

Case Study – Flexible working post Covid -19

You are the manager of a team which consists of 6 others. Following the Covid-19 pandemic you receive 5 flexible working requests on five consecutive days as follows:

1. A request from Kate Flemming who wants to work from home full time. She was very ill with Covid – 19 and believes that she caught it from the workplace. Although she has made a full recovery, she has developed anxiety about returning to the office.
2. A request from Steve Arnott who wants to work from home full time. He suffers with an auto-immune deficiency and was on the shielding list due to this condition.
3. A request from Joanne Davidson who wants to work from home 4 days a week and to work flexible hours on those 4 days and come into the office 1 day a week. She is a single mother of three young children (all of primary school age) and finds the flexibility of being able to start work early and work in the evenings means that she is able to take the children to school and pick them up and give them tea gives her significantly improved work/life balance.
4. A request from Ted Hastings who wants to work from home full time. His wife has complex medical needs and has been on the government shielding list. She is unable to receive the vaccine due to her medical conditions.
5. A request from Tommy Hunter to work from home 3 days a week. He found that he was more productive working from home and he also has an hour's commute to the office each day so can get more work done from home and this has given him a significantly increased work/life balance which he wants to maintain. He confirms that this is very important to him and he has had job offers from other companies offering him this flexibility.

Whilst all of the team have been working fully from home during Covi-19, work productivity has reduced, and team camaraderie has suffered. Some tasks are difficult to manage from home and the organisation has indicated that whilst there will be increased flexibility moving forward it wants to return to a predominantly office-based workforce.

The remaining member of the team is a single male who has found working from home difficult from a mental health perspective and has been suffering with depression as a result of the isolation. He cannot wait to return to the office and spend time working with the remainder of the team.

Identify the issues associated with each of the requests received.

How would you respond to each of these requests?