

AMY BASKIN AND HEATHER FAWCETT

Request for a Work Schedule Change

Background

Karen works weekdays 9:00 to 5:30 as a technical writer for an aerospace plant. Karen's husband, Murray, doesn't start work until 9:30, but often must work late into the evening. They have two school-age children. Their youngest, Helen, has cerebral palsy.

Karen would like to work flextime, so that she can be home with her daughters after school. That would allow her to schedule more therapy appointments for Helen, as well as help the girls with their homework. It would also save the family significant babysitting costs.

She will request a 6:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. workday.

Proposal Memo

To: John Doe

From: Karen MacDonald

Re: Request for Flextime

Date: May 17, 2006

As a team member of HI-Tech's Technical Writing Division for six years, I'd like to propose changing my work hours to 6:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., instead of 9:00 to 5:30.

I believe that, with this earlier schedule, I would be able to improve my written output by at least a third. As I'm sure you know, writing and editing requires a great deal of solitary concentration. Although I enjoy the camaraderie of our open-concept office, I am frequently disrupted by nearby phone calls and discussions. With the earlier schedule, I would have several hours to work without distraction before most of my coworkers arrive each day.

An earlier schedule would also allow me to schedule my daughter's medical appointments after work, meaning I'd be able to take significantly less time off, yet still see to her needs.

MEMO

Amy Baskin is a freelance writer who has published in magazines such as *Canadian Parent*, *Canadian Living*, *Today's Parent*, *Canadian Family*, and *Education Today*. She has also taught children and adults for more than two decades.



Heather Fawcett is a writer and an advocate for children with special needs. Early in her career, she was a technical writer in the computer industry. Her textbook *Techniques for Technical Communicators* has been used on college and university campuses in Canada and the United States.



This proposal memo is excerpted from Baskin and Fawcett's book *More Than a Mom—Living a Full and Balanced Life When Your Child Has Special Needs*. www.morethanamom.net

Do you or someone you know have flexible work hours? What benefits and problems can you see with such an arrangement?

Overview of the memo—define problem/oppor

s questions
ions.

I feel that my work record as a reliable, self-directed, and self-disciplined employee makes me an ideal candidate for flextime work.

Since I rarely interact directly with customers, customer service should not be compromised. Should an urgent matter arise after I'd left work for the day, I would still be accessible by cell phone.

My meetings with engineers can be easily rescheduled to take place before 2:30. I could still arrange to work a later schedule on days when my presence would be critical in the late afternoon—for example, if a client requested a 3:00 meeting.

To ensure success, I propose we meet weekly in the first month to review the arrangement. I would continue to report on my progress in weekly department meetings.

We can use the timelines currently in our product schedule to track my projects and measure productivity.

I would like to discuss this proposal with you further to address any potential concerns you might have. I understand that you are responsible for the success of this department and must determine whether this plan works for our team as a whole. I suggest a trial period of one month, after which the arrangement could be assessed and revised, if necessary. I understand that if the plan is not working, I might be required to return to my original schedule.

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