



## *Flexibility & Balance - University of Western Australia*

### *Tips from UWA:*

- Analyse the workload and re-evaluate how tasks are done
- Maximise existing infrastructure to benefit your company
- Investigate how technology can work for your business and your people
- Consider flexible work practices across a range of disciplines
- Make flexible work practices part of your firm's culture

### Nic says:

"technology has allowed us to work much more efficiently ... it has had a liberating effect on the nature of work"

### *Meeting business and employee needs*

The University of Western Australia, one of Australia's research intensive Group of Eight universities, has an international reputation for excellence, innovation and enterprise. With over 3,500 permanent staff and a student body in excess of 21,000, UWA has a developed culture of inclusivity and flexible practices. Its reputation is reliant upon attracting and retaining the best in academic and professional employees and it achieves this, in part, by offering a range of flexible working conditions that includes well developed parental leave, flexible hours, part time work, home based work, the capacity to negotiate core hours of work at the local level, compressed week, annualised hours, purchased leave and a deferred salary scheme.

The University has long realised that an evolving system of flexible work, suited to the needs of their employees, ensures that they remain motivated and happy and that they are positioned well to contribute and succeed. This approach has helped UWA maintain its position amongst the foremost of Australia's learning institutions.

### *Let technology liberate the workplace*

Nic is a career academic and has been with UWA for over 11 years as an integral part of the economics faculty. With a workload split between teaching and research Nic spends half his time on campus and the rest working from home. Technology now affords Nic the opportunity to work efficiently without being chained to the office, his reliance on books and libraries has been much reduced and the internet has liberated his research methodologies.

For Nic the benefits are massive. He saves on nearly three hours of commuting from his home in the hills and enjoys the additional bonus of less parking fees, lower petrol costs and reduced wear on his vehicle. He now finds that he gets his work done quicker and that when working from home he is very efficient. He is still accessible to University staff and students yet enjoys freedom from interruptions and the convenience of home.

### *Plan well and use the available tools*

UWA has harnessed new technology and used it to benefit both employer and employee. By providing University laptops to employees and ensuring home access to the University broadband system the University has ensured that the transition to a more flexible workplace is easy for all concerned. Where there is a job sharing arrangement the University provides e-mail aliases to internal and external clients so that dealings are seamless and workflow continuous.

By properly managing schedules and timetables and innovative usage of commonly available technologies UWA allows their employees to enjoy a much more flexible workplace whilst at the same time maintaining the quality expected of a leading university.