

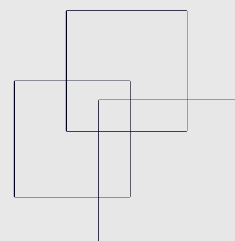


International
Labour
Office
Geneva

WISE +

Work Improvement in Small Enterprises

Action Manual





International
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WISE +

WISE + Action Manual

Developed and piloted within the ILO/DANIDA project:
**Improving Job Quality in Africa through concerted efforts by Government,
Employers and Workers**

Conditions of Work and Employment Programme

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Work improvement in small enterprises (WISE) Action Manual

Geneva, International Labour Office, 2009

ISBN 978-92-2-122906-3 (print)

ISBN 978-92-2-122907-0 (web pdf)

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Foreword

Work Improvement in Small Enterprises (*WISE*) is an innovative approach to improving working conditions and productivity in small and medium-sized enterprises around the world. It is not simply a training package, but a process in which entrepreneurs and managers are empowered and supported to address working conditions issues through the identification, sharing and implementation of local and affordable good practices. In the long term, the improvements in working conditions achieved are sustained through the development of supportive networks of local entrepreneurs and trainers who continue to share ideas and practices, motivated by the measurable improvements in productivity that participants experience.

A series of training modules and guides, first published in 1988, form the heart of *WISE*. Until now, these have provided guidance on nine technical areas of working conditions, all of which address the physical organization of the workplace and work processes and simple ways to alter these, so as to improve safety and health and increase productivity. These manuals have been used, adapted and translated into more than ten countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America, evidencing the flexibility and effectiveness of the *WISE* approach.

WISE-R (*More Work Improvement in Small Enterprises*) builds upon this success and is designed to meet the needs identified by *WISE* trainers and entrepreneurs around the world to expand the *WISE* package to include other key dimensions of working conditions. *WISE-R* consists of six new modules and training guides that address not only the physical work environment, but also the more complex day-to-day challenges that entrepreneurs face when handling employee recruitment, management and motivation.

WISE-R is a natural extension of the original *WISE* manuals. It reflects the global recognition that the employees of a business are not only often a significant investment, but that their performance holds the key to the success of the business. *WISE-R* reflects this reality and takes on the issues that are central both to workers' recruitment, retention and motivation, and to maximizing individual productivity in a safe and healthy way: wages, working time, maternity protection, work-family balance, management and motivation, and workplace relations.

As with *WISE*, the suggestions made in *WISE-R* are both practical and low-cost. The focus of these ideas is, in fact, to introduce simple working practices and measures that can make a huge difference to the motivation and the ability of employees to perform their job and, consequently, to the productivity of the business.

The concept of combining *WISE* and *WISE-R* into a *WISE+* package arose in the course of a six-month period of pilot testing carried out in Mozambique and the United Republic of Tanzania in 2009. Following the development of the *WISE-R* modules, a decision was taken to pilot the *WISE* and *WISE-R* training modules in tandem. The implementation phase was carried out with the cooperation and participation of a range of local and national actors, including local entrepreneurs, employers' and workers' organizations, labour inspectorates, ministries of labour, training institutions and others. The feedback received following this exercise has suggested that combining *WISE* and *WISE-R* is an efficient and effective approach.

This *WISE+* binder brings together the *WISE Action Manual (1997)* with the new *WISE-R Training Manual* to create a complete *WISE+ Action Manual*. We have also created a second binder, which contains the *WISE* and new *WISE-R Trainers' Guides*. In the longer term, further work will need to be undertaken to fully integrate the *WISE* and *WISE-R* modules, and their respective guides. This *WISE+* package is thus presented as a prototype, which is ready to provide a solid starting point for future work. The ILO would welcome the feedback of entrepreneurs and practitioners who will use and adapt the methodology to the multiple realities of workplaces around the world.



International
Labour
Office

WISE-R
More
Work Improvement in Small Enterprises

Module 3

Designing and Managing Working Time

Developed and piloted within the ILO/DANIDA project:
**Improving Job Quality in Africa through concerted efforts by Government,
Employers and Workers**

Conditions of Work and Employment Programme

Introduction

The way that employers plan and organize working time in their business impacts the level of productivity, work quality and worker stress, often in ways that are not always well understood. As a result, business owners struggling to find customers and meet tight deadlines, may make hasty decisions about organizing working time.

One common misunderstanding relates to the use of long working hours as a way of increasing output. When people picture employees working long hours towards a deadline, they often imagine efficient, consistent, performance and increased productivity. Unfortunately, the opposite is often the case. As worker fatigue, health problems, and workplace accidents increase, business costs go up and productivity stays the same or even goes down.

This module is designed to help you to understand more about working time, including the many different working time arrangements (work schedules) you can have, and the advantages and disadvantages they present. It will also give you more information on the impact of different working patterns on worker performance and productivity.

You might be surprised to learn that there are practical strategies that can increase efficiency and productivity at the workplace just by managing working time well. In fact, there is quite a bit of evidence that effective management can bring real benefits to your business.

The objective of this module

- 1) To explain working time, including different working time arrangements, their advantages and disadvantages, and the impact of different working patterns on worker performance and productivity.
- 2) To enable you to set working hours and work schedules that will make your workplace healthier, safer, more productive, and more attractive to current and potential employees.
- 3) To give you knowledge to make wise decisions on working time arrangements, so that the working patterns you adopt increase efficiency and production, rather than reduce them.

This Module covers all of the basic issues related to working time:

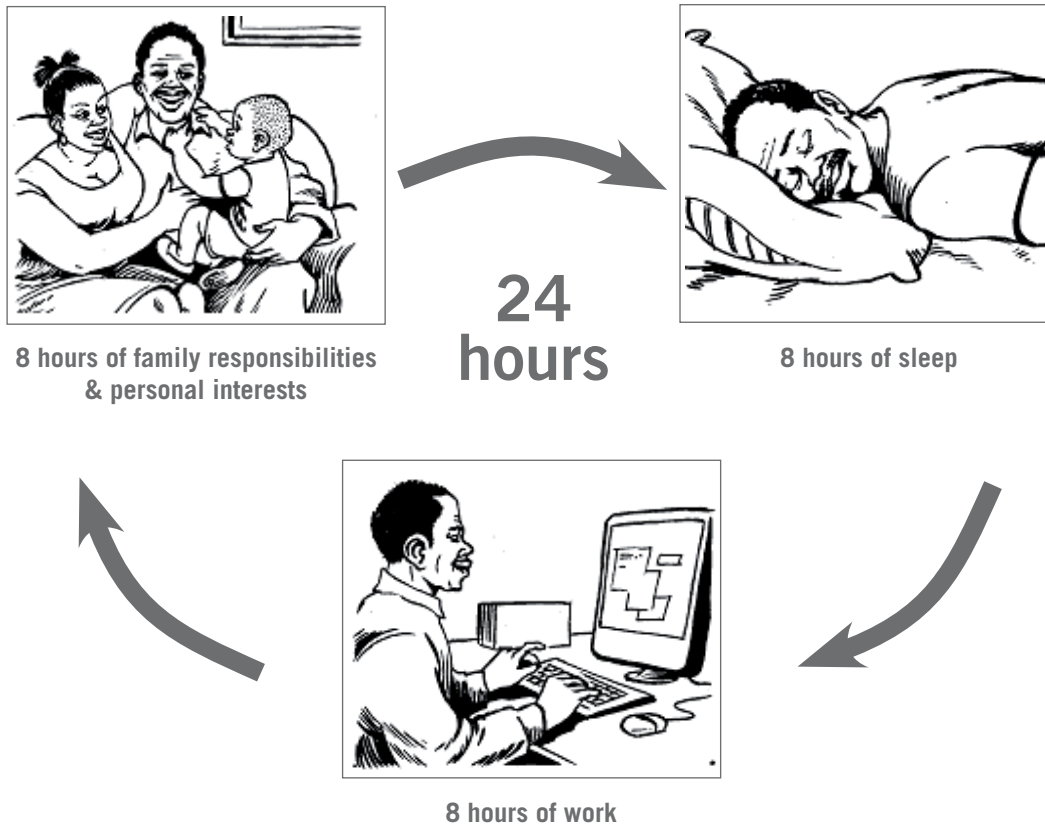
- What is working time?
- How to avoid long working hours.
- Rested workers are productive workers.
- Structure shifts for maximum effectiveness
- Limit the use of night work.
- Flexible working time arrangements
- Using overtime wisely
- Involving workers in the design of work schedules

3.1

What is Working Time?

Working time is made up of the hours that you each member of your staff works.

The number of hours might be fixed by the company, by a national law or by a collective agreement reached between the company and a trade union.



Your aim should be to structure working time in ways that ensure:

- Productivity is as high as possible;
- The risks to workers' health and safety are as low as possible;
- You and your workers are able to meet family and work responsibilities.

Your country, like all countries, may have regulations regarding working time. These might set out rules on the normal daily and weekly working hours, the maximum number of hours a worker can work in a week, or the number of rest hours a worker should have between shifts.

✓ **ILO International standards** provide some minimums and maximums, including that workers should:

- work a maximum 48 hour week (no more than 10 hours a day);
- have at least a day's rest (24 hours) per week;
- get a minimum of 3 weeks of paid annual leave per year.



Workers arriving at work.

As an employer, your aim should be to create a good design for working time in your company. This means that you need to find a way to set working hours and patterns that respect national and international standards, are good for workers, and productive for your business.

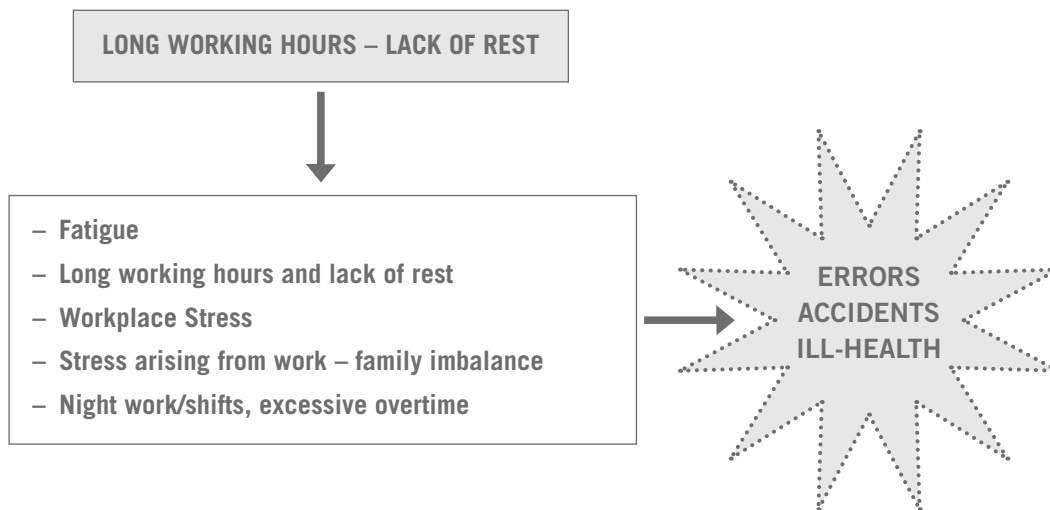
The advantages for your business

If you properly organize the working time in your workplace, you will benefit from:

- happier, less tired, and more consistently productive workers;
- workers with lower stress symptoms, lower illness rates, and better attendance, and who are able to balance their work and family responsibilities;
- lower overtime costs;
- less accidents and errors, because staff will be less tired, more alert, and able to concentrate better.

For business owners, accidents in the workplace can have direct and indirect effects:

- Costs of sick pay, medical treatment and compensation
- Costs of replacing the absent worker
- Losses caused by loss of production
- Attention and investigations by factory inspectors or safety and health bodies
- Penalties imposed for breaches of rules that caused the accident
- Loss of confidence of other workers
- Feeling of responsibility for the worker's injury



How to improve the organization of the working time in your workplace:

You will need to give attention to two main things:



This module will help you to do this. The actions and approaches that are suggested all respect the following principles:

1. Avoid wasting time to prevent long working hours
2. Provide enough worker rest time
3. Structure shifts for maximum effectiveness
4. Avoid or minimize the use of night work
5. Consider using flexible working time arrangements
6. Limit the use of overtime
7. Involve workers in the design of work schedules

How to Avoid Long Working Hours

When you work the right number of hours, and have enough breaks, you stay productive. But when you (and your workers) work too many hours, you become tired, your productivity goes down, and the number of mistakes you make goes up.

This chapter will help you to avoid long hours and still get the job done.

The advantages for your business



This worker is very tired after working a long day, so is finding it difficult to think clearly.

Employers often think that long hours equal higher production, but this is not the case. Several studies have demonstrated that productivity declines as working time becomes too long. Typically (though not always), productivity gradually increases in the first 1 to 5 hours of work. However, it can go down after a certain number of hours (11 hours), and can even become negative (due to accidents and work errors caused by fatigue).

This is because long working hours are linked to:

- **fatigue, especially when long hours are routine**, because the work is physically and/or mentally demanding or perhaps because it is boring;
- **Stress**, at trying to keep up work performance over that length of time;
- **difficulties** in balancing work and family responsibilities;
- **other health problems**, because people who are fatigued and stressed are more susceptible to physical and mental ailments.

Setting working hours at the right level will improve motivation and reduce wasted time and resources. It will also lift morale, as your workers will appreciate having the chance to work and enjoy some time with their families.

Reducing long working hours => increased productivity

What you can do

1. *Cut out activities that waste time*

Checkpoint 15: Avoid wasting time and resources by planning for production and delivery timelines, including advanced planning on staffing needs.

Time can be wasted in many ways. They all cost money, and most time wasters can be avoided. Some examples include:

- **Plan for smooth production** – Spend some time planning ahead to make sure that you have the raw materials you need when you need them. You can do this yourself or train another member of staff on how to work out what is needed. This gives them the chance to take on responsibility for making sure your stock is sufficient at all times.



This entrepreneur is working with a colleague on production planning.

2. *Planning your staffing*

Develop accurate timelines for different work activities and contracts, so you can be sure to have the number of staff you need to complete the job.

3. *Seek feedback from employees*

Talk with workers about fatigue, stress, and performance and look for ways to reduce these problems so as to increase productivity. One simple measure could be to ask workers to contact a supervisor immediately if they encounter any problem, rather than waiting for the next time when the supervisor comes along.

Checkpoint 16: Have a regular schedule for maintaining equipment, so that you avoid accidents and breakdowns.

4. Maintain your equipment

If machinery is not properly maintained it is more likely to perform slowly, or break-down and cause you to lose hours of production. It is also likely to reduce the quality of your goods, so you end up with more rejects and complaints. It is, therefore, important to include maintenance of machines in your planning.

Think about negotiating with a local business to maintain your equipment at regular intervals. Making sure that machine operators know how to safely use and clean the machines they use can also help to prevent damage.

5. Keep a log of the hours that workers work

By doing this, you will know when someone has worked for too many hours or too many days without a break, and might be in danger of having accidents or making errors.

6. Increase job skills training

A trained worker can often do in a few minutes what another person has struggled with all day. They understand the tasks they are doing, the equipment they are operating, and the problems that they might encounter. This is why having well trained workers can help to save you *from the long hours trap*.

Take the example of using a copy machine. If the operator of the machine does not know all the functionalities, he or she will waste paper, ink and electricity, as well as working time. It is possible that this job could be done twice as fast (literally!) if the operator received training/guidance on the use of the copy machine.

Most of the time employees do not realize that they do not know how to perform a particular task, or they are too embarrassed to admit to it. Your presence at the workplace and continuous dialogue with employees is, therefore, very important for spotting such training needs.

Checkpoint 17: Provide job-specific training to boost expertise and efficiency.

**Working more than about 50 hours per week
is excessive and counter-productive
for your business!**

3.3

Rested Workers are Productive Workers

The advantages for your business

Rest time can include:

- breaks during the working day;
- rests between shifts;
- weekly rest days.

All three types of rest are important and can impact on your productivity.

Rests between work shifts (and at the end of the working week) provide time for workers to rest, meet family responsibilities, and refresh themselves before the next work session. Rest breaks during the working day help to minimize the build-up of fatigue.

Whichever job you or your workers are doing, regular breaks will help keep you all more alert and this is important if you want to keep your business working efficiently.

Adequate rest => Increased productivity

What you can do

Make sure:

- You provide at least 11 hours of rest between shifts (daily rest) and 24 consecutive hours of rest at least once a week (weekly rest);
- To reduce fatigue and boredom, give workers frequent breaks rather than one long break;

Checkpoint 18: Make sure all workers get enough rest time during their working day, in between their shifts, and at the end of their working week.

- Workers have a place to rest that is away from the working space and that has access to drinking water and toilets;
- The length of breaks, the type of breaks (active or passive), and how often they can be taken is adjusted to the nature of work and to the needs of workers.

Checkpoint 19: Provide a place for workers to rest, away from their work station and with access to drinking water and toilets.



These workers are able to relax together during work breaks.

- Provide enough rest time between shifts (daily rest) and weekly rest (rest days).
- Sometimes a change of task can provide a worker with a break from boring tasks, so think about allowing/asking the same worker to perform different tasks, with their agreement, of course.

Rest time is needed by everyone!

Whether you work bent over a desk or stand at a conveyor belt, it is important to change positions regularly if you want to avoid aching or stiff joints. Breaks provide an opportunity to move away from the workstation, go to the toilet or have a snack to boost your energy. All of these will help to keep you and your workforce productive.

Don't forget: Parents or other workers with caring responsibilities may need to check on relatives or feed (breastfeed) children. If they can do this during their break times, it will not interrupt your production.

Some things to think about when programming rest:

Some more ways to reduce fatigue and stress

- Allow frequent planned short breaks.
- Allow mini-breaks with basic physical exercises.
- Ensure at least 24 consecutive hours of weekly rest.
- Provide a calm place to rest, with drinking water and toilet facilities.
- Provide drinking water and toilet facilities.
- Ensure the right temperature at the workplace (not too hot or cold).
- Use safe machinery and protective gear to eliminate insecure feeling.
- Respect the “elbow rule” to avoid fatigue and pain (work surfaces should generally be at the elbow level).
- Provide good chairs of correct seat height and with a good backrest.

What do you think? Is it better to have:

- ? Frequent, short breaks
- ? Longer, less frequent breaks



These workers are chatting and stretching during a short break from desk work.

What should you and your workers do during break time?

- ? Be active (do other work, exercising) but rest from mental activity (active rest);
- ? Rest from physical activity (passive rest);
- ? Take time away from the things that cause you stress;
- ? Spend time on different job using a different part of your body;
- ? Do personal tasks (e.g. check on sick relatives).

**There is no right answer,
as work breaks need to be structured
to meet the needs of the worker!**

The most appropriate types of rest will depend on:

- The type of work they do;
- The highs and lows in work demands they face;
- How physically or mentally tiring the job is;
- The number of days worked;
- The personal circumstances of the worker, etc.

BEWARE:

- **Rest before too much fatigue builds up;**
- **The value of a given period of rest goes down as the time on the job increases, so it is important that breaks are taken early enough during the shift.**

To promote cooperation: Involve workers and their representatives in the design of work and break time schedules and be ready to listen to their feedback. This can do wonders for worker motivation and loyalty. (See section 8 of this Module)

3.4

Structure Shifts for Maximum Effectiveness

The advantages for your business

Shift work is increasing around the world and can be attractive to businesses because it increases output by extending the hours of operation, thus making better use of existing facilities and equipment. Employers also see it as a way to meet peaks in demand.

Two common types of shifts and shift patterns are:

- **Fixed shifts:** same shift (hours and start time) each day e.g. many office jobs;
- **Rotating shifts:** the period worked changes periodically, so a worker could work from 6 am until 2 pm one week, 2 pm until 10 pm the next, then a week of night shifts from 10 pm until 6 am e.g. in a large factory. Shift rotation involves advanced planning, scheduling, and notice to workers.

What you can do

1. *Weigh up the costs and benefits of shift work*

The benefits for the enterprise:

- More intensive use of premises and equipment;
- Extended operating hours without overtime costs;
- Longer consecutive rest periods for workers are possible.

The costs and problems for business:

- Potential difficulties in managing shift work and also ensuring that supervision of safety and quality is maintained;
- Potential increased worker fatigue, stress, inattention and accidents, particularly if night shifts are used;
- Early/late and night shifts can cause a decrease in efficiency and the quality of work of workers, leading to lower productivity and more product products that fail to meet quality standards.

The advantages and disadvantages of shift work for workers:

The advantages for workers:

- Offers a chance for higher earnings, if the hourly rate is higher on certain shifts (e.g. night shift work usually is paid at a higher rate);
- Can suit the needs of individuals e.g. as a short term way for both parents to work (one in the day and one, for example, in the evening) and always have someone free to care for children or relatives.

The disadvantages for workers:

- Increased fatigue, stress, and inattention due to changing, early, late shifts, or longer working days.
- Potential difficulties for workers in fulfilling their family responsibilities (particularly for single parents) depending on the types of shift used.



A worker falls asleep during the day due to fatigue.

2. Reduce the negative effects of shift work

All shifts can have a negative effect on workers' productivity and should be carefully managed, including:

✓ **Ensure regular and predictable schedules:**

Where working hours change often and in an irregular manner, they are difficult for workers to adapt to. Such irregular schedules can make it impossible for workers to adjust their internal time clocks or to have predictable family and social lives.

✓ **When using rotating shifts, rotate shifts forward not backward:**

For example, if you have three 8 hour shifts, the shift should always be moved forward in time between the old and the new shifts. This makes sure that workers get a proper break between the end of the old shift and the beginning of the new. Moving shifts in a clockwise fashion makes it easier for workers to adapt their body clocks to the new shift.

✓ **Rotate shifts quickly** (say, weekly) so workers can adapt to the pattern and do not get used to one shift over a medium period.

Checkpoint 20: Avoid or minimize the use of irregular and unpredictable shift schedules.

- ✓ **Think choice:** Give workers the right to refuse to work certain days (e.g. rest days) and the right to request different types of working time arrangements.
- ✓ **Safe transport:** Ensure that workers have a reliable way of getting to work and home from all shifts (especially at night) – this is good for safety and work attendance.



Workers wait for the bus to take them to work.

Limit the Use of Night Work

The advantages for your business

Night work is often used in industries that require round the clock operations, such as many hotels and factories. However, many employers do not realize that running night shifts has some important (hidden) costs attached. If you take these into account, you may find that night work is not worth the price you are paying.

Being aware of all of the costs of regular night working, both personal and financial, will help you to make the right decision for your business.

Less night work => lower costs => increased productivity

What you can do

1. *Be aware of the costs of night work for both workers and business:*

When thinking about night shift working, you should remember that night shifts can lead to all the same problems as other shift work (discussed above). These can include additional administrative costs (electricity, heating), supervision difficulties, increased worker fatigue and sleep disorders, consequently a higher probability of accidents and health problems.



Fatigued workers have more accidents.

The negative effects of night work on workers are:

- More accidents and other problems due to lack of alertness (sleepiness) and less supervision of safety. The effects of these are exacerbated by the reduced facilities available (e.g. absence of first aid, café/canteen for eating);
- Disruption to home and social life;
- Workers are forced to behave in opposition to their natural biological timing system, causing disruption to sleep and digestive and reproductive disorders, caused by the fact that the work pattern is against our internal biological timing system.

These negative effects can create additional risks for your business, as they can lead to:

- Lower productivity and reduced quality of work;
- A higher probability of accidents that increase costs;
- A reduction in quality.

NOTE: Age, experience, individual/family circumstances will all impact on the individual's experience of shift work, but most will experience some of the problems listed above.

Checkpoint 21: Minimize the use of night work and, when it is necessary, make it safer by providing supervision and adjusting the lighting and temperature in the work environment to be similar to daytime.

2. *Avoid night work shifts when you can. If it is impossible to avoid the use of night work:*

- Provide proper facilities for night workers (e.g., for first aid, rest breaks, regular health assessments);
- Modify the working environment to simulate daytime and promote alertness e.g. lighting, temperature;
- Make sure transport is available to workers going home after dark, to increase safety and minimise absenteeism.

3.6

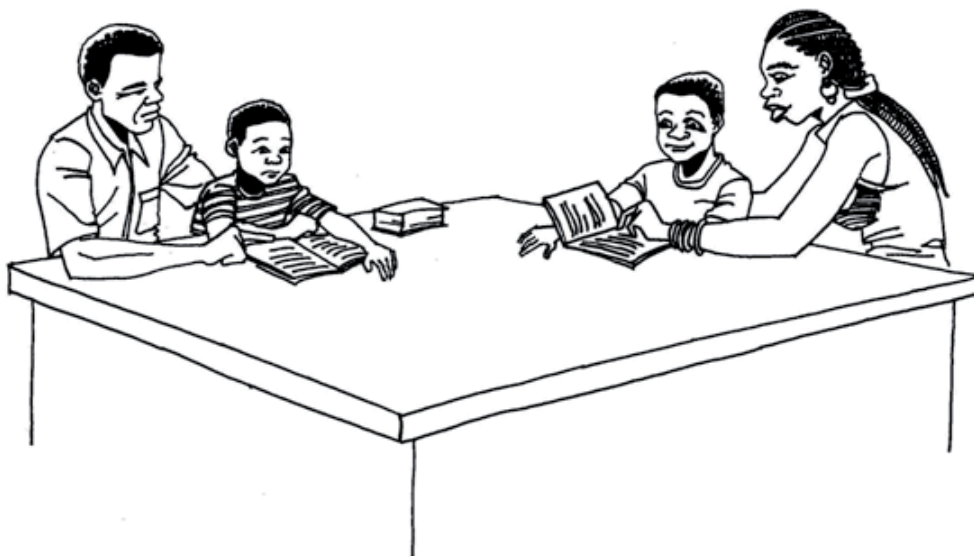
Flexible Working Time Arrangements

Whatever your business, the demands for your product or service are unlikely to be constant. Sometimes your business will be much busier than at other times e.g. a factory making bikes is likely to be busier in spring than in winter. The same thing goes for your workers and their non-work responsibilities. Whether they need to pick up a child from school for care or a sick relative, every worker has individual needs that will make it more or less easy to work during certain time periods.

Flexible working time arrangements are already popular in many countries because many of them fit better with the reality of work and life demands by providing flexible choices for workers that can benefit businesses too.

The advantages for your business

Flexible working time arrangements can offer workers increased choices about how many hours they work and when they work them, so they often find it easier to combine work and family (or community) responsibilities. As a result, these arrangements can reduce feelings of tension, worry, and stress, experienced by workers who are struggling with family or other personal responsibilities.



Good working schedules allow working parents to spend time with their children.

The main benefit for employers from flexible working, are:

- improved employee attitudes and increased motivation and performance of workers;
- improved recruitment and retention of new employees;
- increased trust and good will, which is helpful when you need workers to make an extra effort for your business. This can improve your business and its financial performance.

Flexible Working Time => motivated workers => increased productivity

What you can do

There is a range of innovative 'flexible working' arrangements:

1. Offering workers shorter hours (part-time working)

Part-time working time arrangements involve workers being employed to work fewer hours than those who work full time, for example, 26 hours per week instead of 40. Using part-time workers can give employers improved adaptability, because the business has a larger number of workers to rely upon to help in periods of high demand.

2. Staggered hours schemes

Workers, or groups of workers, start and finish work at slightly different times. Workers may be able to choose their start time, from a range of options. Once the choice is made, this becomes their fixed schedule.

Staggered hours schemes can be particularly helpful in allowing all workers to reduce travel times by avoiding rush-hour travel. It also gives businesses the chance to have the maximum number of workers at the busiest time of the day.



SCHOOL



OFFICE

This father benefits from a flexible work arrangement, so can drop his child at school before going to work.

3. Flexitime

Checkpoint 22: Introduce flexible working time arrangements that will help your workers to balance their responsibilities and boost your productivity.

With flexitime, the worker and employer can schedule working hours flexibly on a daily or weekly basis. The amount of hours worked each day or week, and the daily starting and end times, may vary, but the worker has to work certain “core” hours each day (e.g. 10 am to 3 pm). Employers sometimes also set a minimum number of hours to be worked over a month.

4. *Time banking schemes*

This is an extension of flexitime arrangements. It allows a worker to ‘bank’ the extra hours they work in excess of the normal hours of work in a particular period (e.g. a month) and use them to reduce their working hours or take leave in another month. This gives workers the possibility of working extra hours one month and to save these extra hours up to be taken as time off later.

Individual contracts or collective agreements with trade unions determine how many hours a worker can bank and how long they can hold on to them e.g. hours to be used within 3 months.

5. *Flexible breaks*

Workers are given the option to take shorter lunch breaks and, for example, go home earlier.

6. *Compressed workweeks*

In compressed workweeks, the normal number of working hours does not change, but those hours are scheduled over fewer days than is normal e.g. 4 days of 10 hours rather than 5 days of 8 hours. This can be beneficial for long-distance workers or for those who want to save on transport costs, but the risk of fatigue, accidents, and stress, can be higher with very long shifts (e.g. 12 hours per day).

Using Overtime Wisely

When workers who are paid by the hour or day work more than their normal (contracted) hours, the extra hours worked are normally counted as 'overtime'. Often, this work is paid at a higher rate than normal work, to compensate workers for the extra effort and inconvenience of staying at work longer (at least 28% higher, according ILO Standards).

The advantages and disadvantages of overtime for your business

Overtime and shift work, have many of the same advantages and disadvantages.

The advantages: Overtime can provide a chance for a worker to earn a little more and it can help the business to increase total output. Unlike shift work however, the increased output is due to longer hours for individual workers and, therefore, can only be used for limited periods.

The disadvantages: For the worker, overtime brings with it all of the problems that are produced by working longer hours that were discussed earlier (fatigue, stress, ill health and family disruptions, etc.).

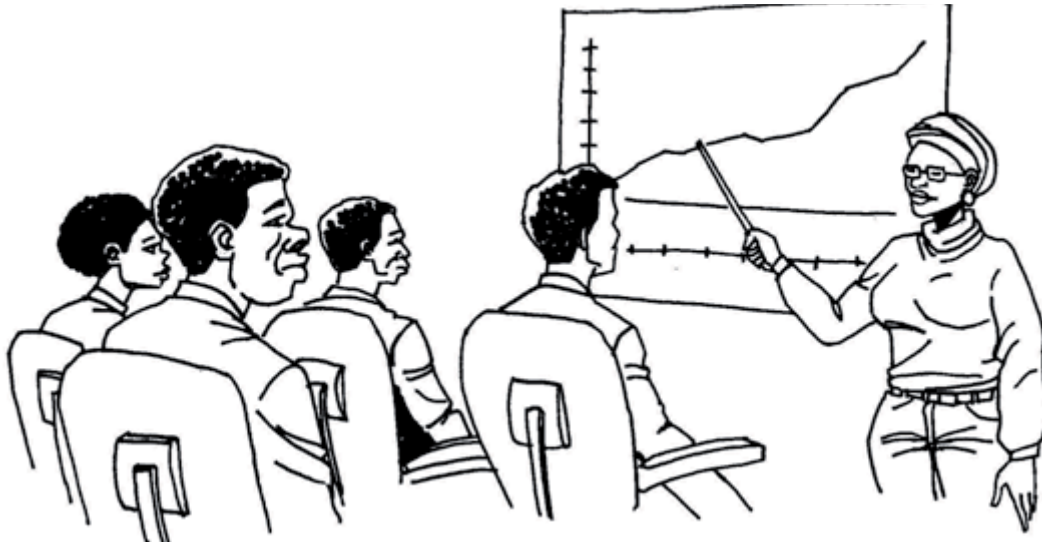
For the business, as regular overtime work lengthens the total hours a worker works, it is likely to be less productive than normal working hours, and the outputs might be of lower quality.

Also on the negative side, using overtime increases business costs e.g. for operating the premises, staff, etc.

What you can do

1. To avoid an additional burden on your business and your workers:

- Limit the use of overtime through increased work efficiency and planning;
- Give advance notice of required overtime work;
- Set wage rates, piece rate payments, and incentives, at a level that enables workers to meet production targets during normal hours (so workers can earn a proper wage without working overtime);
- Make sure that the effective wage rate is at least equal to the minimum wage.



An entrepreneur explains to managers how overtime has increased business costs.

Checkpoint 23: Limit the use of overtime, especially on extended (e.g., 12-hour) shifts. When overtime is used, provide advance notice to workers.

If overtime is required, try to:

- Spread the overtime out between male and female workers who wish to do extra hours. Men and women both have family responsibilities;
- Find a balance between hours of work and intensity of work;
- Develop a company policy for proper compensation for time worked;
- Provide clarity and motivation, and give all workers a written contract that includes a statement on their normal working hours, their pay, and the pay rate they will receive if they work additional hours;
- To avoid doubt, include details of the overtime worked and the hourly rate paid on the workers' pay slip, so that they can check that the payments are correct.

To promote cooperation: Meet regularly – at least once a year – with workers' representatives to consult with them on wages, including overtime rates. These consultations should also include discussions on other overtime issues, such as fairness in deciding who is offered the possibility to work overtime.

Checkpoint 24: Be clear with each worker about their normal working hours, their pay, and what pay rate they will receive for overtime work.

Involve Workers in the Design of Work Schedules

The advantages for your business

When you design the work schedules for your business, you will firstly want them to be practical – so that the work gets done on time. Secondly, to attract and retain the best workers, your working time design should be as attractive and motivating as possible. In general, workers will perform better if work schedules are adapted to their personal needs and responsibilities.



Workers and business owners discuss working time schedules.

Your experienced employees know how the production processes operate and are familiar with the way work demands change. They know why some work patterns don't work and others do. They also know the problems that other workers face when trying to balance their work with family and other responsibilities. So, by involving workers in the process of designing work patterns, working hours, shift rotation, and everything else to do with working time, you will have the best chance of coming up with working time schedules that work well, both for the business and the workers.

Worker involvement:

- ↳ Improves the “fit” between workers and their jobs.
- ↳ Improves employee's performance
- ↳ Improves productivity

What you can do

Checkpoint 25: Consult with workers on the design of working time in your enterprise, and listen to the feedback they give you.

Involving workers and their representatives in the process of designing your working time schedules can be very helpful. They can make you aware of all of the issues that they face with working patterns. These might include problems of transport, for example, or family responsibilities, such as caring for children or sick relatives.

Workers can also help you to identify any problems that working patterns create for meeting work deadlines, such as staff shortages at certain times of the day.

Here are just a few of the points that might come up:

- Family responsibilities – How do working hours/shifts fit school times or other caring tasks?
- Health and security concerns – Workers may see risks before managers, such as with night shifts.
- Transportation to/from work – Is it available? Is it safe?
- Rest and meal facilities – Are they available on site or nearby? Are they suitable?

How can workers in your enterprise be more involved in developing working time schedules? (Through meetings, written questionnaires, informal discussions?)

Checkpoints for WISE-R Module 3

Effective Management of Working Time

- Checkpoint 15:** Avoid wasting time and resources, by planning for production and delivery timelines, including advanced planning for staffing needs.
- Checkpoint 16:** Have a regular schedule for maintaining machines, so that you avoid accidents and breakdowns.
- Checkpoint 17:** Provide job-specific training to boost expertise and efficiency.
- Checkpoint 18:** Make sure all workers get enough rest time during their working day, between their shifts, and at the end of their working week.
- Checkpoint 19:** Provide a place for workers to rest, away from their work station and with access to drinking water and toilets.
- Checkpoint 20:** Avoid or minimize the use of irregular and unpredictable shift schedules.
- Checkpoint 21:** Minimize the use of night work and, when it is necessary, make it safer by providing supervision and adjusting the lighting and temperature to be similar to daytime.
- Checkpoint 22:** Introduce flexible working time arrangements that will help your workers to balance their responsibilities and boost your productivity.
- Checkpoint 23:** Limit the use of overtime, especially on extended (e.g. 12-hour) shifts. When overtime is used, provide advance notice to workers.
- Checkpoint 24:** Be clear with each worker about their normal working hours, their pay, and what pay rate they will receive for overtime work.
- Checkpoint 25:** Consult with workers on the design of working time in your enterprise, and listen to the feedback they give you.

WISE-R Module 3: Effective management of working time

| | | |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Checkpoint 15: Avoid wasting time and resources by planning for production and delivery timelines, including advanced planning on staffing needs. | | |
| Do you propose action? | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> Priority |
| If yes, what action? | | |
| Checkpoint 16: Have a regular schedule for maintaining equipment, so that you avoid accidents and breakdowns. | | |
| Do you propose action? | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> Priority |
| If yes, what action? | | |
| Checkpoint 17: Provide job-specific training to boost expertise and efficiency. | | |
| Do you propose action? | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> Priority |
| If yes, what action? | | |
| Checkpoint 18: Make sure all workers get enough rest time during their working day, in between their shifts, and at the end of their working week. | | |
| Do you propose action? | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> Priority |
| If yes, what action? | | |
| Checkpoint 19: Provide a place for workers to rest, away from their work station and with access to drinking water and toilets. | | |
| Do you propose action? | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> Priority |
| If yes, what action? | | |

| | | |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Checkpoint 20: Avoid or minimize the use of irregular and unpredictable shift schedules. | | |
| Do you propose action? | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> Priority |
| If yes, what action? | | |
| Checkpoint 21: Minimize the use of night work and, when it is necessary, make it safer by providing supervision and adjusting the lighting and temperature in the work environment to be similar to daytime. | | |
| Do you propose action? | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> Priority |
| If yes, what action? | | |
| Checkpoint 22: Introduce flexible working time arrangements that will help your workers to balance their responsibilities and boost your productivity. | | |
| Do you propose action? | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> Priority |
| If yes, what action? | | |
| Checkpoint 23: Limit the use of overtime, especially on extended (e.g., 12-hour) shifts. When overtime is used, provide advance notice to workers. | | |
| Do you propose action? | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> Priority |
| If yes, what action? | | |
| Checkpoint 24: Be clear with each worker about their normal working hours, their pay, and what pay rate they will receive for overtime work. | | |
| Do you propose action? | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> Priority |
| If yes, what action? | | |
| Checkpoint 25: Consult with workers on the design of working time in your enterprise, and listen to the feedback they give you. | | |
| Do you propose action? | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> Priority |
| If yes, what action? | | |