

# The Future of Flexibility

## **BC Center for Work & Family** Executive Briefing Series



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If you do not have a copy of the full Briefing, please email: [cwf@bc.edu](mailto:cwf@bc.edu) or visit our website for the briefing and bibliography:

<http://www.bc.edu/content/bc/centers/cwf/research/publications.html#executive>.





- Agile work
- BYOD initiatives
- Mobile offices
- Hotelling, hot desking
- Global and virtual teams

# The New Flex Landscape

- To meet increased demands and workload
- To improve health and well-being
- As an attraction, retention, and engagement tool

# Why does flexibility matter?





FACTS  
~~MYTHS~~

- Telecommuters are less productive
- It's not possible to complete the same amount of work in a compressed workweek
- Job sharing is not realistic

# Disproving Common Myths

## Organizations

- 88% offer telework
- 82% offer flex time

## Individuals

- 31% of full-time workers in the US do most of their work remotely (The Flex + Strategy Group, 2014)
- Usage of flexibility has increased from 71% in 2009 to 78% in 2013 (Working Mother, 2013)

# Who offers flexibility, and who uses it?



- Increased Retention
- Increased Job satisfaction
- Attraction of talent
- Greater innovation, quality, customer retention  
Increased revenue generation

# What is the ROI?

- Business needs
- IT concerns and costs; concerns over data security
- Traditional organizational cultures
- Individual concerns
- Manager concerns

## Barriers to implementation and usage



- Publicize success stories
- Provide incentives for teleworking
- Offer training on how to be a successful flexible worker
- Provide training and tools for managers
- Present the business case for flexible work

# How do we overcome them?

- 85% of non-exempt employees report that having flexibility to manage work and life would be “extremely” or “very” important when looking for a job (FWI, 2011)
- Non-exempt workers are less likely to have access to flexible work arrangements(FWI, 2011)
- Challenges include coverage needs, scheduling demands, manager concerns

# Non-Exempt Workers



## Strategies

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| • Provide schedules in advance                    | • Create a relief pool                               |
| • Ask for employee input into schedules           | • Rotate weekend hours                               |
| • Promote cross-training                          | • Offer downtime leave                               |
| • Implement a computerized self-scheduling system | • Offer job skills training and advancement programs |

# Strategies for Non-Exempt Workers

## **Flexibility solutions for non-exempt workers:**

- Cross training
- Online scheduling
- Flex Coupons
- Shift swapping
- Downtime without pay
- At-Home Agents positions
- Fixed scheduling available

# Best Practice: Marriott International



## Manager-Initiated Flexibility

- Engage leadership teams in evaluating the feasibility of “Flex” for their organizations
- Flexible work arrangements are proactively offered by managers to employees
- Turnover for all employees utilizing flexible arrangements was 41% less than the company-wide average

# Best Practice: State Street

## **e-Working (work from home) Program**

- Enables more than 20% of associates in specific roles to work seamlessly from home on a full-time basis
- Associates can reduce commuting time and expenses and support a healthy work-life balance
- For BCBSMA, e-Working helps reduce administrative expenses, supports disaster readiness efforts, and is environmentally responsible

# Best Practice: BCBSMA



## Flexibility Ambassador Program

- The Ambassadors champion flexibility through training sessions and networking events, encouraging open dialogue, sharing success stories and promoting fair and consistent use of flexibility
- They help achieve annual Flexibility goals and objectives and share feedback on program effectiveness, best practices and new approaches
- Key outcome: 90% of Finance employees surveyed in 2012 in the U.S. reported they have the flexibility they need

## Best Practice: Johnson & Johnson

## myRyan

- Conversations are about results, not hours or work locations
- Systems and measurements are aligned to support meaningful discussions about results and accountability
- Individuals and teams respect and support each other through effective communication, collaboration, and consideration
- Results: reduced turnover, higher employee morale, higher client satisfaction

# Best Practice: Ryan LLC



- Communication
- Metrics
- Culture Change
- Executive Champions
- Organization Priorities and Strategic Initiatives
- Team Engagement

How do you sustain your  
commitment to flexibility?

# Contact us!

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