OUR CONTEXT

• Reintegrating the workplace after nearly a year and a half in lock down:
  • Stress and anxiety linked to yet more change, health concerns and “the unknown”.
  • Prolonged reduction in social interaction has diminished some of the aspects previously most valued about working on campus.
  • New attitudes and expectations about the world of work
• Building the foundation for the workplace of tomorrow: we have much to learn as an institution, as managers, as teams: skills for managing a hybrid workplace, decisions about in person/online service, meeting stakeholder needs, sustaining productivity and innovation, managing performance, maintaining a sense of belonging, engagement, etc.
ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES
MANAGERS/SUPERVISORS

• Encourage staff to discuss their interest in applying for an IFWA with you. This will facilitate planning for both parties.

• Familiarize yourself with the program guidelines. Consult the “Better Together Guide” for more return to campus guidance.

• Review requests objectively, considering all impacts and possible mitigation strategies.

• Communicate your decision in a timely manner.

• Clarify expectations: schedule, deliverables, availability when working remotely, means of communication, terms for modifying the agreement, monitoring progress.

• Engage in objective evaluation, measuring success and reporting.
TIPS FOR REVIEWING A REQUEST: IS AN INTERIM FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENT VIABLE?

• Are there specific peak or critical periods when a remote work or flex schedule may not be viable? If so, can the arrangement be managed differently during that period (e.g., over a month versus a week)?

• Does the employee require more coaching, direct support or structure to effectively fulfill their responsibilities (e.g., new to role, change in tasks, performance issue that necessitates in person supervision)?

• Does the situation require that all or most of the work be done on campus (e.g., facilities maintenance, frontline client service, labs)?

• Does the position require access to equipment that is only available on campus (e.g., research lab equipment)?

• Be sure to consider how these constraints were managed during the pandemic, if the employee worked from home.
TIPS FOR REVIEWING A REQUEST (CONT.)

• Verify that the dossier is complete and that any concerns are addressed with the employee.

• Be sure to consider the big picture (overall team requests, stakeholder needs/expectations, operational requirements) when evaluating and deciding.

• Be objective and consider all the options - ensure you are approving/refusing for the right reasons.

• If approving a request, ensure that the employee understands the terms and that this is a trial - subject to review.

• When declining a request, document your reasons, advise the employee ASAP, ideally in person, to ensure they understand the decision.
TIPS FOR OPERATIONALIZING AN INTERIM FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENT

• Set work schedules that address new/emerging operational needs to ensure office/department coverage (eg. determine optimal balance between in person and online service delivery in evolving context).

• Establish clear goals, deliverables and deadlines for which the employee is accountable.

• Consider how you will sustain communications, teamwork and collaboration.

• Ensure team members and other key stakeholders (if applicable) know each others’ schedules and how best to communicate (e.g., MS Teams platform, phone, in person, etc.).

• Optimize the time spent on site by prioritizing activities that are best done in person (e.g., requiring higher levels of collaboration) vs. more solitary tasks better-suited to remote work.

• Agree on means and methods by which you will supervise and monitor workload and results.
MANAGING IN A HYBRID MODEL

• As managers, you will be participating in an important initiative as we collectively discover more about HYBRID WORK through our day-to-day experiences. The success of this interim program will play a key role in shaping future possibilities @ McGill. Let’s set ourselves up for success.

• Manage this as a LEARNING PROCESS - skills development, tracking, feedback mechanisms, and reassessment will be critical for your team, and for McGill at large.

• Consult guides, tools and resource people available to support you.

• Consult your HR Advisor as needed.
APPROACH THE HYBRID WORKPLACE WISELY

• Manage excessive and unrealistic demands and expectations upfront.
• Re-establish priorities and become acquainted with the “new normal”. Reconnect face-to-face and stabilize team.
• Encourage equity within & beyond units and faculties.
• Reinforce team cohesion & sense of community.
• Provide sufficient development, tools, and meaningful metrics to make HYBRID WORK sustainable @ McGill.
• Ensure that we maintain the total <<McGill Experience>> for ALL.
THERE ARE VALUABLE REASONS TO SUPPORT HYBRID FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS

- Develop new ways of working, post-pandemic.
- Develop new capabilities - individual, team and institutional - that support excellence.
- Encourage agility and innovation in our staff.
- Attract and retain talent.
- Engage employees – increased morale, productivity.
- Provide quality service with hybrid options.
- Support Mental Health (reducing risk of burnouts, sick leaves; optimizing work/ life balance).
AS THE HYBRID WORKPLACE EMERGES, SO DO IMPORTANT QUESTIONS...

• What do we need to consider to maximize the effectiveness of hybrid work?
• What equipment / technology / resources are needed to support this model?
• Given the diversity of roles at McGill, how will we arrive at a semblance of fairness, equity within and across units?
• How will we manage employee expectations?
• How will we measure individual and team performance?
MORE QUESTIONS

• What should client service look like in this model; how will we measure effectiveness?
• How can teaming be most effective?
• How can we enhance collaboration, creativity, innovation, engagement?
• How can we ensure we don’t lose touch with the human side of work (trust, relationships, belonging, support)?

EXPLORE SOME OF THESE QUESTIONS WITH COLLEAGUES AND TEAM MEMBERS. ALIGN AROUND THE QUEST TO LEARN AND MAKE HYBRID WORK SUCCESSFUL.
KEY CENTRAL RESOURCE DOCUMENTS – RETURN TO CAMPUS

✓ Better Together Checklist
✓ Return to Campus Tool Kit
✓ Better Together Accompanying Guide for Supervisors
✓ FAQs
✓ Communications Plan
✓ Better Together Template (Local adaptation and cascading)
✓ Care Calendar with WELL-COME BACKPACK