

Making the Decision to Work Part Time

1st September 2022

Part-time work was once limited to a narrow range of jobs. Today there are many options, and a growing number of employees are working part time. Employers in virtually all industries have become more open to part-time arrangements.

There are many reasons why someone may want to move from a full-time job to part-time hours. These may include a desire to spend more time caring for children or an elderly relative, a decision to go back to school while working, or a wish for greater balance between work and personal time. When making the decision to work part time, think about all the ways it will change your life, personally and professionally. The following suggestions will help.

Is part-time work right for you?

Working part-time has both advantages and disadvantages. The disadvantages are earning less money, having fewer hours to do your job, and possibly slowing down your career advancement. On the other hand, a shorter workweek leaves you more time to do other things that are important to you. To work out whether part-time work is right for you, ask yourself how it would affect you, your family, your job, and your budget.

Work Hours. How many hours do you want to work? Take into account the demands of your job, how much income you need, what your employer would allow, and how much personal time you would like to have. You may start thinking you would like to work 20 hours a week, then decide that 24 hours is a more realistic number.

Free time. What would you do? Could you study for a qualification? Take care of a child or other family member? Try a new hobby, or pursue other interests? Be realistic about what you can accomplish during your non-working hours, given your other responsibilities and time constraints.

Lost income. How would you compensate? Spending fewer hours at work may allow you to reduce expenses, such as commuting and childcare costs. Work out what your salary would be as a part-time employee, and how you could cut back on other expenses.

Government Benefits. Now that you have reduced your working hours, you may be entitled to benefits from the government such as tax credits, universal credit, or housing benefit. To

© LifeWorks 2020

heartbeat+

Making the Decision to Work Part Time

1st September 2022

work out what you are entitled to, check out the online [benefits calculator](#).

Work incentives. Will you be eligible for the same incentives such as salary increases, bonuses or stock options? You might be compensated differently as a part-time employee compared to your full-time colleagues. This may change your salary in ways you hadn't considered.

Work benefits. Will you lose benefits by going to a part-time work pattern? Some employers offer full benefits, including holiday to employees who work part time, others do not. Many employers who offer benefits to part-time employees require that they work a minimum number of hours.

Time management. Can you do your work successfully working part time? Consider the possibility for you to get your work done in fewer hours. Can you choose particular work activities? How many hours do you need to accomplish your job? Reducing your hours may mean giving up some parts of your job or work that you especially value, however you may be more productive on the days you do work because you are working when you want.

Making the decision

As you weigh up the benefits and drawbacks of moving to part-time work, talk it over with people who know you well. Talk with a trusted colleague, a relative or friend, your partner or spouse. For many people, working part time helps reduce feelings of stress and burnout from working long hours. It can free you up to focus on yourself or make changes in your life. Working part time can also make all the difference for working parents and for people caring for an older relative. Whatever you decide about working part time, do what is realistic and possible for you and your family.