies the characteristics of teams that are working successfully at (name of organisation) including key participants (i.e. clients)</p> <p>Use the results of the above to identify what further steps are necessary and appropriate to strengthen team work.</p>		

Objective Four: To encourage the proactive management of effective teams

Action	Responsibility	Suggested commencement date
<p>Training for teams on how to intervene early when they suspect or are aware of problems developing</p> <p>Develop a database of internal facilitators who could be utilised in resolving problems within teams</p> <p>Review current processes to ensure consistency of approach</p>		

Objective Five: Ensure the implementation and monitor the impact of work-life balance strategies

Action	Responsibility	Suggested commencement date
<p>Overview of implementation plan – continue the work-life steering group for the duration of the implementation plan</p> <p>Assess impact of initiatives – modified questionnaire/focus groups. HR data i.e. exit interviews, turnover rates and leave management.</p> <p>Consider the implications for the wider organisation</p>		