



Balanced Workplace Flexibility

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Overview



- Balanced Workplace flexibility: Why & What?
- Who Benefits Employer/Employee/Customer
- Types Pros and Cons- Think Pair Share from employee and employer
- Case examples- stories- FLEXSAAVY
- Implementation approach

Why: Workforce Competitiveness Trends



- Aging population- increasing elder care demands
- Dropping fertility rates
- Fewer replacement workers for pensions, social security
- Example: -Sampo” Generation- giving up, marriage, dreams buying house
- Labor market shifts women & men -dual career
 - Division of Housework- example
 - ✦ About 60% baby boomers (40s, 50s) feel wife ‘s duty
 - ✦ About 60% millennials (20s, 30s) think equal husband wife
- Global work schedules- mobile work force, clients



Global C-suite executive SHRM/ Economist *Global Firms 2020* survey, Biggest challenges next 10 years

- 1. Retaining and rewarding the best people**
- 2. Attracting the best people to the Organization**

Number one tactic: 1. **Workplace Flexibility (58%),**
2. Trust in Leadership (47%) 3. Meaningful Work (40%)

- Source: SHRM 2010 Human Potential Poll

Workplace Effectiveness Dimensions

Workplace Effectiveness Dimensions	Content/definitions
Job challenge and learning	<i>My job lets me use my skills and abilities; the work I do is meaningful to me; my job requires that I be creative; I get to do different things on my job; my job requires that I keep learning new things</i>
Supervisor task support	<i>My supervisor is supportive when I have a work problem; my supervisor recognizes good work; my supervisor keeps me informed</i>
Climate of respect	<i>Managers actively seek out information and new ideas from employees at all levels; I trust what our managers say; managers deal ethically with employees and clients</i>
Autonomy	<i>I have a lot of say about what happens in my job; I have freedom to decide what I do; I can be myself on the job</i>
Economic security	<i>I am satisfied with my opportunities for career advancement; I am satisfied with my earnings; I am satisfied with my benefits</i>
Work life fit	<i>My supervisor cares about the effect of work on my personal/family life; I have coworker support to successfully manage work and family; I have schedule flexibility to successfully manage work and family; My schedule meets my needs.</i>

Source: U.S. Families and Work Institute,

2009

Flexible work schedules



- Worker control over time, workload, place
- Offered by employers for both work-life and performance reasons
- 77% of U.S. employers allowed at least some employees to change the times they start/stop work (FWI, 2012)
- 63% allowed at least some employees to occasionally work from home

Benefits of Workplace Flexibility



Organization

- Employer of choice -Attract and retain quality employees.
- Cost savings and reduced turnover, global work schedules
- Address 24-7 & globalization of business, customer availability

Job/ Co-workers

- Increase Productivity, cross training.
- Decrease Accidents, presenteeism, tardiness, training, replacement

Employees

- Engagement, helping out, job satisfaction
- Less likely to miss work (due to illness, nonwork demands).
- Improved well-being, less depression, burnout, sleep, health, exercise; elder & child care

Community

- Involvement in community, school, doctor, and family events, shorter commutes

Implementation Challenges- Mixed messages



- Yahoo and Best Buy retract flexible policies
- Managers / workers/ teams need to adapt
 - Schedule meetings
 - Managing performance
 - Virtual teams
- Some workers challenges with overwork
- Some workers need more structured work environment

Manager & Employee Flex Savvy



- Understand **range of flexibility practices to align implementation** with workforce & company **context**
- Implementing flexibility must not be treated as an accommodation but **organizational change** empowering individuals and teams
- Alignment HR systems, culture, and performance and work-life management with **work processes**

What is Balanced Workplace Flexibility?



- **Mutually beneficial flexible arrangement for employees/ employers (Dual agenda, Bailyn, 2010)**
- **“Balanced flexibility”** for mutual gain; **(Win- Win) Not Bad Flex**
- Parties agree on **when, where** and **how**
- **Formal** or **informal/ad hoc/occasional**
- A **business practice & teamwork process** not a Program or individualized one off flex deal
- **Best as culture change** toward new ways working to serve customer while benefiting worker too

Balanced Flexibility – Avoiding Traps



1. Culture of Unbalanced Flexibility

- **Unintended consequences-negative, rather than positive outcomes**
- **Risk of extremes: from exploitation of workers (electronic tethering) to entitlement culture**

Balanced Flexibility – Avoiding Traps



2. Altering Work-Life Dynamics

- **Reduced contact between flexibility users and other organizational stakeholders**
- **Difficulties transitioning**
- **Difficulties managing careers and performance for flexibility users and their supervisors**
- **Job and Family Creep**

Balanced Flexibility – Avoiding Traps



3. Fairness (Inequality and Stigma)

- **Coworkers' perceptions of injustice/inequity and unequal distribution of flexibility access**
- **Gatekeepers of flexibility seen as being arbitrary or unfair**
- **Lack of clarity on how nonusers should work with flexibility users**
- **Backlash stigma**

Types & Examples of Workplace Flexibility

Type	Example
Time Schedule (When)	Flextime Compressed workweeks Flex shift trades/ workday schedules Self-scheduled breaks
Location/Place of Work (Where)	Telework; home based, Remote work, hoteling Virtual contact: pagers, cell, email
Amount of Work (How Much)	Job-sharing , floaters Reduced load or customized work/part-time work Working hours per week, Overtime
Work Continuity (Leaves/Breaks)	Long-term breaks/sabbaticals, career flexibility, family personal medical leaves, comp time, work breaks

Think Pair Share: Exercise



- Pick one type of flexibility
 - Time, Place, Workload, Leave
- Consider a pro and con of each type)
- For Employer
- For Employee
- How to balance

Flexibility Benefit & use may differ by type



- Homeworking- Telework

Benefits:


- Reduces commute to/from work, employee comfort/clothing,
- Less overhead costs at central work site
- Attract/ retain talent,

Who: Professionals and call centers, IT jobs

Caveats: Employer and Employee

- Communicating with colleagues
- Pressure to be available during standard work hours (visibility/ face time)
- Not all work can be taken off site
- Tech. support.,

Flexibility Benefit & use may differ by type

- 
- Compressed Work Week
 - Less absenteeism, turnover, better use of 24-7 systems,
 - Who: nurses, blue collar manufacturing
 - Caveat: fatigue, child care
- Part time/Reduced load
 - Turnover, burnout, retain workers with interest in juggling multiple life roles
 - Who: any job but especially, older workers, those with family, health, or school demands, gradual return to work
 - Caveat: part time pay for full time work, career management

Work Smart Case



- ***Global US company needs to interact with partners in different countries and time zones***
- ***Real estate prices rising***
- ***Changing workforce- more women, elder care, child***
- ***Attracting and retaining top talent***
- ***Productivity***
 - *Work-life balance*
 - *Commute time, expense*



Real Estate Costs and Constraints



- Company spends \$200 million annually on occupancy expense.
- Employee population growing, but company-owned buildings at capacity
- Each working day in US there are 900 partners using VPN (1 in 8 of staff)
- At any given time, only 50% of desks occupied
- Each vacant desk costs the company \$7,000 per year

The Culture



- Conservative and Traditional
- Extremely high levels of customer service
- “Face time” perceived to be the way to promotions

Discovery of the solution



- Proposal
- Pilot
- Practicalities
 - Risk Management
 - Productivity Measurement
 - Evaluation
- Approval

Solution: WorkSmart Program



- Formal approach to flexible work
- Participants give up dedicated office space in exchange for a network of options (home office, business unit flex space)
- Decisions made by Business Units (BU)
- Voluntary program, though BU's identified as eligible are strongly urged to enroll.

Solution: WorkSmart Program



- WorkSmart, partners exchange traditional office/cubical for network of locations including flexible office space (hot desking), home offices, client sites or even coffee shops.
 - Participants must clear personal belongings from their workstations and use drop-in flex desks when in the office
 - Desks are not allocated or personalized – must be available to any participant at any time
- General guideline is to come in the office at least 1x a week and work remotely at least 1x a week.
- Individual teams can specify working guidelines via the WorkSmart Charter

Eligibility Criteria

- Suitability of job functions and risk ratings (1-4) will be evaluated..
- Contractors, temps and high-processing groups are not eligible

- Participant's home office must be quiet, safe, ergonomic and must be in the same state and country as their work office.
- Overtime eligible partners not eligible.

Risk

HR

Tech

Mgr

- Participants must have home internet & contingency plan in case of power outage
- Laptops and soft phones provided

- Business Unit and Manager retain right of veto
- Managers review suitability of participant's home office set up

Employee Requirements & Pilot Evaluation



- Home office equipment, other than laptops, responsibility of individual. Lights, electricity, heat, internet, office supplies, etc. employee responsibility; not reimbursed.
- Participants should remain in the program for a minimum of 90 days & complete bi-weekly surveys during 90 day monitoring period for candid feedback.
- After 90 day milestone, share compiled survey results and recommended next steps

Productivity Results



- **Improved concentration at home**
- **Increased work-life balance and satisfaction**
- **Increased engagement**
- **Improved team communications when adopting collaborative technology tools (Lync, WebEx, desktop sharing, etc.)**
- **Decreased time spent commuting**
- **Lower turnover**

Bottom Line



- WorkSmart enables future growth without incurring additional costs, supports business continuity, enables mobility and collaboration with partners across the globe and reduces occupancy expense.
- Mutually beneficial solution for organization & employee.

Table Exercise



- What is a flexibility implementation challenge you are facing?/ What is an aspect of your organization's current flexibility program or workplace flexibility approach would you like to see improved?
- Brief issue identification (1-2 sentence)
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- Scribe makes a list of each type of issue by person.
- Pick 1- 2 cases.

Tables- Deeper Dive



- Presenter: Illustrative story or example to illustrate
- Table: Clarifying Questions- applying Concepts
 - 1) **Balanced flex :Employer and employee views**
 - 2) **Culture (identify what value or norm is challenging)**
 - 3) **Equity**
 - 4) **Unintended consequences**
 - 4) **Something else (identify) .**
- Brainstorm- Next steps
 - Approaches to better diagnose or move forward on issue.
 - ✦ Prioritize one short term/long-term action to take
 - ✦ Summarize debrief- 1 take away and brief example
- Repeat (if time)

Working Smart- Implementing Workplace Flexibility



- Determine which type of flex approach fits team, job, Develop manager, employer, employee capability
- Adapt Work Processes
 - Coordination, communication protocols
 - Ensure client outcomes, security
- Invest HR systems scheduling systems, cross training
 - Performance metrics/management & org. change
 - Training Supportive Supervisor Behaviors, Flexstyles/ Boundaries
 - Work culture that focuses on results while valuing employee well-being
 - Build Equity, Trust
- Pilot- evaluate- continuous improvement

Employees have growing needs for flexibility: Employers need to change & adapt



References



For More Information:

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