BEST PRACTICES FOR FLEXING: BY ECORNELL

Use this checklist to make sure that your team or work group is getting the greatest possible value out of flexible work arrangements. (If you do not currently supervise a team of direct reports, you can use this within your organization, department, or team to foster a conversation regarding best practices.)

- Create safe conversations for members of your team members to discuss how flexibility might benefit them and enhance their performance.

- Create a space for support groups to meet, such as for elder care or parenting, for example.

- Be creative. There are lots of flexible arrangements that could be used successfully. Will they work in your setting? Consider shift trading, relief pools, flexible start and end times to shifts, half-day vacation increments, or employee-designed schedules. There could be shifting of assignments based on availability and skill rather than seniority, for example. Keep in mind, also, that unpaid time off might be a great choice for someone (such as a 3/4 position).

- Be creative in thinking about how work is assigned in terms of timing and pacing.

- Consult widely with other organizations, clients, board members, volunteers, and staff. Survey employees about what would be meaningful to them. Try to identify what the potential problems will be in advance and how you can deal with them.

- Use a pilot when implementing a new policy. That will help you combat skepticism about whether telecommuting, compressed schedules, or approaches can work.

- To implement flex policies successfully, you have to be explicit. Note that while employees will be expected to perform, they should not get penalized for choosing to take advantage of the flex policies.

- Another key to success is remembering that when it comes to flexible arrangements, you may have to take a different approach to building team loyalty and to deal with team chemistry and relationship building.

- Keep track of hours worked. As a personal practice, it will help you maintain a balance of work time and home time. As a team or departmental practice, it can help the organization track people's work effort and make sure that duties and assignments are