



# WORKING DADS EMPLOYER AWARDS

## Flexible Working Case Study

### Why is it important for E.ON to Support Working Dads?

At E.ON we believe in gender equality and that both parents are equally important in a child's life. Working dads are often overlooked and considered secondary in looking after their children. We support them in balancing both their working life with their family life.

We have always supported our colleagues and offered flexible working options, but the pandemic fundamentally changed our expectations and experience of work. Colleagues told us they valued the additional flexibility that the pandemic afforded them; particularly by allowing them to work a variety of hours from home. Despite a current trend of many employers asking staff to return to the office, our hybrid working model is an enduring part of our workforce strategy.

### Why was this the right thing to do?

Working dads are just as important to our family friendly processes

**"I work full-time 9 days in 10, which means I get to spend every other Friday with my two youngest children and in the school holidays with all three of them. As a family it saves us £150 per week in childcare costs and gives me valuable time with them before they start school. It means that my wife and I can fully share work and childcare."**

Dan Geeson, Operations Manager



as working mums. Being able to work more flexibly and take more family leave gives more choice on how dads balance their work and family commitments.

The wellbeing of our colleagues is so important and through our Working Families Network, we knew this was something they wanted. We looked at best practice in other UK companies to understand what was offered to be more flexible and family friendly.

As a result of this research, we axed lengthy documents and procedures and created some high-level principles to help us move to a more informal approach. These principles helped challenge stereotypes that men did not want to work flexibly, to have time with their families. We presented this information to senior management who insisted we move forward with this approach. We work in partnership with our trade unions who offered support and encouragement throughout all our work.

### What does E.ON do to support dads in the area of flexible working?

We are committed to flexible working and are working hard to communicate the message that flexibility is a priority, anyone can ask for it and it can be requested from day one of joining E.ON. This approach is underpinned by trust. We trust all colleagues to work flexibly and to choose the most appropriate arrangement to maximise their performance.

Our enhanced policies on flexible, hybrid working and Equal Parent Leave support working dads by giving them a choice about when, where, and how they work. Equal Parent Leave matches the full paid leave entitlement of our maternity and adoption leave and can be booked flexibly within the first year of becoming a parent. This gives greater choice, flexibility, and financial support to new parents. Plus, our



**E.ON** is leading the energy transition; providing smart, sustainable and personalised solutions for customers at home, in business and across entire towns and cities and helping customers take climate action by using less energy and even generating and storing it themselves.

E.ON is committed to building an inclusive organisation where colleagues know they're valued, respected and feel a sense of belonging so they can thrive and be at their best.

policies are fully inclusive of all families whether a mum and a dad, two dads, two mums or extended family with parental responsibility.

### What challenges did you face?

There was a clear balance we had to strike between customer, business, and colleague needs, which meant supporting everyone to think differently.

One challenge came around mindset; from colleagues at all levels, particularly around how we could make the initiatives work for our colleagues who are out visiting our customers in their homes and businesses.

We overcame this by clearly communicating that this was endorsed and supported at a senior level. We also demonstrated how this was working in practice, using cases of existing colleagues who were already successfully working flexibly.

We then engaged and communicated with our teams that flexible working arrangements were available to all, as an alternative to traditional part-time working.



## What advice would you give other organisations wanting to support working dads?

Start with a yes for flexible working requests and work backwards from there. Some of our most technical, customer focused roles are managing to work flexibly. We believe all roles can have an element of flexibility. It can be something as simple as allowing a dad to start work 10 minutes later because he wants to drop his children at school or even working from a location closer to home because of caring responsibilities. Trust your colleagues to choose the most appropriate arrangement for them to prioritise customer needs and maximise their own performance. Ask your colleagues what they want. What would make their employment easier? We have a range of approaches to flexible working that we hope covers all our colleagues' journeys. It does not just start and end with the traditional flexible working approach such as a change of hours or location. We also have enhanced benefits such as passports (gives working carers the opportunity to bank hours ahead of taking them), career breaks, buying additional holiday (at any point in the year) and numerous other special leave options.

## What have you learnt through this process and what are your next steps?

Be bold and engage your stakeholders early to ensure they are on the journey with you. Next, we plan to further embed flexible working through role model stories showcasing the variety and diversity of flexible working. As well as being advocates of flexible working for everyone, our family policies are also gender neutral and we believe are another way for our colleagues to work flexibly whilst supporting their family. We introduced Equal Parent Leave in 2023 and are planning on expanding our family friendly work further by offering more support and time off for those going through fertility journeys.

## How did your leadership team help create this change?

Many of our leaders are members of an internal network. For example, our Director of Residential Solutions, Sarah Farmer, sponsors our Working Families Network. This network supports to-be and existing parents and their line managers – a core part of our Employee Value Proposition model. The network has been able to share diverse experiences and directly inform policy development. Sarah ensures she raises the profile of this network and our messages across the UK business at the most senior levels of the organisation. Sarah also works flexibly and has been a vocal advocate of the benefits of flexible working for both individuals and the business.

## How have you communicated these changes?

Our Working Families Network shared the news about flexible working and Equal Parent Leave with their members, whilst senior leaders received email communication about the changes. We featured stories on our intranet with real life case studies of people working flexibly and using the leave. We have updated our careers website and shared posts through our social channels too.

## What has been the impact of your flexible working approach?

Flexible working helps parents and carers return to and stay in work, through balancing caring responsibilities and maintaining career progression. It is helping reduce the gender pay gap, which we are committed to reducing further by 2025. It also enables people with long-term health conditions and disabilities to stay in work. In the first six months of advertising all roles as flexible, internal promotion rates of part-time workers doubled, and lateral moves went from 5% to 17%, vastly improving career mobility.

Our working dads have also told us they appreciate the flexibility of doing the school runs and supporting with more household tasks. Our working mums think it is great we are doing more to help them to be in work and continue striving for a career that may previously have been stunted. Plus, colleagues with disabilities said hybrid working helped to manage their conditions and enabled them to be in work.

**"I have been on a part time flexible working arrangement since I joined E.ON due to a change in family circumstances. My Team Leader was brilliant. I was still new on her team, she listened and showed empathy. My marriage had broken down and my ex left me to look after the children. I needed to collect**

**my children from school and nursery. My Team Leader got my flexible hours set up practically instantly and I can't thank her enough!"**

Manny Sangha,  
Meter Technician



Information accurate as of 2023.

### Contact us:

sarah.forbes@york.ac.uk  
h.birkett@bham.ac.uk  
hello@musicfootballfatherhood.com

**Working Dads Employer Awards Website:**  
[workingdadsemployerawards.com](http://workingdadsemployerawards.com)



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