Meeting Takeaways

- **National context in work-life research: An analysis of the adoption of workplace work-life arrangements in Europe**: Kanter Award Winner Laura den Dulk, Erasmus University
  Professor den Dulk and her colleagues examined the effect national policy and context had on employer’s offering work-life HR policies within their organizations. She discussed policies such as parental leave, child care, and flexible work arrangements and how they differ from country to country in Europe.

**TAKEAWAYS:**

→ Employers in Europe are offering extensions beyond statutory leave regulations (EU required 14 weeks unpaid, but many countries offer more and also paid time), flexible work arrangements (very popular in Northern and Western Europe), and child and elder care.

→ Public child care reduces the need for employer child care. Elder care is a big emerging issue in Europe but employees in Southern Europe distrust their employers and don’t want employer elder care programs. Policy must be sensitive to culture.

→ Low fertility rates are an important driver of paid leave arrangements in Europe. Generous leave policies and incentives are used to encourage families to have more children and boost the population.

→ Although most European nations offer paternity leave, it is not highly utilized by fathers. As in the US, some stigma remains. We should all work to normalize paternity leave and make it more accessible and acceptable to use.

→ State support can be a catalyst for change to encourage employers and vice-versa. There is a positive correlation between state policies and employer policies.

→ In the US, cultural centrality of work is very high and ideal worker image is very prominent. This is less of an issue in many European nations where family is central.

- **Supporting Military Families in the Workplace**, Shelley MacDermid Wadsworth, Purdue University; corporate perspective from Debbie Edwards Veidheffer at Northrop Grumman and Janice Johnson at UPS.
  Shelley reviewed lessons learned from Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom. Large numbers of veterans are transitioning back into the workplace: over 1 million will be leaving military service (300,000 of which may have psychological issues/PTSD). It means a lot to people that they have been severely challenged & come through it: we should build on strengths, prepare people with skill to recover quickly. Stigma prevents many from receiving mental health treatment, and there is a known shortage of services in many geographic areas.
Research TAKEAWAYS:
→ Military veterans are attracted to workplaces have that ready + resilient mindsets: “comprehensive soldier fitness.”
→ Welcome veterans, especially wounded veterans (physical & psychological), women veterans, spouses of service members.
→ Mental health issues / anger management issues make it difficult for relationships when coming home. Social support from workplaces matters.
  o Ask your EAP what they’re ready to do / how they will handle things / urge protocols to be put in place.
→ When thinking about the needs of military families, consider the three phases of duty (from guest Ron Cupples – 25 years in National Guard – Director of HR for Mass. National Guard)
  o Pre-mobilization phase – preparing for deployment (both employee and family)
  o Mobilization phase – family tries to adapt to loss of family member
  o Service member returns – another adaptation
    ▪ Many issues occur here that stress families
  o Active duty has a social network vs. National Guard – social network dissipates.

Northrop Grumman TAKEAWAYS:
→ Operation Impact / Support for Veteran Families: the company has a long tradition of hiring veterans, now actively recruiting severely disabled veterans. For those who are unable to work, they also try to find a family member to hire.
→ They have strong educational assistance, counseling, backup care, “Veritas” ERG for support to military families (currently 900 employees participate).
→ Leverage relationships with VA and Dept of Defense: attend career fairs, get referrals from veterans hospital, vocational and rehab counseling, and arrange for non-profit organizations to provide tailored support.

UPS TAKEAWAYS:
→ “Commitment to Veterans” currently veterans make up 7% of employees - 24,000 military employees; many in aviation, mechanics, and logistics.
→ The company is committed to hiring 50,000 veterans.
→ Recognition – make sure you know who your veterans are + provide recognition for them + their families

• The Future of Work-Life Panel Discussion moderated by Brad Harrington and featuring Tim Hall, Executive Development Roundtable, Anne Weisberg, Families and Work Institute, Tracy Brower, Herman Miller, Lisa Levey, Consultant.
The field has come a long way in the past 20-30 years, but there is still much to be done. We need to pay more attention to culture and leaders and be more holistic in our solutions. If our people are our most important asset, we need to treat them that way. Companies need to be honest about the new career contract they have with employees and provide them the skills to move to new jobs when

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needed. Technology is a double-edged sword that is a convenience and a connector, but it can be harmful to social relationships.

TAKEAWAYS:

→ Although we have clearly made progress on work-life, there is still more cultural change needed
→ We need to better support our managers – they feel the pain; this is a seismic change for them
→ There are 6 fundamental human needs: status, security, achievement, autonomy, purpose and belonging
→ Use the idea of sustainability and resilience to frame work-life and to achieve both performance and sustainability – sustainability of the organization and its talent
→ Must make an emotional connection for leaders to change their behaviors – they have to experience it; put them in the situation (e.g. dual career couple with child care needs) or tell them lots of stories of people in these situations. Have them interview rising stars and ask about work-life at the organization.
→ To change a culture, you need:
  o A vision of the ideal future
  o Knowledge of what to do
  o Healthy dissatisfaction with the current state
  o The three elements above need to be stronger than the perceived costs of making the change

- The Future of Work-Life Breakout Sessions
After the panel discussion, we held 4 breakout sessions where people were asked to answer the following question. What are the most important workforce challenges that face our field as we move forward? We organized the various answers to the question and voted on the top challenges. The highest vote getters across the 4 groups were: Culture Change, Well-being, Workload and Employee Engagement. Some other topics suggested that received quite a few votes included: elder care issues, fiscal constraints, and being more global.

The following day we held new breakout sessions to discuss what needs to be done with each of the four top challenges.

Culture change TAKEAWAYS:

→ We need to help leaders view work-life as an investment that supports employee well-being, sustainable performance, our ability to recruit new talent, and organization competitiveness. It’s a key business strategy.
→ We need to develop the business case with relevant data to support this business strategy, and change leader views using education, data and stories.
→ We also need to provide concrete solutions & tools for all levels of the organization in support of this business strategy.

**Well-being TAKEAWAYS:**
→ Supporting well-being of individuals supports well-being of an organization
→ We need to take a holistic view of well-being and embed work-life into it. Well-being may be a platform to take work-life to the next level.
→ Well-being is better recognized and more culturally relevant globally than work-life, and there is less stigma associated with it.
→ Some well-being metrics to track include turnover, short-term disability, long-term disability, aggregate EAP utilization; include well-being questions in engagement surveys; measure stress and its impact on performance
→ Need to package services in an approachable, simple way; “one size fits one”; on-going effective communications are needed

**Workload TAKEAWAYS:**
→ The central challenge with tackling work overload issue is ability to name it/ call it out
→ There are many fears associated with this issue:
  o Fear it signifies management is not doing its job
  o Fear it signifies employees are being inefficient/ineffective
  o Fear addressing workload translates into permission to not work as hard
→ Approach this topic from a holistic perspective—how do you support employees to deliver top performance; tie it to performance sustainability, resilience, well-being
→ Managers need to allow employees time to disconnect, both individually (e.g. vacations, paid sabbaticals) and collectively (e.g. year-end shutdown)
→ Identify the impact of work overload on employee engagement, turnover, well-being
→ Leadership support is needed to move the culture, but workload issues need to be addressed bottoms-up, starting with individual employees and their workgroups; identify drivers of work overload/ root causes—what teams should be looking for

**Employee Engagement TAKEAWAYS:**
→ In addition to productivity, employee engagement includes a sense of belonging, identity and commitment; willing to go the extra mile
→ Measurement techniques can include: semi-annual pulse surveys, spouse (quality of life) surveys, customer surveys; a dashboard of metrics
→ Use available technologies and channels to increase engagement—push materials out through social media, allowing employees to opt in/out; organize fun activities such as flash mobs, Halloween videos; recognition events for going the extra mile; include employee engagement in performance review discussions
→ Utilize mentoring/developmental networks to increase engagement
→ Show connection between work-life and employee engagement

• **Center Updates & Reflections on White House Summit**, Deb Baldwin and Jennifer Sabatini Fraone, BC Center for Work & Family
Jennifer and Deb welcomed new members Abbvie and the Office of Personnel Management, reviewed the status of member services, and discussed upcoming events. Jennifer shared a brief overview of BCCWF’s participation in the White House Summit on Working Families.

**TAKEAWAYS:**
→ **Member services update:** BCCWF hosted 16 Web-Conferences in 2014, with over 500 attendees total; we facilitated benchmarking and completed summaries of 40 listserv questions and 30 member information requests. Brad Harrington has also conducted 10 presentations and webinars for organizations on our fatherhood research.
→ Brad and Jennifer participated in the White House Summit on Working Families and the White House Event focused on Working Fathers. A number of our members were present as those events as well. It was encouraging to hear our country's leaders discuss work-family issues. Less certain is what will actually occur going forward. More likely that states will be able to implement policies like paid parental leave and sick time rather than the federal government and that companies will increase the supports they offer to remain competitive.
→ **Save the Date for upcoming events:**
  ○ May 5-8, 2015 **Joint Global/National Meeting** in San Francisco
  ○ November 4-6, 2015 in Boston National Roundtable Meeting in Boston and **November 5, 2015 – 25th Anniversary Conference and Gala Celebration**

• **Paternity Leave: Research and Corporate Practice**, Brad Harrington, BC Center for Work & Family, corporate perspective from Kim Smit of Herman Miller and Michelle Mittelsteadt of EY. Brad Harrington provided an overview of the BCCWF research series on The New Dad and shared the results of the latest report **The New Dad: Take Your Leave**, published this June.

**Research TAKEAWAYS:**
→ TV shows still portray father as hopeless, out of it. The other side portrayed is the dad who splits everything 50-50. Both depictions are extreme ends. We need to listen to today's fathers to learn more about their changing roles and their needs when it comes to work-life supports.
→ Paternity leave is critical if we want women to remain engaged and advance in the workplace. The first few weeks after the baby is born is when caregiving roles are solidified. If father is not present, the mother becomes competent, baby attaches to mother, she becomes the “default parent” and father is always in the secondary, supportive role.
→ The New Dad research of 1,000 fathers revealed that paid paternity leave was an important factor in selection of an employer for these dads:
89% rated it as important with 60% it as extremely or very important.
Millennial fathers felt most strongly about this (93% rated paternity leave as extremely, very, or somewhat important).
In the benchmarking section of this research project, 60% of the 30 companies surveyed offer some sort of paid paternity leave.

**Herman Miller TAKEAWAYS:**
- 2 week paid leave at 100% pay -- both mothers & fathers eligible.
- It is culturally accepted to take the leave - 80% of eligible employees use it, and they have 12 months to take it.
- The policy started in 2007 and was driven by:
  - Focus on getting on “Best” lists
  - Supporting employees
  - Helping community
  - Attracting new employees
  - Offsetting change in short-term disability that decreased time available through that policy.

**EY TAKEAWAYS:**
- An internal EY survey found that working parents are the most engaged employees.
- EY birth mothers are eligible for 14 weeks fully paid leave; fathers who are primary caregivers receive 6 weeks fully paid (2 weeks if they are not primary caregivers).
- EY also offers maternity & paternity coaching program: Career & Family Transitions to help employees successfully make transition to being a parent and a professional.
- Biggest challenge now is not if paternity leave, but when and how much. EY seeks to create a culture where men are encouraged to take the full 6 weeks.

**Strategic Relationships at Work, Kathy Kram, Boston University**
Professor Kram discussed the traditional mentoring model where an individual higher up in the organization would provide the support to an employee to assist their development. She spoke about how this has evolved in to what she calls a “developmental network,” and other mentoring models such as reverse mentoring or mentoring circles. Prof. Kram led attendees through an exercise called the Developmental Network Map to help them examine their own networks and whether the mentors and peers in their circles are meeting their developmental needs and consider what other relationships and supports they should cultivate.

**TAKEAWAYS:**
- There are three types of support a mentor/network can provide:
  - Career support (sponsorship, coaching, challenging, assessment)
  - Psychosocial support (encouragement & emotional support, friendship)
  - Role-modelling (identification, can be in a book, may not know the org role models)
→ Take a developmental network approach—circle of developers that align with your personal and professional goals—be clear on what you need and then identify the people who will build a high quality relationship with you—mutuality where both parties are learning & growing is helpful.

→ Consider facilitating the development of Mentoring Circles—Often start with employee resource groups—8-10 peers come together each month to support each other’s development. Example: starting a “Lean-in-circle.”

→ Organizations like The Hartford are using Reverse Mentoring to connect tech-savvy, promising young professionals with senior executives to help them get up to speed with social media and other new technology tools. (See publication on The Hartford Reverse Mentoring)

→ High quality relationships can have beneficial impact: increased zest, empowered action, increased self-worth, new knowledge and skills, strong desire to meet again.

→ To create a developmental culture:
  - create relationship-building opportunities
  - other relevant education & training
  - redesign work to foster collaboration
  - reward + recognize those who support others

• **Kanter Top 10 Takeaways**, Shelley MacDermid-Wadsworth, Purdue University
  The Kanter Award identifies the top 10 articles published each year related to work & family. Shelley reviewed 6 of the top 10 articles with interesting implications for the workplace. A New Publication of the Top Ten Takeaways is now available to read and share.

  1. **From the Shop Floor to the Kitchen Floor: Maternal Occupational Complexity and Children’s Reading and Math Skills** by Yetis-Bayraktar, Budig, & Tomaskovic-Devey.
     → **TAKEAWAY:** Children will score better in reading and math when their mothers are employed and their mothers have more occupational complexity.

  2. **Mothers’ Night Work and Children’s Behavior Problems** by Dunifon, Kalil, Crosby & Su.
     → **TAKEAWAY:** This study found that children who are exposed to mothers’ nighttime work will have more behavior problems or psychological symptoms.

  3. **Workplace Mistreatment of Middle Class Workers Based on Sex, Parenthood, and Caregiving** by Berdahl & Moon
     → **TAKEAWAY:** Fathers who engaged in high caregiving were significantly more likely than those with low caregiving to experience harassment at work from peers. Researchers found a fatherhood penalty for dads who did relatively high amounts of childcare and domestic chores. The fatherhood benefit/premium is limited to traditional fathers.
   → **TAKEAWAY:** Greater policy support for gender equality reduces individual-level risk associated with wife’s employment and serves as a stabilizing factor in modern families.

5. *Women’s Opportunities under Different Family Policy Constellations: Gender, Class, and Inequality Tradeoffs in Western Countries Re-Examined* by Korpi, Ferrarini & Englund.
   → **TAKEAWAY:** Researchers found that in most countries, highly educated women have very high labor force participation rates irrespective of family policies. The major effects of family policies are most visible among women without university-level education.

   → **TAKEAWAY:** This article studied the outcomes of a ‘Results Oriented Work Environment’ initiative at a Fortune 500 company. The study found no impact on number of hours worked, and reductions in negative work to home spillover at both individual and team level. In addition, there were other positive health outcomes: employees using ROWE were more likely to quit smoking, less likely to engage in excessive drinking, exercised more frequently, slept 1 hour more per night, and had more time to prepare healthy meals.