

Using workplace forums to discuss important matters at work

It's useful for employers to discuss any important workplace matters with their employees.

These discussions often take place through a workplace group ('forum') where the employer and employees (or representatives) can discuss important matters.

Benefits of a workplace forum

A workplace forum should be used as a way to discuss and try and resolve issues together.

It provides a way for:

- employees or representatives to raise ideas and questions with management
- employers to present their ideas to employees, and listen to their views and any concerns

A workplace forum is a good way for:

- employees to be informed of and respond to matters that affect them
- workplace decisions to be made quickly with everyone's involvement
- workplace decisions to be made in a way that reduces the risk of disagreements about them later on
- build trust and confidence between employer and employees

Having this type of forum may make it easier to consult with staff on:

- any possible [redundancies](#)
- potential [changes to your contract](#)
- a [TUPE transfer](#)
- changes to your pension arrangements

A workplace forum works best when:

- it includes representatives from all parts of the business or organisation
- representatives are trained to understand the role and have the skills required, for example they're able to work constructively with people who have different views
- the employer and employees feel confident about speaking and listening to each other
- it deals with issues that affect the wider workforce instead of just individual employees
- it looks at all possible options to resolve a problem, rather than just one or two

Example of using a workplace forum to consult employees

The managers of a textiles factory plan to buy new equipment, to improve productivity. They could use a workplace forum to get feedback from employees who will use the equipment, such as what issues they experience with the current equipment and any suggestions for improvements.

For the employer, this would reduce the risk of spending money on equipment that's wrong or does not improve productivity.

For employees, this means they can feel involved in the decision-making. It's also more likely they'll be confident that any decision will not have a negative affect on their workload or morale.

If there are 50 or more employees

If you cannot agree on setting up a workplace forum, and there are 50 or more employees, you have the right to request a formal agreement to be informed and consulted.

[Find out more about requesting a formal agreement](#)