MODULE OVERVIEW

Managing flexible work without losing performance

Adaptive module | ~20 min

Four concrete levers (where, when, how, and how long people work) replace the either-or debate between on-site and remote work and include frontline jobs, often overlooked. The module then sets out the three conditions that keep flexibility on track: rules negotiated in advance, management by results, and protected synchronous time. Finally, it addresses proximity bias, which penalizes the promotion prospects of people seen less often.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

01 Distinguish flexibility from laxity or individual favors: a clear, negotiated framework for everyone.

02 Use the four levers (where, when, how, and how much), including for frontline teams.

03 Build the ground rules with the team: being present together, response times, shared hours, and non-negotiable rituals.

04 Counter proximity bias through management by results, so that visibility doesn't decide promotions.

WHO IT'S FOR

Managers who want to give everyone flexibility while keeping a team that works together.

- **Prerequisite:** none

HOW THE MODULE WORKS

Self-paced, with practice tailored to each learner.

1. **Self-assessment**: on 9 dimensions, to gauge current habits and guide the practice.
2. **Expert video**: 10 minutes, with 3 pauses for reflection.
3. **Practice scenarios**: the first 2 chosen from the self-assessment, then 16 optional ones. Every answer gets feedback: what it leads to, and one way to improve.
4. **Dated commitment**: one action to try, written by the learner or picked from the suggestions.
5. **Memo to download**: key takeaways, questions, commitment, personal notes and checklists.

A SAMPLE PRACTICE SCENARIO

You manage seven buyers. One will lead a tender senior management is following. Over coffee, Théo, in the office four days a week, volunteered. Inès, remote three days a week, led a similar tender but doesn't know about this one. You pick the lead on Friday. What do you do?

ASSESSMENT AND COMPLETION

Pass mark: 80%

The score takes into account your answers to the practice scenarios, your commitment and, where relevant, any additional learning activities. Passing requires a commitment and a score of at least 80%.

METHODS & MODELS

- The four levers of flexibility (the where, the when, the how, the how much): Afthonios framework.
- Four-day week: successful trials in Iceland and the United Kingdom.
- Proximity bias in remote work – Live Data Technologies figures, discussed by Nicholas Bloom (Stanford).

SOURCES & REFERENCES

- McKinsey – "American Opportunity Survey": 87% of employees who are offered remote work take it up
- World Economic Forum / Randstad Workmonitor Pulse (2025): 53% would give up a promotion rather than accept a full return to the office, and 59% would give up higher pay to keep control of their working hours
- Live Data Technologies, analysis discussed by Nicholas Bloom (Stanford) – fully remote employees receive about 31% fewer promotions
- Microsoft's "Work Trend Index": about three quarters of professionals want to keep flexibility over where they work

- Module created by Afthonios.com.
- Content reviewed on 25 October 2026