

# The Future of Work

UNIT  
**5**



A BETTER WAY TO WORK

**TUC** 

## **Acknowledgements**

The materials were originally written by Julia Fiehn and Andrew Miller, Centre for Education and Industry, University of Warwick. This revised fourth edition has been edited by Professor Andrew Miller, Director of Active Learning Research Associates Ltd.

The TUC would particularly like to acknowledge the contributions from trade unions who were represented on the steering group, organisations which provided comments and teachers from the following schools and colleges who took part in trials and consultations: Bridgend College, Cantonian School, Connaught School, Court Moor School, Firth Park School, Fitzalan School, Gabalfa School, Glyn Derw School, Herbert Thompson School, Holgate School, King Egbert Secondary School, Llanrumney School, Radyr School, Robert Mays School, Royston School, St. Michael's School, Willowgarth High School, Yately School.

Thanks also to Gary Forrest, Richard Foweather and Margaret Matthews, Roger Buck of Hampshire EBP, Allen Gray of Barnsley LEA, Hazel Jones of Sheffield EBP, Hazel Watson of St Helen's Community Centre and Chris Young of Hampshire Youth Service.

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**ISBN 1 85006 689 2**

*First published November 1997.*

*Second edition published September 2001.*

*Third edition published October 2003.*

*Fourth edition published September 2006.*

# The Future of Work

## **The aims of this unit are to:**

- raise the awareness of young people about the changing world of work, including flexible working and flexible labour markets
- help young people consider the kinds of skills they need to develop to match the needs of the emerging labour market
- provide an opportunity for young people to work with trade unionists in the classroom.

## **The unit consists of six sections:**

- *Future Skills* – a ‘clock exercise’ in which young people must decide whether certain statements about changing skill needs are true or false.
- *Skills for Work* – a work experience preparation activity which asks participants to consider how the skills that employers say they want in future employees match the key skills.
- *Teamworking* – a case study providing a trade union perspective on teamworking in industry.
- *Bouncin’ Around* – a case study on hot-desking.
- *Flexible Labour Market* – an assignment involving an examination of how aspects of flexibility feature in key sectors of the local labour market.
- *Nothing Ruled In, Nothing Ruled Out* – a simulation in which students, in role as managers and staff of a local authority, consider the benefits and drawbacks of various forms of flexible working.

## Background Information

The future of work is an important topic for young people about to embark on important career-related decisions. Work experience and career education programmes provide opportunities for students to examine some of these aspects of the future of work, particularly in relation to the flexible labour market. The statutory order for Citizenship at key stage 4 requires them to know and understand about how the economy functions, including the role of business, and about the rights and responsibilities of employers and employees.

This section focuses on current trends in labour market practices. It raises for discussion the implications of short-term contracts, outsourcing, job-sharing, 'hot-desking' and a range of other aspects of flexible working. A glossary of flexible labour market terms appears as a supporting document to the assignment.

Many companies have conducted research on what skills will be required in the future, particularly among 'knowledge workers'. The changing demand for workers in different sectors is one of the subjects of forecasting into the next ten years. Teleworking is one growing trend. It can be a way of reducing a company's costs and meeting the needs of people who wish to work from home.

Trade unionists are aware of trends in the labour market and the implications of some of the aspects of flexible working. It is advisable to invite a trade unionist to work with you on this unit. Briefing notes for trade unionists are provided on pages 20–21 of this unit.

Information on changing work and work–life balance is available online from the TUC at: [www.tuc.org.uk/work\\_life](http://www.tuc.org.uk/work_life)

Information on flexible working and changing patterns of work can be found on the ACAS website at: [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk)

Information on work–life balance is available from the Department of Trade & Industry website at: [www.dti.gov.uk](http://www.dti.gov.uk)

The Work Wise UK website is dedicated to promoting flexible working and work–life balance:

[www.workwiseuk.org](http://www.workwiseuk.org)

The TUC has produced a number of leaflets on rights at work including:

*Flexible working for parents*

*Time's up for long hours*

*Time off for families*

These leaflets are available free on the TUC 'Know Your Rights' Line: 0870 600 4882.

# Future Skills

## Description

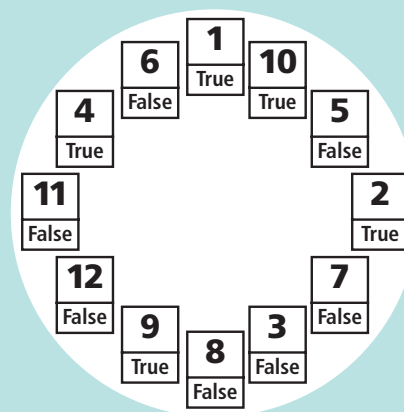
This activity aims to encourage students to consider how changes occurring in the economy will affect demand for particular jobs and skills over the next few years. It takes the form of a ‘clock exercise’ when students working in groups must decide whether a series of statements is true or false. If they make the right choices, then the 12 cards in the exercise form a clockface.

## Learning outcomes

- Young people will understand some of the underlying changes and trends occurring in the labour market, including future skill requirements.
- Young people will consider the kinds of skills that they might wish to develop for the future.

## Method

- Explain the aims of the activity. Ask the students to form groups of five around tables. Give each group a set of *Future Skills* cards. Tell them that there are 12 cards with statements about jobs and skills for the future.
- The task begins by placing *Future Skills* card 1 at the 12 o’clock position, as if on a clockface. One student then reads out the statement on the card and the group decides whether it is true or false. If they decide it is true, then they follow the instruction on the card – which is to go to card 10 – if false, then they go to card 7. This card is then placed in the 1 o’clock position on the clockface.
- Each successive card is placed on the next hour of the clockface, after it has been read out. This continues until all the cards have been placed on the table and each hour has a card. When the group has reached the card which is placed at 11 o’clock, the correct answer (true or false) should be the number of the next card, that is 1.
- However, some groups are likely to have some incorrect answers and so they will be unable to finish the clockface with the right card. If this happens, then you should tell them to try to find out where they went wrong. You may want to intervene as they go around the clockface asking them to re-consider particular decisions. The correct order of the cards is shown in the table.
- At the end of the exercise, which some teams might not complete, you should explain the order of the cards and which statements are true and which false. The Working Futures 2004–14 National Report gives ten-year labour market projects, which are periodically updated to inform the sector skills councils ([www.ssda.org.uk](http://www.ssda.org.uk)).



# Future Skills

## Commentary for Group Leaders

**Card 1: True.** It is estimated that jobs in science, design and engineering will continue to increase as the 'knowledge economy' expands and global competition intensifies.

**Card 2: True.** It is estimated that employment of health professionals will increase as the 'baby boomers' demand better health care approaching their retirement. There will also be increased demand for carers from voluntary organisations and private nursing homes.

**Card 3: False.** The general shift in favour of white collar, non-manual jobs will continue. The long-term decline in manual work, especially in manufacturing, will persist. It is estimated that 400,000 manufacturing jobs will be lost over the period 2004–14. Textiles and clothing will show the largest proportion of losses of around 75,000 over the ten years.

**Card 4: True.** Social skills are much more important in jobs that involve handling customers than, say, in manufacturing. Jobs in personal and protective services, and sales will continue to rise.

**Card 5: False.** Although there will be an increase in people learning from the Internet and distance learning, people will still need face-to-face tuition. The emphasis on lifelong learning will increase demand for teaching and training skills.

**Card 6: False.** The trend is for decision-making to be decentralised and therefore management skills are even more important for junior managers. The demand for full-time and part-time managers is also likely to increase. There will be an estimated 617,000 more managers and senior officials required by 2014. Other posts will be more likely to require some management skills.

**Card 7: False.** The application of technology to farming has increased yields and production with less workers. The EU Common Agricultural Policy has kept many inefficient producers in business, and in future new member states from Eastern Europe are likely to increase competition in the sector. However, if the British climate continues to improve, then there may be some increased demand for gardeners, garden centres and nursery workers.

**Card 8: False.** Because of increasing emphasis on customer service and interpersonal skills, there will be a greater requirement on workers at all levels to show problem-solving skills. Craft operatives and secretarial staff will also be consulted on solving work problems.

**Card 9: True.** There will be an increase in part-time and contractual work which reflects the move to a more flexible workforce. It is estimated that between 1999 and 2010 part-time jobs will increase by 1.5 million.

**Card 10: True.** Information-processing skills, including computer literacy, are going to be an important part of most jobs of the future. However, advances in voice recognition and the Internet may reduce dependence on a keyboard.

**Card 11: False.** It is estimated that there will be a decline in demand for administrative, clerical and secretarial workers to 2014, probably a result of smarter IT systems with other workers doing their own clerical-type duties.

**Card 12: False.** Although it is true that many Europeans speak English well, the expansion of trade in the single market will increase the importance of modern European languages for the UK workforce. The ability to communicate in the language of a customer is an important business asset and this will become an advantage in the future job market.

## Future Skills

### FUTURE SKILLS CARD 1

Companies will search for new products in a increasingly competitive world. This will increase demand for scientists, designers and engineers.

*(Scientific and engineering skills ↑)*

**If true, go to card 10**

**If false, go to card 7**

### FUTURE SKILLS CARD 2

Britain has an ageing population. There will be more and more retired people who will need looking after. They will expect more and better health care. This will increase demand for health care workers and carers.

*(Healthcare and caring skills ↑)*

**If true, go to card 7**

**If false, go to card 12**

### FUTURE SKILLS CARD 3

It is estimated that between 1999 and 2010, employment will grow by 2 million jobs. Half of this increase will be in skilled / less skilled manual jobs and craft work

*(Craft and manual work skills ↑)*

**If true, go to card 11**

**If false, go to card 8**

### FUTURE SKILLS CARD 4

Communication and interpersonal skills will become increasingly important in the future. This is because of the growth of jobs in sales and personal services.

*(Communications and interpersonal skills ↑)*

**If true, go to card 6**

**If false, go to card 3**

### FUTURE SKILLS CARD 5

The use of personal computers and the Internet will reduce demand for teachers, lecturers and trainers. People will be learning on their own much more than in the past.

*(Teaching and training skills ↓)*

**If true, go to card 3**

**If false, go to card 2**

### FUTURE SKILLS CARD 6

Mergers between companies lead to a fall in the number of managers. Management skills such as leadership and decision-making will be demanded less. Decisions will be made by fewer top people in companies.

*(Management skills ↓)*

**If true, go to card 12**

**If false, go to card 1**

## Future Skills

### FUTURE SKILLS CARD 7

The growing world population will boost British farming. Demands for more organic food will also increase demand for people to work on the land. Such workers will need agricultural skills.

*(Agricultural skills ↑)*

**If true, go to card 2**

**If false, go to card 3**

### FUTURE SKILLS CARD 8

The ability to solve problems at work will only be needed among managers and senior staff.

*(Problem-solving skills ↓)*

**If true, go to card 12**

**If false, go to card 9**

### FUTURE SKILLS CARD 9

The number of full-time manual jobs done by men in factories will continue to fall. More production jobs will be done by part-timers and low-paid home workers.

*(Unskilled work ↓)*

**If true, go to card 12**

**If false, go to card 4**

### FUTURE SKILLS CARD 10

Computer literacy and keyboarding skills will become more important in the future. This is because of the growth of jobs in sales, financial and personal services to people.

*(Computing and information processing skills ↑)*

**If true, go to card 5**

**If false, go to card 9**

### FUTURE SKILLS CARD 11

As more work is based in offices rather than factories, there is going to be an increase in demand for secretarial and clerical jobs.

*(Secretarial and office skills ↑)*

**If true, go to card 6**

**If false, go to card 4**

### FUTURE SKILLS CARD 12

As English becomes the favoured language of business in the European community and beyond, the need for British people to speak foreign languages will fall.

*(Modern language skills ↓)*

**If true, go to card 4**

**If false, go to card 11**

# Skills for Work

## Description

Many employers have examined the skills required of future workers. At the same time education researchers have investigated the ways in which education systems need to change in order to help people acquire these kinds of skills. Currently, many of these skills for work in the future go under the broad heading of key skills. Most recently QCA guidance on work-related learning talks about the skills for employability and enterprise. This activity asks young people to consider the skills demanded by employers and to link them to the key skills. They also consider how work experience can help them develop skills for the future.

## Learning outcomes

- Young people will understand the kinds of skills which employers require of the future workforce and relate these to their key skills used in school.
- Young people will consider to what extent their work placements and the work-experience programme as a whole can help develop future work skills required by employers.

## Method

- Explain to the students that many employers have studied the skills that will be required of the future workforce in the 21st century. One response to this has been the requirement for schools to include the development of key skills in the curriculum. In advance of the session reproduce enough card sets for each between a group of four or five students. Explain that the *Future Skills* cards are based on research in some of our leading companies. (For example, cards 1–7 are taken from British Airways' Criteria for Staff of the Future and cards 8–13 are taken from a BT study. The remaining cards are based on research by the University of Warwick/Institute of Education on *Learning for the Future*.)
- Ask students to separate out the *Key Skill* cards and the *Future Skills* cards. They should then arrange the *Key Skill* cards (six plus the 'Other' category) in a line across the top of a table. The task is to put each of the *Future Skills* cards into one of these seven categories. They should discuss each card in turn and decide where to place it.
- When the first task is complete, they should then reorder the *Future Skills* cards according to:
  - *the most difficult skills to learn*
  - *the skills more easily acquired.*
- The final task is to look through the *Future Skills* cards and decide which skills they would like to develop during their work-experience placement. Explain that some skills can be developed through the work at the placement, but other skills can be developed through school-set assignments.

# Skills for Work

<p><b>KEY SKILL</b></p> <p><b>Communication</b></p>	<p><b>KEY SKILL</b></p> <p><b>Application of Number</b></p>	<p><b>KEY SKILL</b></p> <p><b>Information Technology</b></p>
<p><b>KEY SKILL</b></p> <p><b>Working with Others</b></p>	<p><b>KEY SKILL</b></p> <p><b>Improving own Learning and Performance</b></p>	<p><b>KEY SKILL</b></p> <p><b>Problem Solving</b></p>
<p><b>KEY SKILL</b></p> <p><b>Other</b></p>	<p><b>FUTURE SKILLS 1</b></p> <p><b>Handling customers with care</b></p>	<p><b>FUTURE SKILLS 2</b></p> <p><b>Being fluent in a second European language</b></p>
<p><b>FUTURE SKILLS 3</b></p> <p><b>Being adaptable and flexible</b></p>	<p><b>FUTURE SKILLS 4</b></p> <p><b>Being aware of and sensitive to equal opportunities</b></p>	<p><b>FUTURE SKILLS 5</b></p> <p><b>Being aware of and sensitive to people from other cultures</b></p>
<p><b>FUTURE SKILLS 6</b></p> <p><b>Being able to work in teams</b></p>	<p><b>FUTURE SKILLS 7</b></p> <p><b>Being able to manage projects</b></p>	<p><b>FUTURE SKILLS 8</b></p> <p><b>Being able to use the Internet</b></p>
<p><b>FUTURE SKILLS 9</b></p> <p><b>Being able to use various IT applications</b></p>	<p><b>FUTURE SKILLS 10</b></p> <p><b>Being able to make lively presentations using visual aids</b></p>	<p><b>FUTURE SKILLS 11</b></p> <p><b>Having excellent selling skills to convince customers</b></p>

## Skills for Work

### FUTURE SKILLS 12

Being able to present data visually

### FUTURE SKILLS 13

Having good negotiation skills and being able to put a strong case

### FUTURE SKILLS 14

Being able to meet individual targets

### FUTURE SKILLS 15

Being able to work towards team targets

### FUTURE SKILLS 16

Having the self-confidence to deal with new people and new situations

### FUTURE SKILLS 17

Being able to respond to the varied and changing demands of customers

### FUTURE SKILLS 18

Having a concern to improve constantly the quality of one's work

### FUTURE SKILLS 19

Being able to apply learning from one area to another

### FUTURE SKILLS 20

Being able to solve complex problems

### FUTURE SKILLS 21

Being creative

### FUTURE SKILLS 22

Being a good team player

### FUTURE SKILLS 23

Being a self-starter and able to motivate oneself

### FUTURE SKILLS 24

Taking responsibility for one's own decisions

### FUTURE SKILLS 25

Being able to cope with uncertainty and constant change

### FUTURE SKILLS 26

Being committed to learning throughout life

# Teamworking

## Description

Teamworking is one of the most common aspects of human resource management. In teamworking, work is reorganised and old methods are replaced. People are retrained and multi-skilled. Working in teams is also an important aspect of school work, and students are being asked to develop the key skill of Working With Others. The case study enables students to understand the meaning of teamworking in industry.

## Learning outcomes

- Young people will understand the meaning of teamworking as used in industry.
- Young people will know some of the advantages and disadvantages of teamworking.

## Method

- Ask the students to work in small groups of three to four. Distribute the case study, *Teamworking*, and ask groups to discuss the following questions:
  - *What is meant by teamworking?*
  - *How is teamworking in industry different from working in a team in school?*
  - *Why are companies introducing teamworking?*
  - *What benefits can teamworking bring to workers?*
  - *What problems can there be?*
- Ask each group to appoint a scribe to record the views of the group. Discuss each question in turn by asking a group to report back on its views and then opening up the discussion on that question to other groups.
- Invite any visitor who is present to comment on the views expressed.

# Teamworking

Teamworking is when workers form a small group which is responsible for its work. Teams generally have a team leader to motivate and guide them. Teams tend to supervise themselves rather than have an outside supervisor.

Under teamworking, companies change their traditional production lines or piecework. Instead people work in multi-skilled work teams. Each worker can do a number of tasks. Workers often move around between jobs.

## **Employers often introduce teamworking because:**

- it allows them to respond more quickly to changing markets
- it can increase productivity and the quality of goods made, as teams feel greater responsibility for their work
- peaks and troughs of workload can be evened out, saving money
- problems can be more easily sorted out by the team, rather than by managers telling people how to solve the problem.

## **The GMB union makes a number of points about the introduction of teamworking:**

- Teamworking can increase morale and job satisfaction as people feel more involved and can see the contribution they are making to the end-product.
- Teamworking must not mean that staff have greater responsibility for no extra pay. The benefits of teamworking to companies should be reflected in higher wages for workers.
- Team leaders have an important role. They coordinate ideas and teach others to plan and control their work. Team leaders should be elected from within the group or selected in a fair and open way.
- Teamworking can help to improve communication between management and workers. Management must not use teamworking to bypass trade unions. Trade unions are still needed to provide an independent voice for the workforce.
- Trade unions should be properly consulted on the organisation's plans to introduce teamworking.

Adapted from *Teamworking* in GMB Bargaining Brief: Issue 14.

# Bouncin' Around

## Description

The case study discusses some of the good and bad points about hot-desking. This is an increasingly common example of flexible working environments. It is also a practice that students might encounter on work experience. A discussion of the case study would also make good preparation for participation in the simulation, *Nothing Ruled In, Nothing Ruled Out*.

## Learning outcomes

- Young people will understand some of the advantages and disadvantages of hot-desking.
- Young people will consider the impact of the working environment upon people.

## Method

- Ask the students to work in small groups of three to four. Distribute the case study, *Hot-desking*, and ask groups to discuss the following questions:
  - *What is meant by hot-desking?*
  - *Why do companies want to introduce hot-desking?*
  - *What are the advantages and disadvantages for the employees involved?*
  - *Would you like to be a hot-desker or not? What are your reasons?*
- Ask each group to appoint a scribe to record the views of the group. Discuss each question in turn by asking a group to report back on its views and then opening up the discussion on that question to other groups.
- Invite any visitor who is present to comment on the views expressed.

# Bouncin' Around

What's the first thing you do when you get to work? For many of us, it's gazing at a picture of our loved ones or moving that cactus around while we wait for the computer to boot up. But for a growing band of staff, work only begins once they've unpacked pictures of their loved ones and the good luck toys we all like to have around on whatever desk they're assigned of a morning. At the end of the day, they'll clear their personal effects away and store them in an office file set aside for them, copy any computer files they need on to a disc and go, leaving the desk as they found it for someone else to use the next day.

These nomadic workers are at the forefront of the growing trend of hot-desking which allows companies to use workstations round the clock in order to keep costs down.

## Shove up, shipmate!

Did you know the idea of hot-desking comes from an old Navy practice when bunks in warships were shared by sailors on different shifts to save space?

For some people, the idea is hard to handle – they believe they have earned the right to the status that goes with the right desk in the right place and they prefer the security of having their own things on their personal desk. An Industrial Society survey found that twice as many office workers prefer the traditional fixed desk. Among secretarial and clerical staff nearly eight times as many preferred their own desk.

## Hot-desking jargon

### Cubicles and caves

Private places in an open-plan office

### Hotelling

Hot-desking where workers ring in advance to pre-book the facilities they need (like a hotel)

### Motelling

Like hotelling but workers do not need to pre-book

### Guesting

Arrangements between companies who provide hot desks for each other's employees.

Once staff are willing to give it a go, they find there are advantages. Jo Lehan of the Nationwide Building Society started hot-desking four years ago and found it hard to get used to at first. 'After a while you do adjust and there are positive benefits', Jo discovered. 'By packing everything away every evening you ensure things don't go missing. People interact more and get to know others they might not have sat next to if they had their own desks.' Paula Cozens, another Nationwide employee, believes that moving desks has reduced problems with her neck which she thinks may have got worse if she worked at one desk.

In some cases hot-desking is just not suitable – for instance some staff with disabilities require work areas that are set at an exact position.

Adapted with permission from *Rapport*, The Nationwide Group Staff Magazine, Issue 48, March 2003.

# Flexible Labour Market

During the past few years, the way people are employed and how they work has been changing. The name often given to these changes is the *flexible labour market*. The glossary explains some of the main features of this new flexibility. Your task is to investigate what changes have been introduced at the workplace. Work with a group of other students who are also undertaking an experience of work at a placement in the same sector (e.g. shops, offices, construction). This will enable you to produce a report on changes in the labour market in that particular sector.

The research for the following assignment can be carried out either during your work experience or during workplace visits. You could also collect your information at your part-time job if you get permission from your supervisor.

The evidence from this assignment can be used to illustrate your use of the Key Skills listed in the box. They could form part of your portfolio of evidence for a qualification.

## Key Skills – level 2

**Communication:** Contribute to discussions

**Communication:** Write different types of documents

**Information Technology:** Develop information

**Information Technology:** Present information

**Working with Others:** Organise tasks to meet your own responsibilities and support co-operative working

## TASK ONE

Your task is to investigate the labour market in the sector which you have chosen (e.g. retail, construction, manufacturing). Prepare interview questions for the manager or personnel officer in the organisation where you will be working. Use the glossary of terms to plan your questions. Questions might include the following:

- *What is the current pattern of employment (e.g. part-time compared to full-time; the balance between male and female workers; the balance between managerial, supervisory and operative level jobs; and how many skilled and unskilled workers)?*
- *How has the pattern changed over the past few years?*
- *How is it likely to change in the future?*
- *What forms of flexibility have been introduced?*
- *Why were these changes made?*
- *What have been their effects?*
- *Were employees and their unions consulted about the changes?*
- *How many workers are appointed through agencies?*
- *How many of the staff are homeworkers/teleworkers?*

# Flexible Labour Market

## **TASK TWO**

Discuss the questions that you have produced with other students in your group. Agree on a common set of questions and produce a final set of interview questions using ICT.

## **TASK THREE**

Interview the manager or someone from the personnel department at the company. It is important to find the right person who will be able to answer your questions. You may want to let them see the questionnaire in advance of the interview, so they can think about their answers. If there is a trade union representative, interview them about their perspectives on the changes that have been introduced.

## **TASK FOUR**

Write up your interview notes so that other members of your group can understand them. Duplicate your interview write-up and give copies to other members of your team. Meet and discuss as a group what you have discovered about:

- *past changes in the sector of employment which you are investigating*
- *the current pattern of employment*
- *possible future changes at the workplace.*

## **TASK FIVE**

Write a report on the changing labour market in the sector you have been investigating. You could use local Labour Market Information (LMI) available from your Careers or Connexions Service.

## **TASK SIX**

Present the main findings of your study to a visiting careers advisor, trade unionist or employer.

## ***Flexible Labour Market: Glossary of Terms***

There is no single definition of 'flexibility'. This glossary lists some of the different practices it can involve. Labour market flexibility is a controversial area. Flexibility can benefit employers or employees, or both. Businesses want patterns of work to fit the needs of the company. People want work patterns to be more flexible to create a better balance between work and life. Trade unionists believe that some forms of flexibility have harmed workers. They argue that flexibility should be underpinned by fairness at work. Since April 2003 employees with young children (or a disabled child) have been able to apply to their employer to work flexibly.

### **Annual hours contracts**

Annual hours contracts are a way of cutting the amount of money spent on overtime. People are employed for so many hours a year and are paid the same each month regardless of the number of hours worked. When work is busy, they will work longer hours and when work is slack their hours will be cut. In this way the company gains flexibility over when people work.

### **Compressed hours**

Working time is reorganised into fewer but longer blocks of time during the week. For example people might work longer days and work a 4 or 4.5 day week.

### **Derecognition**

Derecognition is when an employer no longer recognises a trade union for negotiating about working conditions, pay, etc. It often happens before the introduction of personal contracts. This is when people are offered terms and conditions of employment which are different from those offered to others. About half of all employees work in places where unions are recognised.

### **Deregulation**

When the government reduces demands on employers to follow particular rules. For example, the government abolished Wages Councils in the 1980s. These set minimum wages for different sectors. The government's aim was to allow employers to reduce wages so that they could employ more workers. After abolition, wages fell in these sectors, but the hoped for rise in employment did not happen.

### **Downsizing**

Some firms have made people redundant as a way of reducing costs. This has often put pressure on those who keep their jobs. This is because the same amount of work has to be done by less people. The fear of job losses has made many people feel insecure, even when there is no immediate threat.

### **Flexible working weeks**

This usually involves compressing the working week so that the same hours are worked over fewer days. This can help recruitment, reduce overtime and absenteeism, but can lead to fatigue if working days are too long. However, they can give employees a long weekend.

### **Flexitime**

Flexitime is where employees are free to vary their daily hours of work within a range, provided that they are on the premises during certain core times (e.g. 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.). This would enable them to arrive later on some days but to work later in the evenings to compensate. It is mostly used for office staff below managerial levels.

### **Homeworking**

Homeworking is simply working at home. The work is often low-skill manual and includes assembly operations. Because homeworkers are generally self-employed, they have few or no employment rights. They also have very low wages and are mostly female.

### **Job sharing**

Job sharing is a form of part-time working where two people share the same full-time job. There is often an agreement that if one is sick or on holiday, then the other will do his or her share of the job as well.

**Kaizen**

A Japanese approach to improving quality used in manufacturing companies. The responsibility for improving quality rests with each employee. Each employee is expected to contribute ideas to improve ways of working in the team. It is part of teamworking.

**Multi-skilling**

Multi-skilling is when workers are trained to carry out a range of tasks. This increases flexibility in the organisation's use of staff. If there are absences or a need to increase the numbers working on particular processes, then this can be easily done. It contrasts with 'job demarcation' where each person's job was strictly defined and they would not undertake other related tasks.

**Part-time working**

Today, six million people in Britain work part time; that's a quarter of the workforce. By 2010 that is set to rise to a third of the workforce. Women make up the majority of part-time workers and 45% of women in employment work part-time as their main job. Part-time workers now have the same rights in relation to pay and working conditions as full-time workers.

**Performance-related pay**

When people's pay is linked to their own performance of the job.

**Quality circles**

When people from different levels in the company meet to discuss ideas about how work processes can be improved.

**Self-rostering**

A team of people working on a particular project schedule their own working days to meet the demands of the project.

**Shift working**

Shift working has always existed in manufacturing where companies have wanted to use expensive equipment for more than eight hours a day (e.g. 9 a.m. until 5 p.m.). It is now spreading to shops which are opening for longer hours. Some people work very long hours in shops and services at the weekend and work hardly at all during the week.

**Staggered hours**

This is where start and finish times for all staff vary to allow staff coverage (and to take into account their personal situations). So one day may be from 8.30am–5pm and the next from 8.45am–5.15pm.

**Sub-contracting or outsourcing**

Sub-contracting has been used in the construction industry for years. In order to reduce costs, the company employs only a few core staff. Self-employed people or small companies are contracted to carry out work. It is now widespread in computing, scientific and local authority (contract cleaning) areas of work.

**Team working**

Team working is when a team is made responsible for a job or set of jobs. If staff are sick or absent, then the team has to ensure that the jobs are still carried out.

**Teleworking**

When people work from their own homes using information and communication technologies. This sometimes happens because the company has moved away from where the employee lives or because an individual prefers to work at home. New technologies such as e-mail and fax enable communications with the head office to be maintained.

**Temporary jobs**

Many people take temporary jobs, mainly because no permanent jobs are available. In the UK there are one and a half million people in temporary employment, and they often have little or no legal protection.

**Time rise**

Organising time more flexibly or shortening working hours can be as important as a pay rise to some people.

**Zero hours contracts**

When an employee is continually on call for the employer, but has no guarantee of work. There are usually no other benefits, because of their low earnings from not enough hours worked. An example could be someone who is working in a fast food restaurant. The manager asks him or her to be on 'standby' at the premises all day, but only asks the employee to work when it is busy.

# The Future of Work:

## *Briefing Notes for Trade Unionists and Other Visitors*

This unit of work is part of a set of materials developed by the TUC for use with young people in schools and youth centres. The materials aim to help young people acquire knowledge and understanding about the changing nature of work and careers, employment rights and the role of trade unions, and to develop skills to manage their own careers and negotiate decisions throughout their working lives.

The specific aims of the unit on the future of work are to:

- raise the awareness of young people about the changing world of work, including the flexible labour market
- help young people consider the kinds of skills they need to develop to match the needs of the emerging labour market
- provide an opportunity for young people to work with trade unionists in the classroom.

The unit consists of six sections. The following brief notes give suggestions about the role of a trade unionist and other visitors in supporting each of these sections.

### **Future Skills**

This activity aims to encourage young people to consider the need for various work-related skills in future workplaces. They have to decide whether the demand for particular skills will increase or decrease in the future. The role of the visitor is in the debriefing of the activity. It would be helpful if visitors could provide an analysis of how the skills required in their industry/company are likely to change in the future and the forces that are creating these changes in demand.

### **Skills for Work**

In this activity students decide how various skills for work in the future fit with the Key Skills that they are being encouraged to develop in school. It would be helpful if visitors during debriefing could comment on the relative importance of the skill requirements. They could also say what skills students can usefully acquire during their education compared to those skills that can only be developed in a work setting. How can students develop these skills for work during work experience and part-time work?

### **Teamworking**

This is a case study activity in which students discuss a GMB union briefing paper on teamworking in industry. It would be helpful to invite a trade unionist or other visitor with personal experience of teamworking to describe its introduction, operation, benefits and drawbacks at the end of the exercise.

### **Bouncin' Around**

This is a case study based on an article in the Nationwide Building Society's Staff Magazine about hot-desking. It would benefit from a visitor with experience of working in a modern office environment that involves hot-desking.

### **Flexible Labour Market**

This is an assignment which involves students collecting data about flexible practices in key sectors of the local labour market. It would be helpful to invite a trade unionist, or other visitor with knowledge of labour market flexibility, to join in the briefing of students, through using examples which bring the concepts alive. They might also provide an audience for students' reports on their investigations, offering insights on the extent to which the students' findings are representative of changes occurring in each sector.

### **Nothing Ruled In, Nothing Ruled Out**

This is a simulation involving the managers and staff of a local authority moving from Victorian to modern premises. The lack of space and need to reduce costs means that various forms of flexible working have to be considered. It would be desirable for any trade union visitor to have experience of local government and the issues involved in flexible working. The role could involve briefing managers and/or staff and commenting on these options chosen during the debriefing.

# Nothing Ruled In, Nothing Ruled Out

Written by Andrew Miller

Acknowledgements to Jane Williamson, TUC.

## Description

This simulation allows young people to explore the pros and cons of new ways of 'flexible' working. The scenario is a local authority that is moving from its rambling Victorian buildings to new, more compact, open-plan offices. The authority needs to reduce costs and save space, but at the same time wishes to retain and motivate staff. Managers and employees meet separately to consider their favoured options and then a staff meeting is held to debate the issues.

## Learning outcomes

- Young people will understand the meaning of flexible working and the pros and cons of different forms of flexibility.
- Young people will appreciate that individuals and groups have different perspectives on flexible working according to their circumstances.
- Young people will consider some of the alternatives to a full-time 'nine-to-five' job.

## Method

- The simulation will work best when students have completed some preparatory work on the concept of flexible working. There are various websites, but good starting points are the TUC ([www.tuc.org.uk/work\\_life](http://www.tuc.org.uk/work_life)) and Work Wise UK ([www.workwiseuk.org](http://www.workwiseuk.org)) sites. The activities in this unit and the glossary of flexible labour market terms are important preparation.
- Before the session, invite a trade unionist who represents workers in the local authority sector to work with you.
- The simulation could be run over one session taking about one and a half hours, or it could be split into three shorter sessions. There are three stages to the simulation. In Stage 1, managers and staff meet separately; in Stage 2, they come together for a staff meeting; and in Stage 3, there is debriefing for all involved

### Stage 1

- Distribute the briefing sheet, *Grantchester Council on the Move*, and read it through with the whole group.
- Divide the group into managers and staff and PREPARE to hand out the *Manager/Staff Member Role Cards* to every member of the group. Before handing out these role cards, teachers should tick ONE of the boxes to indicate the precise work role each student will play. There are a range of management and staff jobs which should be evenly distributed throughout the group. Tell the students that they can develop their own role by answering the questions on the role card.
- Ask capable members of each group to take on the additional role of Senior Manager and Union Representative and give them their additional role cards. When everyone has developed their role, each person should introduce themselves to the rest of their group (sticky labels can act as name badges).

- A team of consultants has written a paper which sets out some of the pros and cons of various forms of flexibility from the point of view of the employer. Distribute this paper, *Management Briefing*, to the management team.
- The National Association of Local Authority Staff (NALAS) – a fictitious trade union – has prepared a paper on the pros and cons of various forms of flexibility from the point of view of the staff. Distribute this paper, *Staff Briefing*, to the staff team.
- Allow managers and staff members time to study their respective papers. They should spend some time thinking through their role and how the various changes that have been suggested might affect them. Their personal circumstances will influence their preferences.
- The chair of each group (the Senior Manager or Union Representative) should then take them through a discussion of each of the five options. Someone should act as a scribe, making a note of what has been agreed. At the forthcoming authority staff meeting, one person should be chosen as spokesperson from each group to present the views of the group.

### **Stage 2**

- Rearrange the furniture of the room into a public meeting format with a table and chairs at the front of the room for main spokespersons, and with chairs in theatre-style for the audience.
- The teacher or group leader should act as the chair of the meeting and invite the management's spokesperson to address the audience on their preferred options. He/she should then invite the staff spokesperson to respond stating their preferred options. Finally, open the debate to questions and statements from the floor. In your role as chair, summarise the main points of the discussions, highlighting areas of agreement and disagreement.

### **Stage 3**

- Debriefing can take place in the whole group, or students can be asked to form new sub-groups of five or six, with a mix of staff and managers. Questions might include the following:
  - *What similarities and differences were there between the preferred options of the two groups?*
  - *Having heard the arguments for and against teleworking, who would choose to be a teleworker and why?*
  - *Which types of flexibility are more likely to be supported by staff?*
  - *Which types of flexibility are more likely to be resisted by staff?*
  - *How can membership of a trade union protect staff interests?*
  - *What have they learned about flexible working?*

# Grantchester Council on the Move

Chief Executive, Jane Maloney, announced that the Authority would be moving into its new premises in six months time. 'The old Corporation Avenue building is well past its sell-by date. The long corridors and small offices were not suitable for a forward looking authority in the 21st century. The new open-plan offices will allow us to make better use of new technologies', she said.

## **Reduce costs**

She went on to say that the good news for staff was the better environment in the new building. However, overall there is less space and so there is an urgent need to see how space can be used more efficiently. The council is also committed to holding down the council tax rates and so there is a need to reduce costs.

## **Low staff morale**

A confidential council survey of staff opinion found that morale was low because of uncertainty over the future: 40% said that they were dissatisfied with their work, 25% said that they would move to another job, if a suitable one was available. 'People are worried about compulsory redundancies, but we want to reassure our staff that we are looking at other ways to reduce costs. We are keen to raise staff morale. Many of

our staff have family responsibilities and may welcome the opportunity to have greater flexibility in the way they work', she said.

The council has commissioned a firm of consultants to investigate some of the pros and cons of different types of flexible working. Jane Maloney has asked a group of managers to consider this report and to make some recommendations which will tackle the twin problems of saving money and space, and retaining and motivating staff.

When asked if she had already made up her mind about what was needed, she replied, 'I have an open mind. Nothing is ruled in, nothing is ruled out.'

At the same time a staff working group is meeting to discuss the same issues. A meeting for staff across the council will debate the main questions:

- *How can costs be reduced?*
- *How can staff be squeezed into a smaller working space?*
- *How can staff morale be improved?*
- *How can the Authority prevent staff from leaving to take other jobs?*

## Management Briefing Paper – 1 of 2



### FLEXIBLE WORKING AND GRANTCHESTER COUNCIL

#### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The ways of working at Grantchester Council are old-fashioned and need to be modernised. The majority of staff have administrative or clerical duties, many using PCs or taking telephone enquiries from local businesses and the public.
- 1.2 75% of the 400 staff are women, although half the 50 staff on management grades are men.
- 1.3 The working hours are 9.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. on Monday to Friday and most staff stick to this pattern as they are full-time employees.
- 1.4 Only 10% of staff (generally those on clerical grades) work part-time.
- 1.5 The recent staff survey showed low morale among staff and there is a need for management action to improve the situation.
- 1.6 We think that the Council should consider introducing a package of measures to create greater flexibility. This, we believe, will help to achieve the goals of cutting costs, while also saving space and improving staff morale.

#### 2.0 Flexible measures

- 2.1 **Telework:** Staff carrying out basic clerical duties could be linked to the main Authority computer and work from home. Managers could work from home for part of the week to reduce the pressure on office space. Other staff, mainly involved in answering telephone enquiries, could also work from home.

##### Teleworking

###### Pros

- *cuts the space needed at the office, as more staff work at home*
- *many staff with young children or elderly relatives may find this an attractive option. It will help retain staff and improve their morale*
- *it will help reduce traffic congestion in the town centre – a green option which the Council is committed to promoting.*

###### Cons

- *there will be a need to spend on new technology to be used at home. Home offices need furniture and security may be a problem*
- *more difficult for managers to supervise what staff are doing*
- *equipment can be stolen and other people could gain access to confidential records*
- *added communications costs of keeping links to home offices.*

- 2.2 **Hot-desking:** Staff will have a desk at the office, but they do not own a particular desk or office. When they come into the office, they use whichever desk or office is available. This is one way of dealing with the reduced amount of office space in the new building.

*continued...*

## Management Briefing Paper – 2 of 2

### Hot-desking

#### Pros

- *reduces costs as less office space is needed for the same number of people*
- *discourages groups of people from gossiping about how terrible work is.*

#### Cons

- *less easy for managers to supervise staff when they are moving around the building at different work stations*
- *not having their own desk may hit staff morale.*

- 2.3 **Part-time working and/or job-sharing:** Part-time working allows more flexibility. For example, more part-timers could work in the busier morning period and less in the afternoons. Many women with children might prefer working part-time to full-time. Job-sharing allows two people to share a full-time post.

### Part-time working / job-sharing

#### Pros

- *they allow a close fit between the needs of the council and the workforce available.*

#### Cons

- *less control over the workforce by management*
- *this can actually increase the number of people employed.*

- 2.4 **Outsourcing:** Certain jobs carried out by Council staff could be outsourced or sub-contracted to outside companies. For example, simple clerical tasks, such as inputting data, could be suitable for outsourcing. The staff themselves may wish to go self-employed to run these companies.

### Outsourcing

#### Pros

- *the cost of jobs will be known and the Council will save on National Insurance Contributions and maternity leave*
- *the Council can hire specialist companies to handle the work*
- *contracts can be renegotiated and the price could be reduced by competition.*

#### Cons

- *less easy to control the work once it is outsourced*
- *costs of recruiting companies to do the work*
- *companies may use the ideas they pick up to win other business.*

- 2.5 **Flexitime:** Currently all full-time staff work from 9.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. with an hour for breaks during the day. The hours could be extended by flexitime from 7.30 a.m. to 6.30 p.m. Staff might have to work core time, say, from 10 a.m. to 3.30 p.m. Other rules applied to flexitime include lunchbreaks of between 30 to 90 minutes taken between 12 and 2 p.m. There are also rules about banking time in one week and then carrying it over to the next week. Extra hours worked can sometimes become flexileave giving people an extra day or so holiday a month.

### Flexitime

#### Pros

- *improved staff morale as a result of greater control over their working hours*
- *staff can be asked to attend earlier or stay later when there is a rush on.*

#### Cons

- *difficult to monitor how many hours staff have worked*
- *can be abused by some staff.*

- 2.6 The Council should consider some combination of these measures to reduce costs and improve staff morale.

## Staff Briefing Paper – 1 of 2



### FLEXIBLE WORKING AT GRANTCHESTER COUNCIL – A REPORT BY THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL AUTHORITY STAFF

#### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The majority of staff at Grantchester Council have administrative or clerical duties. Many use PCs or answer telephone enquiries from local businesses and the public. While 75% of the 400 staff are women, half the 50 staff on management grades are men.
- 1.2 The working hours are 9.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. from Monday to Friday, and most staff stick to this pattern as they are full-time employees. Only 10% of staff (generally those on clerical grades) work part-time.
- 1.3 A recent staff survey showed low morale among staff and there is a need for action to improve the situation.
- 1.4 The Council has asked Wilson Consulting to consider new working practices. A package of measures to create greater flexibility is likely. This, they believe, will help to achieve the goals of cutting costs, while also saving space and improving staff morale. The union believes that any changes must involve consultation and agreement with staff and the union. It is important that staff think about how changes might affect them. Below we set out some of the pros and cons of different types of flexibility.
- 2.1 **TELEWORK.** Teleworking involves staff working at home. Staff will be using PCs and will be linked with the main Council building – through e-mail, fax and telephone. Clerical staff and some managers may wish to have some teleworking in their jobs. The union has drafted a telework agreement which sets out some of the rules that should govern telework.

#### Teleworking

##### Pros:

- *end the need to spend time and money in commuting to work*
- *more time can be spent with families*
- *the home office can be more personal and more enjoyable to work in.*

##### Cons:

- *spending more time with the family can put strains on relationships*
- *people can feel lonely and isolated from their colleagues*
- *the home office takes away space from the family home*
- *teleworkers may be seen as not 'real' employees.*

- 2.2 **HOT-DESKING.** Staff will have a desk at the office, but they do not own a particular desk or office. When they come into the office they use whichever desk or office is available. This may be one way of dealing with the reduced amount of office space in the new building.

#### Hot-desking

##### Pros:

- *less supervision from managers and more freedom of movement.*

##### Cons:

- *people can leave their work out on their desks*
- *people cannot personalise their own space with photographs, etc.*
- *people are not sure where they will be working and this creates uncertainty.*

*continued...*

## Staff Briefing Paper – 2 of 2

- 2.3 **PART-TIME WORKING AND/OR JOB-SHARING.** Part-time working allows more flexibility. For example, more part-timers could work in the busier morning period and less in the afternoons. Many women with children might prefer working part-time to full-time. Job-sharing allows two people to share a full-time post.

### Part-time working/job-sharing

#### Pros:

- *it is easier to fit the job around people's personal/family needs*
- *more time to spend on other things, e.g. leisure.*

#### Cons:

- *tends to reduce chances of promotion*
- *tends to have less benefits*
- *lower income*
- *may increase people's isolation from colleagues.*

- 2.4 **OUTSOURCING.** Certain jobs carried out by Council staff could be outsourced or sub-contracted to outside companies. For example, simple clerical tasks, such as inputting data, could be suitable for outsourcing. Some staff might want to go self-employed if they were guaranteed work from the Council.

### Outsourcing

#### Pros:

- *some staff could set up their own small businesses to do the outsourced work*
- *tax benefits can be gained from being self-employed.*

#### Cons:

- *loss of benefits such as pension rights, National Insurance contributions, etc.*
- *loss of training opportunities*
- *need for workers to have enterprise skills to market their services*
- *expense of providing their own equipment.*

- 2.5 **FLEXITIME.** Currently all full-time staff work from 9.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. with an hour for breaks during the day. The hours could be extended by flexitime from 7.30 a.m. to 6.30 p.m. Staff might have to work core time, say, from 10.00 a.m. to 3.30 p.m. Other rules applied to flexitime include lunchbreaks of between 30 to 90 minutes taken between 12 and 2 p.m. There are also rules about banking time in one week and then carrying it over to the next week. Extra hours worked can sometimes become flexileave giving people an extra day or so holiday a month.

### Flexitime

#### Pros:

- *working time can be shifted to suit personal needs*
- *greater freedom*
- *greater responsibility for managing your own time.*

#### Cons:

- *colleagues who abuse the system create more work for others*
- *more difficult to arrange meetings first thing in the morning or in the late afternoon.*

## ROLE CARD: Union Representative – National Union of Local Authority Staff (NALAS)

It is your role to chair the staff group who are meeting to discuss the move to the new Council Offices. You should discuss the options that are presented in the attached report by your union. The options are one or more of the following:

- teleworking
- hot-desking
- part-time working
- job sharing
- outsourcing
- flexitime.

You want to make sure that any agreement has the support of the staff. Any change to working practices must bring benefits to staff and be voluntary. Your union has produced a set of principles about teleworking which you want to make sure are included in any agreement with the Council.

The other key questions that you need to discuss are:

- *Will the flexible working apply to all staff?*

or

- *Will some forms of flexible working, such as teleworking, only be available for managers?*

You will need to make sure that you have one or two spokespersons lined up to speak at the open meeting that is planned to discuss these issues. They will need to put forward the recommendations of your staff group to the whole meeting.

### NALAS CODE OF PRACTICE: TELEWORKING

- Teleworkers should be employees, not self-employed, in order that their employment rights are protected.
- To avoid isolation, contracts of employment should require teleworkers to come to the office regularly.
- Teleworkers should have the same rates of pay and employment benefits as office-based workers, including child-care provision and family leave.
- There should be a set number of working hours and teleworkers should be included in any schemes to develop their careers, such as training and appraisal.
- All computer equipment should be provided, paid for and serviced by the employer.
- Teleworking should be voluntary and workers should have the right to return to working from the office.

## ROLE CARD: Senior Manager

It is your role to chair the management group who are meeting to discuss the move to the new Council Offices. You should discuss the options that are presented in the attached report by Wilson Consulting. The options are one or more of the following:

- teleworking
- hot-desking
- part-time working
- job sharing
- outsourcing
- flexitime.

You want to make sure that any agreement has the support of the managers. Any change to working practices must achieve the aims of reducing costs, saving space and improving staff morale.

The other key questions that you need to discuss are:

- *Will the flexible working apply to all staff?*

or

- *Will some forms of flexible working, such as teleworking, only be available for managers?*

You will need to make sure that you have one or two spokespersons lined up to speak at the open meeting that is planned to discuss these issues. They will need to put forward the recommendations of your management group to the whole meeting.

## ROLE CARD: Manager / Staff Member

You work at Grantchester Council. You have to decide where you stand on the ideas for more flexible working arrangements. First decide on your own personal circumstances by creating your own role.

1. What is your name? \_\_\_\_\_

2. What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_

3. What is your post at the Council?

### Management

Administration Manager

Environmental Services Manager

Leisure Services Manager

Council Tax Manager

Social Services Manager

### Staff

Council Tax Officer

Leisure Services Officer

Social Services Administrative Assistant

Environmental Services Administrative Assistant

4. How far do you live from the new offices?

1 km

2 km

4 km

10 km

20 km

5. What is your marital status?

Married

Single

Divorced

6. How many children do you have living with you? And how old are they?

Child 1 \_\_\_ years

Child 2 \_\_\_ years

Child 3 \_\_\_ years

Child 4 \_\_\_ years

7. What kind of home do you have?

Flat

2 bed terrace

3 bed semi-detached

4 bed detached

5 bed detached

8. What kind of person are you? What are your social and leisure interests?

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Think through how the person/role you have created would react to new ways of working.

- **Would they welcome or resist change?**
- **Would they like to work at home or not?**
- **Would they like to run their own business or not?**
  - **Would they like flexitime?**
  - **Would they like hot desking?**