

Guidelines on job sharing

Job sharing is becoming increasingly common in New Zealand as employers devise working arrangements that will help retain staff. These guidelines outline how to develop a job share arrangement so it work effectively for everyone.

Why offer job sharing?

When a job sharing programme is properly implemented and integrated into an organisation, it contributes significantly to staff recruitment and retention. In the 2007 Hudson survey, 79% of respondents saw a positive impact on attraction and retention as a result of job sharing.

What is job sharing?

In a job share the tasks and responsibilities of a full-time position are shared by two people. Pay and leave entitlements are shared on a pro rata basis. The position remains a full-time position and can revert to being filled by one person. Job sharing can arise when:

- an employer chooses to advertise a vacancy as a job share, or
- an employee/employees voluntarily request to have an existing full-time role changed to a job share. This might be an employee's own role or some other role within the organisation.

Job sharing is different from a job split that results in a full-time position being split into two separate part-time jobs with separate duties. It differs from part-time work where an employee is individually responsible for the work.

There are different ways to fill a job share role – employers may appoint people who have similar skills or may recruit people for their complementary skills.

What roles can be job shared?

Job sharing can be applied to most full-time roles, including those at senior levels, providing the role has been properly designed. It can be a very valuable option when used to retain senior staff with high replacement costs.

Job sharing is an attractive option for many different groups of workers including:

- Parents wanting to combine paid work with their parenting responsibilities
- Students combining paid work and study
- Older workers transitioning to retirement

Every role to be job shared should be carefully analysed to ensure that the most appropriate type of job share option is chosen.

Who benefits from job sharing?

Employers

- **Increased staff retention**
Job sharing enables employers to retain the skill and experience of parents.
Job sharing may encourage older workers to stay involved in paid work for longer.
- **Gains from the pooling of experience**
Additional skills can be gained for the price of one full-time salary.
Different perspectives within the same job can create greater ability to problem solve and improve efficiency.
- **Reduced absenteeism and greater continuity**
Leave due to sickness is often lower among job sharers.
Job sharers are often able to cover each other's sick and annual leave.
- **Improved performance and productivity**
The fewer hours you work, the more intensely you can work.
- **Potential to save on office space and equipment**
Some job sharers may never overlap and therefore can share space and equipment. Even where partners do overlap, the investment in shared equipment may be outweighed by the benefits of having full coverage of a role.
- **Maximise employee strengths**
Job sharing offers employers an opportunity to tap into the complementary strengths and weaknesses of the partners by defining their duties so they play to the strengths of each. Job sharing can also be used as a career development opportunity to address areas of inexperience.
- **An opportunity to offer broader hours of operation**
- **Increased discretionary effort**
As with other types of flexible work arrangements, job sharers tend to repay their employer with discretionary effort.
- **Provides a suitable alternative for monotonous work, perhaps resulting in lower or delayed turnover**

Employees

- **Parents are able to maintain their career position**
This makes job sharing a particularly attractive option for professional women.
- **Employees do not lose any of their benefits**
- **Flexibility and improved work-life balance**

Perceived potential problems and assumptions

- **Increased costs**
There may be slight increases as a result of overlap time, extra payroll management and training time. These must be weighed against savings in staff retention and the advantage of having continual coverage during leave periods.
- **Increased management time**
After their initial training and co-ordination period, job sharers need less supervision, especially if responsibility for making the arrangement work rests with them. There is often an inbuilt quality assurance process when two people overlap and share a role which increases quality without management intervention.
- **Job share partners must have identical skills**
Job sharers need to have the appropriate knowledge and skills to do their jobs but their skills and experience does not need to be identical. The combined competency of two job sharers may be greater than that of a single employee performing the same role.
- **Communication problems**
Providing a clear job share description that spells out important components of the role is critical. See the sample job share descriptions which clearly define the duties of two parties who both share responsibilities and have sole responsibility for aspects of their role.
- **Choosing job sharers who have similar work ethics can help avoid communication problems.** Job sharers need to agree on how they will handle their communications with each other and how to contact each other in case of emergency.
- **Problems meeting client demands**
Many issues can be dealt with if all stakeholders are given advance notice of the job share arrangement. By encouraging stakeholders to share these concerns, job sharers and their manager will have an opportunity to solve any issues
- **Problems if one job sharer leaves**
It is important to state in the job share document that the job share role is not guaranteed for life. Options for replacing a partner could include offering the remaining sharer a full-time role, advertising the vacancy as a job share arrangement, or varying the remaining sharer's role and responsibilities so that it becomes a "standalone" part-time position
- **Performance management**
Job sharing can involve individual and joint performance feedback. Partners can have the same or different performance standards.

Discussions addressing performance issues of only one of the partners should be conducted in private.

- Performance related pay
Job sharers are usually assessed as individuals although some of the criteria may relate to their performance as job sharers.

Tips to make it work

- Ensure that there is top level support for the job share
Management support is critical to success of a job share. All managers need to understand the benefits to the organisation of the arrangement.
- Develop a well thought out job share plan
Include details of how the job share will benefit the organisation as well as clear information about the job share arrangement. Develop a comprehensive job description, communication plan and contingency plan.
- Treat job sharing teams as single employees
By treating teams as single employees and rewarding their collective effectiveness, each partner is likely to hold themselves accountable for the partnership.
- Develop an effective communication programme
Spell out how relationships will work between the job sharers, their managers, co-workers and customers. Emphasise that from the stakeholder's perspective the process will be seamless. Cover off how the job sharers will communicate between themselves and with their clients. Advise stakeholders if the job share is being introduced for a trial period, letting them know if they will be invited to contribute to the review process at the end of the trial.
- Plan the transition
Involve stakeholders before the job share commences and use the job share partners to brainstorm potential issues.
- Decide how the parties will communicate
This may include a handover period with both job sharers present so they can meet to review work in progress. Job sharing can also work well when the two job sharers do not meet in person but they need to be creative about how they keep in touch. Options include:
 - Using a common note book to record work in progress and tasks completed
 - Scheduling time to telephone each other to "hand over" from one partner to the other as appropriate
 - Providing a shared email address and/or voice mailbox as appropriate

- Copying the other partner on pertinent emails
- Define the duties
Job sharers need to be clear about their responsibilities. It can help to include a copy of the job description in the job share contract. Be sure to identify any situations where projects are to be assigned to individual partners rather than shared. Duties can be redefined as part of the review process (see below).
- Establish guidelines for and with the job share partners
This helps to set the expectations for everyone. These can include:
 - Division of duties
 - Areas of responsibility
 - Work practices
 - Coverage at peak times and relief arrangements
 - Handover arrangements between the job sharers
 - Communication processes with other staff
 - Access to training and development
 - Performance evaluations for each job sharer
 - What happens if one job sharer leaves
- Trial and review period
It can be helpful to everyone if a job share arrangement is reviewed after an agreed trial period but it is important that all parties are aware from the outset of the evaluation criteria. Group discussions involving the job sharers and the wider team can be an excellent way of finding out how the job share is working before the arrangement is made final.
- Terms and conditions
It is important that the parties know if the job share will be for a fixed term or run indefinitely. The circumstances under which a job share can be terminated should be spelled out, including:
 - Who has the right to a full-time position should the job share not work out?
 - What happens if one partner wants to opt out?
 - What happens if operational requirements are not being met?

Useful resources

The Job Share Guidebook for Employees and Supervisors

<http://www.chr.alberta.ca/Practitioners/?file=staff/flexible-work/jobshare/titlepage&cf=374>

(This resource offers practical considerations on setting up a job share.)

Job Sharing – A practical guide. Pam Walton. (1990.) Great Britain: Kogan Page.

Job Sharing – Two heads are better than one. Mary O’Hanlon & Angela Morella. (2003.) NSW: Crows Nest.

UNSW Guideline - Family Friendly Work Practices at UNSW

http://www.infonet.unsw.edu.au/staff/guidelines_familyfriendly_work.pdf
(Especially pages 11-12: Practical tips for job sharers & Practical tips for managers)

The following two sample position descriptions were designed to cover a job share role where the partners shared some responsibilities (reception and related administrative duties), as well as having individual responsibilities for distinct parts of the job such as accounts payable.

POSITION DESCRIPTION ADMINISTRATION ASSISTANT (PART-TIME)

Reports to: XXXXX (Line Manager)

Interacts with: Internal
All XXXX (organisation) staff and contractors and their staff

- External
- Customers, suppliers
 - Local/ regional and National organisations
 - Whanau / hapu / iwi organisations
 - Funding assistance Agencies
 - Business Networks
 - Local and Central Government agencies

Primary Purpose:

- To provide an effective and efficient administration service to all internal and external customers with empathy and professionalism.
- Regularly review resources i.e. petty cash, stationery, cleaning, meeting and training rooms and catering supplies.
- Manage reception and the telephone system with professionalism and promptness.

Principal Objectives:

- Respond efficiently and effectively to all enquiries.
- Maintain integrity of inward and outward correspondence and filing systems.
- Actively support and assist all co-workers with a quality administrative service.
- To communicate internal/external events and/or meetings in a timely fashion.
- To manage all filing requirements.
- To undertake special projects as directed.
- Be aware of XXXXX (organisation) Customer Target Groups as defined from time to time by the CEO.

Key Accountabilities:

- Produce accurate documents within negotiated time frames.
- Organise and prioritise workload so as to allow for regular flow within acceptable time frames.
- Effectively manage a scheduling system for boardroom, interview and seminar rooms.
- Maintain confidentiality of inwards and outwards correspondence and filing systems.
- Manage the collection and despatch of inwards/outwards mail.

- Respond efficiently and effectively to all administrative enquiries, including room bookings and customer appointments.
- Assist in the set up of Seminar Rooms as required.
- Co-ordinate mail-outs as required
- Control and manage administrative duties, including purchasing requisitions and accounts; monitor/respond to all payments and debts; monitor and manage petty cash system.
- Active maintenance of the organisation's databases to ensure that the database remains credible.
- Control and manage booking systems for seminars, workshops and courses as per any quality processes or requirements and input data into appropriate databases or schedules as required to meet time-frames.
- Control, monitor and organise of all stationery, kitchen, cleaning and toiletry requirements.
- Carry out quality verifications for the functions performed.
- Establish customer/visitor needs and make appropriate referral.
- Create a welcoming/culturally comfortable environment in reception area, by being empathetic and professional at all times.
- Ensure inwards and outwards mail is processed, distributed and posted daily.
- Maintain a safe workplace in accordance with OSH requirements.
- Manage special projects according to project plan and objectives
- Be aware of co-worker's workloads/time constraints and be actively supportive and assist wherever possible
- Adhere to **XXXXX** (organisation) Q-Base Quality Programme, the Health & Safety Policy, the Privacy Act and other statutory obligations

Key Result Areas:

- Quality reception service to internal/external customers.
- Up to date tidy accurate files
- Prompt availability of documents/files.
- Maintain adequate internal resources.
- Timely/accurate word processing completions.
- Timely/accurate data input and schedules maintained.
- Directives from the **XXXX** (Line Manager) have been met

LIMITS OF AUTHORITY

- All personal tolls, faxes and mail must be recorded for private payment.
- All purchases over \$100 must be covered by a Purchase Order signed by your supervisor prior to any commitment to purchase

HOURS OF WORK

- Monday to Friday 8.30 am to 1.30 pm
- On Reception – 8.30 am to 1.00 pm each day

POSITION DESCRIPTION

ACCOUNTS CLERK / ADMINISTRATOR (PART-TIME)

Reports to: XXXXX (Line Manager)

Interacts with: Internal
All XXXXX staff and contractors and their staff

External

- Customers, suppliers
- Local/ regional and National organisations
- Whanau / hapu / iwi organisations
- Funding assistance Agencies
- Business Networks
- Local and Central Government agencies

Primary Purposes:

- To provide an effective and efficient administration service to all internal and external customers with empathy and professionalism.
- To efficiently and accurately manage the Accounts Payable function and other accounting procedures as directed.
- Manage reception and the telephone system with professionalism and promptness.

Principal Objectives:

- Respond efficiently and effectively to all enquiries.
- Maintain integrity of inward and outward correspondence and filing systems.
- Actively support and assist all co-workers with a quality administrative service.
- To communicate internal/external events and/or meetings in a timely fashion.
- Effectively manage the accounts payable processes and monitor all purchasing requisitions within the required deadlines.
- Undertake all other accounts duties as required.
- To manage all filing requirements.
- To undertake special projects as directed.
- Be aware of XXXX's Customer Target Groups as defined from time to time by the CEO.

Key Accountabilities:

- Produce accurate documents within negotiated time frames.
- Organise and prioritise workload so as to allow for regular flow within acceptable time frames.
- Maintain confidentiality of inwards and outwards correspondence and filing systems.
- Accurate processing of Accounts Payable and filing of invoices for payment by the due dates.
- Accurate reconciliation of supplier statements against invoices and the addressing of discrepancies each month.
- Effective reconciliation of accounts and bank statements.

- Respond efficiently and effectively to all administrative enquiries, including room bookings and customer appointments.
- Assist in the set up of Seminar Rooms as required.
- Co-ordinate mail-outs as required
- Control and manage administrative duties, including purchasing requisitions and accounts; monitor/respond to all payments and debts.
- Assist in the management of the booking systems for seminars, workshops and courses as per any quality processes or requirements and input data into appropriate databases or schedules as required to meet time-frames.
- Assist in the control, monitor and organise of all stationery, kitchen, cleaning and toiletry requirements.
- Carry out quality verifications for the functions performed.
- Establish customer/visitor needs and make appropriate referral.
- Create a welcoming/culturally comfortable environment in reception area, by being empathetic and professional at all times.
- Ensure inwards and outwards mail is processed, distributed and posted daily.
- Maintain a safe workplace in accordance with OSH requirements.
- Manage special projects according to project plan and objectives
- Be aware of co-worker's workloads/time constraints and be actively supportive and assist wherever possible
- Adhere to **XXXX's** Q-Base Quality Programme, the Health & Safety Policy, the Privacy Act and other statutory obligations

Key Result Areas:

- Quality reception service to internal/external customers.
- All invoicing and accounts processes undertaken are accurate and on time
- Up to date tidy accurate files
- Prompt availability of documents/files.
- Maintain adequate internal resources.
- Timely/accurate word processing completions.
- Timely/accurate data input and schedules maintained.
- Support is provided to all other Administration staff as required
- Directives from the **XXXX** (Line Manager) have been met

LIMITS OF AUTHORITY

- All personal tolls, faxes and mail must be recorded for private payment.
- All purchases over \$100 must be covered by a Purchase Order signed by your supervisor prior to any commitment to purchase.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Qualifications: (Minimum)

- Relevant tertiary/professional qualification is desirable.

Experience: (Minimum)

- At least 2 yrs of proven experience in planning and organising work and priorities.
- At least 2 years Accounts Payable experience

Physical Requirements:

- Able to use PC for long periods of time.
- Ability to sit at Reception Desk alone.
- Driving Licence.

Knowledge:

- High level of knowledge & skill of Microsoft Office programmes
- Empathy for cultural and gender differences.
- Minimum of two years of Bookkeeping experience
- Working knowledge of computerised accounting systems
- Understanding of management principles and Best Practice Models
- Understand the dynamics of manawhenua / tangatawhenua and iwi Maori in relation to an urban environment

Skills:

- Facilitation and networking skills.
- Problem solving and mediation skills.
- Highly developed interpersonal and representational skills and a proven superior standard of written and oral communication skills.
- Ability to exercise sound judgement.
- Good computer skills
- Team building.
- Negotiation skills.

Desired Attributes:

- Ability to work autonomously, with self-management and prioritising skills.
- Initiator.
- Ability to meet deadlines.
- Effective communication.
- Ability to work collaboratively with team members and internal and external stakeholders to accomplish organisational goals and contractual obligations.
- Empathy, listening skills and ability to use appropriate interpersonal skills.
- Non-judgemental attitude.
- Understand, value and respect differences
- Energy and enthusiasm.
- Networking skills.
- Analytical and problem solving skills.

This formal job share letter spells out the terms of the job share. It is in addition to the employee's contract of employment. It stipulates the hours/days to be worked by each partner and provides that these can be changed by agreement between the partners and their manager. It also addresses what will happen should business needs not be met or one partner leave.

Name
Address 1
Address 2
Address 3
Address 4

Date

Dear,

It's great that you and your job share partner have been able to arrange a job share arrangement that suits you both.

It's with pleasure that I offer you the opportunity of job sharing in the role of {JOB_TITLE} on the terms and conditions set out below.

Grade: {RUDF_JobGrade}
Business Unit: {OUDF_Business Unit Name}
Salary: {OFFER_SALARY}
Start date: {OFFER_ACTUAL_START_DATE}

You will initially work {DAYS_OF_WEEK_WORKED} for {HOURS_PER_DAY} per day. Your job share partner will work {JOBSHARE_DAYS_OF_WEEK_WORKED} for {JOBSHARE_HOURS_PER_DAY} per day. Changes to the days and hours you are scheduled to work will be by arrangement between you, your job share partner and me as your manager.

It's important for you and your job share partner to communicate effectively so each of you can meet your objectives.

I would therefore like both of you to attend work at the same time on {SHARED_WEEKDAY} between {SHARED_HOURS_REQUIRED}.

If your job share partner wishes to leave their job share position or our business needs are not being met by the job share arrangement, we will need to explore available options with you. The options that we may consider include looking for a replacement job share partner for you, offering you the position on a full time basis, or discontinuing the job share position. In the event that we discontinue the job share

position, we will give you at least four weeks notice and we will help you find another job share arrangement or part time position.

All other terms and conditions will remain unchanged.

The next step is for you to sign and date a copy of this letter to acknowledge that you accept its terms and conditions and send it back to me.

Please talk to me if you need to clarify any aspect of your job share arrangements.

....., I hope you enjoy your new working arrangements.

Yours sincerely,

{HMGR_NAME}
{MANAGER_TITLE}
{OUDF_Business Unit Name}

I have read and understood the contents of this letter, and accept the terms and conditions it contains.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

This job share agreement was for two partners sharing one role, where one partner works a further 20 hours in another role. Performance measures for the shared role are included with the job share agreement.

XXXXXXXX - Job Share Secondment Agreement
[For periodto.....]

1. It is agreed that the position of XXXX, based with the XXXXX] team in the XXXXX be shared by XXXXX and XXXXX for a period of X months from XXX to XXX both dates inclusive with the right of re-negotiation at the end of the period.
2. The XXX is employed for 40 hours per week. It is agreed that XXX and XXX shall each work 20 hours per week and be remunerated at individual rates negotiated with the Manager.
3. XXXX will work 40 hours per fortnight working 2.5 days per week Monday , Tuesday and Wednesday morning. XXX will work 20 hours per week Wednesday afternoon, Thursday and Friday.
4. Specific performance measures will be established to assist with monitoring the effectiveness of the job share secondment. Reviews will be held with the Manager, XXX and XXX in XXXX
5. If absences other than annual leave and sickness occur, the other party may be required to cover the absence by working extra hours above the 20 hours per week at ordinary rate.
6. The job-share /secondment ceases if either party resigns or is dismissed. The Manager may consider a renewal of the job-share, subject to finding a second person who is acceptable.
7. For other conditions of appointment see current Employment Agreements.

Sample performance measures

The success of the job share secondment will be measured by:

- The Team Leaders' Performance Plans reflect realistic outcomes and meet (the Employer's) strategic and BAU requirements
- The Team Leaders' workloads are managed effectively
- Accountability for outcomes is equally shared by both Team Leaders
- (The Employer's) organisational and portfolio responsibilities are met
- Both Team Leaders attend scheduled (aaa) and (bbb) meetings
- Organisational knowledge is shared by the two Team Leaders
- Management of the xxxx team is uncompromised by the job share
- Ensure Team Members continue to receive regular support and mentoring from Team Leaders and are not adversely affected by the job share
- Team meets all agreed tactical objectives
- BAU delivered by the xxxx team meets customer service goals for (the Employer)
- Training and development targets are met for the xxxx team and Team Leaders

Sample flow chart – Implementation of a job share

<p>Manager receives a request from staff members to job share a role</p>	<p>Step 1: Considerations: the needs of the work area, the job to be shared and possibilities to change the existing arrangements, the needs of the proposed job sharers</p>
	<p>Step 2: Talk to HR team and/or to other managers who have managed flexible work arrangements</p>
	<p>Step 3: Determine an arrangement that meets the needs of both the work area and the employees – including clarifying details relating to the hours and responsibilities, leave and cover, performance monitoring</p>
	<p>Step 4: Document the arrangement and provide each job share employee with a copy of it</p>
	<p>Step 5 Communicate the changes to any other employees and clients who may be affected by the changes resulting from introduction of a job share and provide them with an opportunity to discuss any concerns they may have</p>
	<p>Step 6: Implement the arrangement for a predetermined period</p>
	<p>Step 7: Review how the arrangement works regularly and adjust as necessary</p>