

Workplace Flexibility is an Imperative for the 21st Century Workplace

Flexible Work Arrangements Are Key to Securing and Retaining Talent

- C-suite executives say the biggest threat to their organizations' success is attracting and retaining top talent.¹ The best way to attract and retain the best people (even above compensation) is to provide flexible work arrangements.²
- A large majority of employees (87 percent) report that flexibility in their jobs would be "extremely" or "very" important in deciding whether to take a new job.³
- Among HR professionals who reported that their organizations had formal flexible work arrangements, 89 percent said the arrangements positively affected retention.⁴

Flexible Work Arrangements Keep Employees Engaged and Productive

- 91 percent of HR professionals believe implementation of formal flexible work arrangements had a positive impact on employee morale (job satisfaction and engagement).⁵
- Effective and flexible workplaces can attract talent, increase diversity, increase job satisfaction, increase loyalty, increase social responsibility, increase productivity, reduce absenteeism, reduce stress in the workplace and retain talent.⁶

Even in Hard Times, Workplace Flexibility is a Smart Business Decision

- During the recession of 2008-2009, 81 percent of employers maintained the workplace flexibility they offered and 13 percent increased it.⁷
- Offering job-sharing and introducing full-time telecommuting for employees to save on building and maintenance costs were among the changes organizations made as a result of the economic recession.⁸

Workplace Flexibility Includes...

- Having traditional flextime (setting daily hours within a range periodically)
- Having daily flextime
- Being allowed to take time off during the work day to address family matters
- Being able to take a few days off to care for a sick child or other family member without losing pay, having to use vacation days, or make up an excuse for absence
- Being able to work some regular hours at home
- Being able to take breaks when one wants to
- Having a work shift that is desirable and predictable
- Having complete or a lot of control over work schedule
- Being able to work part time (if currently full time) or full time (if currently part time) in one's current position
- Being able to work a compressed work week
- Being able to work part-year in current position
- Seldom being required to work paid or unpaid overtime with little or no notice
- Agreeing that one can use flexible work arrangements without jeopardizing job advancement
- Having the support of one's supervisor and co-worker to successfully manage work and family life responsibilities
- Returning to work gradually after childbirth or adoption
- Being allowed to phase into retirement by working reduced hours over a period of time prior to full retirement
- Taking paid or unpaid time from work for education or training to improve job skills

Flexibility must work for both the employer and the employee.

Source: Families and Work Institute

¹ *Company of the Future* survey, commissioned by SHRM with the Economist Intelligence Unit, 2010

² *Challenges Facing Organizations and HR in the Next Ten Years*, SHRM poll, 2010

³ *Bold New Ideas for Making Work Work*, Families and Work Institute, 2009

⁴ *Workplace Flexibility in the 21st Century*, a SHRM survey, 2009

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *The State of Health in the American Workforce: Does Having An Effective Workplace Matter?* Families and Work Institute, 2009

⁷ *The Impact of the Recession on Employers*, Families and Work Institute, May 2009

⁸ *The Impact of the Recession on Employers*, Families and Work Institute, May 2009

Times Have Changed for the Workforce

- Dual-earning couples are now the norm, up from 66 percent in 1977 to 79 percent in 2008.⁹
- One in five employees currently provides elder care, and one in two employees expects to provide elder care within the next five years.¹⁰
- Employees increasingly experience a time famine. Three in four employed parents (75 percent) feel they don't have enough time with their children, up from 66 percent in 1992. Likewise, 63 percent of employees in couple relationships feel they don't have enough time with their husbands, wives or partners, compared with 50 percent in 1992. And 60 percent of all employees feel they don't have enough time for themselves, up from 55 percent in 2002.¹¹

⁸ SHRM Poll: *Financial challenges to the U.S. and global economy and their impact on organizations — spring 2010 update*

⁹ *Times are Changing*, Families and Work Institute, 2009

¹⁰ *The Elder Care Study*, Families and Work Institute, 2010

¹¹ *From Research to Action in Workplace Flexibility: Lessons in Bringing About Workplace Change*, Families and Work Institute, *Future of Children*, Princeton University, in Preparation