

RAMONA HÖNL

TRUMPF's approach to optional working time

Despite having a job, you can still have enough time for your children, for a trip around the world, or for putting in a few extra hours at work to buy a few more things. Employees can enjoy a lot of freedom with TRUMPF's optional working time model.

The high-tech company introduced the model in 2011. Since January 2019, a similar model has been in place throughout Germany within companies from the metal and electronics industry that are bound by labor agreements. But who will use it? What rights do employees have? And how does it benefit the company?

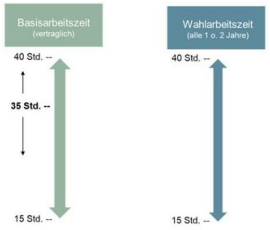
Ben Haugk has been employed at TRUMPF since 2010. He really enjoys his job as a product manager in the area of 3D printing. Last year, Ben became a father for the very first time. His young son, Arno, is just learning how to crawl, and is developing really fast in other ways as well. Ben would like to see more of his son, so that's why he has reduced his working hours at TRUMPF. Rather than working for 35 hours per week, from June 2019, he will work for just 25 hours. "My wife and I really like going to work. With this rule we can take it in turns to look after our child, yet still go to work," said the new father.

Work should fit your lifestyle

This is something that has been made possible, as TRUMPF – one of the first companies to do so – has introduced optional working time. Since 2011, employees from this high-tech company can make their own decision about how much time they want to spend at work. In doing so, they discuss the situation with their manager and fix their working hours for a one or two year period. Anything from between 15 to 40 hours is possible. Once the time period has ended, they can revert back to their contractually agreed basic working time, or determine the number of working hours anew. In this way, TRUMPF enables its employees to tailor their working hours to their lifestyle.

Reduce first, and then increase? Also possible!

A model that has been the norm at TRUMPF since 2011 has now also been taking off in several other companies since January 1, 2019. For a limited period of time, full-time employees at companies within the metal and electronics industry that are bound by labor contracts can reduce their working time to up to 28 hours per week. Afterwards, they are guaranteed the right to revert back to their usual full-time hours, or they can apply for reduced working hours again.



TRUMPF's optional working time model allows employees to choose how many hours they want to work. For a one or two-year period, anything between 15 and 40 hours is possible. Afterwards, they return to their contractually agreed basic working time, or determine the number of working hours anew.

It's not just employees who benefit – companies do as well

Ben Haugk very much appreciates this level of flexibility. "Time is a precious gift. That's why I want to decide for myself how I spend it." As soon as his son starts kindergarten, Ben wants to increase his working hours again. Oliver Maassen, Director of Human Resources at TRUMPF, is also impressed by the model. "The TRUMPF model is based on give and take. On the one hand, we make it possible for our employees to adapt their working hours to fit the stage they are at in their lives. We want to keep our employees when they are raising children, looking after relatives or, for any other reason, are at a stage in their lives when they can't spend as much time at work. At a time when there is a shortage of skilled workers, it makes us attractive as an employer and strengthens staff retention. On the other hand, the working time accounts grant us more flexibility during peak business periods."

Many also want to work more hours

When TRUMPF introduced optional working time, there was a huge surprise at first: "A large number of employees wanted to increase their working hours, rather than reduce them. Initially, this may seem perplexing, but for people who have enough time, having the option to earn more is an attractive proposition," explained Maassen.

Sabbatical or mobile working – employees have a lot of freedom

Optional working time is not the only instance in which TRUMPF is leading the way in terms of innovative working models. Employees can also save up working hours for a sabbatical or further education, work remotely, use TRUMPF's laundry service and take away food from the canteen for their relatives. SWR television reported on the new regulations on optional working time and also visited TRUMPF for this purpose.



RAMONA HÖNL

ГОВОРИТЕЛ , МЕТАЛООБРАБОТВАЩИ МАШИНИ

https://www.trumpf.com/bg_BG/newsroom/stories/trumpfs-approach-to-optional-working-time/