



Diversity & Inclusion Case Study

Solving Talent Shortages with Flexi-Pool

How a new rostering system worked for Keelings and their employees

September 2021



Spotlight on Keelings Flexi-Pool Project - This month's AgDIf case study focusing on Diversity & Inclusion inspiring stories.



We implemented this innovative approach to help improve our attraction, development and retention of talent, as well as improve our employee engagement scores

Our Challenge

As an Irish-owned family business with over 2,000 employees, we are committed to enabling our people to reach their full potential. As national unemployment levels dropped in 2014/2015, it was becoming increasingly challenging to source & retain operations employees for our business. Our demand has mainly been seasonal due to the nature of our business and recruitment and training in a tight employment market, was becoming a significant challenge for our HR team.

Work-life balance was a key call out in our employee voice forums and engagement survey, particularly in relation to employee's family commitments.

Our Approach

Firstly, we analysed our current employment terms and looked at other organisations who had better retention rates, to explore potential solutions. With a clear business case, we scoped a project plan to introduce a new flexible roster system that we called Flexi-Pool system and hired a full time Resource Manager to take it on. It was a departure from our rigid expectations for shift availability that were based on business requirements.

We began with a trial. Over six months we recruited 80 people to participate. The new approach allowed these employees to tell us which days and shifts that they could work, based on their commitments outside work, and we accommodated that within our roster.

Our Outcomes

This Flexi-Pool approach has been a resounding success and is now being used by 210 employees. It has been especially attractive to employees with children and childcare responsibilities.

By 2019, we had seen a 14% increase in our Engagement Score overall, our absence levels decrease overall and retention increase by 30%.

We have also seen an increase in our people in those roles aspiring to and developing into more skilled roles.

Our Learnings & Next Steps

One thing we learned during this process was to give our Flexi Pool greater advance notice of working hours, moving from weekly rosters, to issuing rosters 2-3 weeks in advance. This gave them additional stability in their personal planning.

Following the success of this programme, we have since extended the programme to asylum seekers in local direct provision centres. This has supported our business to help us to fulfil our recruitment needs but most importantly, support our communities in helping asylum seekers achieve increased financial independence and help them integrate and socialise outside of their accommodation centres.

Possible Next Steps For Your Company

Survey your employee to gain their views on their work-life balance.

Assess the results against your business's current employment terms, and what other businesses are offering.

Explore how your business could adapt these terms, including a flexible roster system, introducing any changes on a pilot basis initially.

Find out more about how to build and execute your D&I strategy by using the AgDIf toolkit, to create an environment where your employees can thrive and where you can attract the best talent to your business.

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