



National Australia Bank (NAB)



Financial and Insurance Services



30,000 employees



55% female



45% male

Challenge

NAB has identified flexibility as a key enabler for promoting diversity and inclusion across the business, as well as a driver of better business outcomes. Understanding that flexibility leads to higher productivity and is an asset that helps attract and retain talented people, the company focuses on creating a flexible working environment that accommodates the diverse needs of its customers and business, and enables its people to work in a way that promotes work-life balance.

The challenge has been to create a range of accessible, practical, self-managed online tools and guides to help managers and employees negotiate flexible arrangements in a business with more than 30,000 employees across Australia.

Strategy

NAB believes flexible working should be part of everyday business and available for employees regardless of gender, role or location, as long as it is consistent with the needs of their customers, business, teams and the individuals.

Having promoted flexible working for more than 15 years, NAB's business case for flexibility is strongly endorsed and championed by leaders throughout NAB, and these leaders are visible role models of flexible working. Training on flexible working policies is provided throughout the organisation for managers and employees.

NAB Working flexibly in large company

Actions

NAB offers a range of flexible working options to employees such as transition to retirement, job sharing, working from home, compressed hours, flexible start and finish times, and extended leave.

Designed to empower people and managers to make decisions about flexible working arrangements together, NAB released its first Flexible Working Toolkit more than a decade ago.

In response to rapid changes to technology, and the roles of women and men in the workforce and at home, NAB has continued to update its flexibility resources. For example, in 2010 a transition to retirement option was added to the company's Enterprise Agreement.

The Flexible Working Toolkit is an internal website which empowers employees to research flex options, create flexible work proposals and work directly with their manager to find the best flexible working arrangement without having to go through human resources.

Accessible to all Australian NAB employees, and reviewed and updated regularly, the website offers:

- an overview of workplace flexibility
- the formal and informal flexible working arrangements that are available at NAB
- information about relevant polices, enterprise agreement clauses, OHS and flexible working principles
- guides for employees on how to create a flexible work proposal
- guides for managers on how to assess a flexible working proposal
- access to on-line training modules such as information on how to connect remotely and how to communicate with teams when working remotely.

Below is an example of a checklist for a manager to help evaluate a flexible work request.

Evaluating a flexible work request

	Task	Resources
What you need to know	Review and understand relevant policies before discussing flexible working options with the employee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant policies • Enterprise Agreement
Understand the request	Take the time to understand the request and consider if it is the best way to meet the needs of the customer, the business, the team and the individual.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible working principles • Global best practice
Understand the role	Consider the role or position in terms of outcome and performance, rather than the amount of time spent in the workplace.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job descriptions / Role purpose statements
Consider a flexible office	Consider whether the role can be performed from home or another location.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology solutions • Working from home and offsite work policies
Consider the impacts	Consider any impacts and benefits for the customers, the business, the team and the employee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How-to guides
Measuring success	Determine a review period and define how success will be measured.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant policies • Job descriptions / Role purpose statements

Outcomes

The Flexible Working Toolkit was accessed by more than 4,000 employees in 2016. NAB tracks the success of its flexible working arrangements via its annual Employee Engagement Survey, which seeks employees' feedback on whether they feel they have the flexibility they need to support their work, life and community priorities.

In 2015 and 2016, more than 85% of NAB's employees said that they have the flexibility required to accommodate their work and external priorities.

Employee experience

NAB's transition to retirement options include moving to part-time, job sharing or offsite work. An employee can also use existing long service leave to reduce their work week or choose to be appointed to a less senior role.

Graeme Reilly has been at NAB for 41 years and is currently a manager in Credit Risk Applications Risk, Analytics and Reporting.

"NAB has a transition to retirement policy and as part of this I approached my manager looking to reduce the number of days I worked.

About the same time, a colleague approached me about job sharing. Giles is a new father and wanted to work reduced hours to spend more time caring for his son. The job share has been going really well. I work Monday to Wednesday and Giles works Wednesday to Friday – so we have a crossover day, and Giles sends me an email update on Friday so I know what's happening on Monday.

To make sure there is clarity around who reports to whom, we have made sure that, for performance management, the people we work with report to only one of us. They have been fine about job share – they know there is always a manager there if they need one.

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One of the advantages of this kind of job share is that there is a synergy where people who have been around the organisation for a while can transfer knowledge and experience to newer people.

This process started as a transition to retirement. I'm still thinking about it, but now I'm considering whether I still want to retire so soon.

I like the lifestyle of working three days and it has also given me two days to get back into the community and see what's out there before I retire – I've been using my business experience in a volunteer capacity at not-for-profit organisations, which has been really interesting.

The idea of job sharing is more normal now at the bank – I know of two other job shares – one is a parent with young kids sharing with someone also transitioning to retirement.

I think job sharing is an opportunity that more people should consider – because it has benefits to the company, the team and the employees."



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