

FLEXIBLE APPROACH KEY TO SOLVING WORK-LIFE BALANCE

With more and more workers struggling to juggle the conflicting demands of their home life and job, flexibility is the key to creating the correct work-life balance.

That is the view of Tony Britten, Director of Human Resources for The Co-operative Bank, which has produced a special 24-page booklet aimed at helping staff create a balanced life.

Introducing the handbook, Mr Britten said: "Work-life Balance Policies and Benefits are aimed not only at people who have carer responsibilities for children, relatives or dependants, but all members of staff who wish to create a balance in the differing aspects of their life. It is an approach which has benefits for both workers and the company."

The Bank offers its 4,000 staff a range of flexible working arrangements to help them combine their domestic and business responsibilities, either on a permanent basis or for a shorter period of time.

The booklet outlines the Bank's various flexible working policies which have been designed with input from staff and the banking union Unifi. These include: part-time working; job sharing; compressed hours; term time working and temporary reduced hours.

The handbook also explains the Bank's career break scheme; childcare vouchers; maternity and paternity leave and its position on personal and parental leave.

"Our staff are our most important asset, and therefore as a responsible employer we have to ensure that they can get the right balance between work and home life. Earlier this year we were selected as one of the DTI and Sunday Times top 100 companies in the UK to work for, which clearly shows that we must be doing something right," added Mr Britten.

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