Creating a Culture of Work-Life Flexibility: What Leaders & Staff Should Know

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Welcome! & Learning Objectives

- Workplace Flexibility: What and why it matters
- Types
- Benefits/Tradeoffs Employee, Employee
- Driving Change: Examples of Implementing Balanced flexibility practices
Work-Life Relationships

Ellen Ernst Kossek, Ph.D.
A changing workforce:

- In 2010, women comprised 47% of the workforce\(^1\)
- In 2010, 71% of women in the workforce had children of 18 years or younger\(^1\)
- Among employed parents, 20% are single parents\(^2\)
- Women Primary earner in over 1/3 families

\(^2\) Families and Work Institute, 2008
More workers are facing complex life stressors such as long commutes, doctor visits during the workday, time to exercise, or second jobs.
• Employment among people aged 55 and older has increased to an all-time high of 40.4 percent \(^3\)
• These workers also face additional stressors outside the workplace, such as elder care for their own parents.

\(^3\) Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010
Between 13% and 22% of American workers are juggling a caregiving role with working.\textsuperscript{4}

Low level employees are just as likely to have caregiving responsibilities as higher-wage employees, but have fewer financial resources with which to meet these responsibilities.\textsuperscript{5}

\textsuperscript{4} Gallup Healthways Wellbeing Survey, 2011
\textsuperscript{5} Neal & Hammer, 2007
Growing Challenges at Work and Home

- 75% working parents say they do not have enough time for their children (or each other)
- 50% of all children live in single parent household before 18
- Dual earner family modal U.S.– only 17% single earner breadwinner
- 65 and over fastest growing population, pension gap, replacement workers, increasing elder care
- Fewer employees want jobs with more responsibility

Boundaries between work time and non-work time are increasingly blurred.

Many supervisors or staff work more than 40 hours per week, which makes it difficult to find a balance between job & family demands.

By 2008, 60 percent of fathers in dual-earning couples were experiencing some or a lot of conflict compared to about 47 percent of women.¹³

¹³ Galinsky, 2013.
Spillover Costs to Employees & Families

Work-to-Life/Family Spillover when factors at the workplace affect personal lives and vice-versa.

- Education of children suffers when parents cannot meet with teachers, oversee homework, and attend school events.
- Some parents reported that their working conditions affected their children’s health—a child missing a needed doctor’s appointment or a child failing to receive adequate early care, causing an illness or condition to worsen.¹⁴

Defining Nonwork/Family: A Broad Perspective
Includes all employees

- Family members may include a spouse/partner, children and grandchildren, parents and grandparents, and siblings.
- Many people today have close relationships with friends, neighbors, roommates, volunteer group members, and coworkers.
- It’s important to recognize that these “families” can serve the same function as traditional families and can be just as important to a person as more traditional family members.
95% of Millennials say that work-life balance is important to them.

46% of employees say that flexible options that support work-life balance are important to their job satisfaction.

9% of companies say their personnel or practices sometimes stand in the way of workplace flexibility.

Source, Inc. Magazine 2013
Growing competitive challenges

- Economic Pressures
  - Universities moving to “state supported”; constant need to show value of on-campus education; global student and faculty market

- Understaffing & Hiring Freezes; Overwork

- Low Morale/Motivation, Rising Workloads

- Changing nature work - no longer 100% performed at desk machine

- Pace of work increased
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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Workplace Effectiveness Dimensions</th>
<th>Content/definitions</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Job challenge and learning</strong></td>
<td><em>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.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Supervisor task support</strong></td>
<td><em>My supervisor is supportive when I have a work problem; my supervisor recognizes good work; my supervisor keeps me informed.</em></td>
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<td><strong>Climate of respect</strong></td>
<td><em>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.</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Autonomy</strong></td>
<td><em>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.</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Economic security</strong></td>
<td><em>I am satisfied with my opportunities for career advancement; I am satisfied with my earnings; I am satisfied with my benefits.</em></td>
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<td><strong>Work life fit</strong></td>
<td><em>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 successful manage work and family; My schedule meets my needs.</em></td>
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</tbody>
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**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
63% allowed at least some employees to occasionally work from home

Families and Work Institute, 2012
Flexibility Gaining Ground

From 2008 to 2014, most forms of flexible work arrangements for at least some employees became more common.

FLEXIBILITY GAINS GROUND

- Flexible starting and quitting times: 79% in 2008, 81% in 2014
- Option to work longer hours on fewer days: 38% in 2008, 43% in 2014
- Can work from home on occasion: 50% in 2008, 67% in 2014
- Can work from home regularly: 23% in 2008, 38% in 2014
- Paid time off for family or personal needs: 73% in 2008, 82% in 2014
- Choice of whether or not to work overtime: 27% in 2008, 45% in 2014
- Control over when to take breaks: 84% in 2008, 92% in 2014
- May gradually return after childbirth or adoption: 77% in 2008, 74% in 2014

Sources:
1. ISTOCK (4)
2. WCRLDATWORK (THAT FEEL-GOOD FEELING)
3. REGUS GROUP (THE RETENTION ADVANTAGE)
4. FAMILY AND WORK INSTITUTE'S 2014 NATIONAL STUDY OF EMPLOYERS (ALL OTHERS)
### Types & Examples of Workplace Flexibility

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

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

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Challenges to implementing flexibility when done ineffectively

Stratified workforce schedules of “haves and have-nots”, Favortism

Work intensification

Lack of HR team integration

Limited technology and resources

Lack of performance, staffing, process redesign

Some people need structure
The Flexibility Spectrum

- **Individual Accommodations**: Special arrangements or "deals" granted on a case-by-case basis and often kept secret.

- **Policies and Programs in Place**: Policies and programs exist, but flexibility is used only in "pockets" across the organization.

- **Flexibility Has Many Faces**: Widespread use of formal and informal flexibility to meet business and individual needs.

- **New Ways of Working**: A results-driven culture where flexible work practices utilized as a management strategy to achieve business results.

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Goal: Develop Manager & Employee Flex Savvy

Understand **range of flexibility practices to align implementation** with workforce and 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**.
Tip 1: Develop Balanced Workplace Flexibility

“Balanced flexibility” for mutual benefit of employee and employer; (Win-Win); Not Bad Flex

Parties agree on when, where and how

Can be 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  
| | • Avoid extremes: Exploitation of workers (electronic tethering) to entitlement culture  
| 2. Altering Work-Life Dynamics | • Reduced contact between flexibility users and other organizational stakeholders  
| | • 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
Workplace Flexibility for Mutual Benefit

Flexibility/Work Control
Leadership
Interpersonal Context
Development Opportunities
Work-Life Interactions

Engagement

Performance
Well-being

Source: Kossek, Rupp, Wilson, Porter, Law- Penrose, 2015
As part of an initiative to support high-level science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) workers at universities, the National Science Foundation (NSF) recently began a 10-year Career-Life Balance Initiative. The goal is to expand family-friendly, flexible work practices for scientists nationwide to attract, retain and advance the best researchers in STEM fields. At the launch event at the White House in September 2011, participant Gina Schmalzle said, “There were representatives there from industry, academia, and government all echoing the same message, that these policies are good for everyone and they’re especially good for our economy in a time when we can’t afford to miss out on the talent of women or of anybody.”

Flexibility in the workplace is possible when workers and managers are engaged in honest, open and ongoing communication with each other, when there is mutual commitment to the needs of the (Organization), and (employees) are respected and trusted. (Employees) and supervisors are encouraged to jointly explore ways to meet workplace needs and to respect the important and critical dimensions of people's lives outside the workplace. All needs should be considered when exploring the ideas of flexible scheduling.

Examples of flexible scheduling may include: modified work or lunch hours, compressed work weeks, part time schedules and job sharing. Workers and supervisors are encouraged to seek assistance from all available resources in developing flexible arrangements. Resources can include, but are not limited to, human resources offices, union representatives, the Office of Work/Life Resources and Regional Problem Solving Teams (RPSTs)."
Tip 3 Understand that flexibility benefit & use & implementation challenges 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, some desk clerical work, 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.,

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Tip 3: Flexibility benefit & use may differ by type

Compressed Work Week
Pro: Less absenteeism, turnover, better use of 24-7 systems,

Who: nurses, blue collar manufacturing

Caveat: fatigue, child care
Tip 3: Flexibility Use may differ by Type

Part time/Reduced load

Pro: Turnover, burnout, retain workers with interest in juggling multiple life roles

Who: any job but especially, caregivers of children and elders, older workers, those health, or school demands, gradual return to work

Caveat: Part time pay for full time work, career management, work intensification
Tip 3: Flexibility Practices for hourly and customer facing jobs

Cross-training with certification and replacement planning
Summer hours for Clerical staff with cross training
Team based work system with compressed work week in exchange for job security
Shift trades, bidding for vacations
Self scheduling
Incentives for scheduling during peak days
  Staffing buffers with rotating employees
Annualized or monthly hours, e.g. lighter schedule mid week or summer
Tip 4  Customized & adaptive approach to fit org. & job context

Information Technology (TOMO)

- Work can be completed off site
- Middle Class Wages
- Long hours
- Meetings
- Mixed gender, but more males in general, especially in upper management

Health Care (LEEF)

- Structured, regulated environment
- Work most often has to be done on site
- Interdependent tasks
- Multicultural population
- Lower wages
- Lack of flexible hours
- Predominantly female

Source: Work Family Health Network
Review of the Big Picture

“Four-months of social and structural changes to increase control and support”

- **Face-to-face** social migration (all)
  - Group interactive training sessions
  - Employee transfer of training activities

- **weSupport** training (supervisors)
  - Computer-based training and habit-tracking
CUSTOMIZATION OF CONTENT FOR HEALTH CARE

• Enact schedule control in regulated and structured environment limited

• Focus on problem solving what scheduling issues can be changed

• Role of the scheduler

• Empowering workers to make changes in processes

• Developing solutions rather than relying on management, using guideline:

  “Safe, legal, cost-neutral”
Supervisors can help.

- Research on work-life conflict and stress has shown that leaders and supervisors who directly interact with employees have some ability to increase or reduce the work-life stress experienced by those workers.
- We see leaders supervisors as the linking pin to a positive work setting by providing support for employee well-being and performance.
5 conduct Leader support behavior training

- **NIH funded study** trained supervisors to support workers’ family/personal lives through family supportive supervisor behaviors (FSSB) (Kossek et al., 2016)

- **Emotional Support for Family**
  - My supervisor takes the time to learn about employees’ personal needs.

- **Practical Support with Scheduling Conflicts**
  - I can rely on my supervisor to help me with scheduling conflicts if I need it.

- **Work-Family Role Modeling**
  - My supervisor is a good role model for work and nonwork balance.

- **Creative Work-Family Management**
  - My supervisor is able to find ways to work with employees to meet both the needs of associates and the business.
Tip 6 Flex is a team sport process

Training and Blueprint Process

Six components of the Flex Team Blueprint:

- Flex Team Agreement
- Communication and Team-Building Tactics
- Performance Management Strategies
- Culture Map
- Technology Optimization
- Success Measures

Source: National Workplace Flexibility Study: Kavanaugh et al. 2013,
Work-Life Boundaries: Flexstyles

Kossek, Ruderman, Brady, Hanum, 2012
In partnership with center for creative leadership
Behaviors

- Integrators
- Separators
- Work Firsters
- Family Firsters
- Cyclers
Tip 7 Pilot and Evaluate risk management as team migration Example: 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*

*Culture*

Conservative and Traditional

Extremely high levels of customer service

“Face time” perceived to be the way to promotions
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
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

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

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

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

- 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.
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
**Fostering Positive Engagement**

**THAT FEEL-GOOD FEELING**

The graph below depicts senior managers’ responses to the question “What would your work force say is the effect of your organization’s flexibility programs on...” Overwhelmingly, flexibility is seen as a plus.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Engagement</th>
<th>Motivation</th>
<th>Satisfaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source Inc. magazine, 2013
• **Determine which type of flex approach fits team, job**

  Develop manager, employer, employee capability
  Coordination, communication protocols
  Adapt Work Processes – ensure client outcomes, security, back ups
  Invest HR systems scheduling systems, cross training
  Performance metrics & org. change
  Work culture that focuses on results that matter most for customer (high value work) while valuing employee well-being
  Build equity, trust
Areas of Opportunity

Expand flex literacy via training
Re-Craft practices to flexible work process
Empowerment link to employee involvement problem solving teams
Move away from one size fits all environment.
  Think about dept. or work units in collective for better team functioning, customer results
Subordinate Development
Participative(Bottom up) yet strategic (Leader)
Customized & adaptive approach, pilot & evaluate for organizational learning
Employees have growing needs for Flexibility; More work is occurring 24-7

Employers (and employees) need to change & adapt
Thank You

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For More Information:
