

## EFFECTIVE WORKPLACE SERIES

### WORK-FAMILY INFORMATION ON: FLEXIBLE WORK SCHEDULES

SUPPORTED BY: THE ALFRED P. SLOAN FOUNDATION    COMPILED BY: JUDI CASEY, MSW

SLOAN WORK AND FAMILY  
RESEARCH NETWORK  
BOSTON COLLEGE

WWW.BC.EDU/WFNETWORK

### WHY ARE FLEXIBLE WORK SCHEDULES AN IMPORTANT WORKPLACE ISSUE?

"Flexible work schedules, such as flextime and a compressed work week, offer employees a sense of control over their daily work. This flexibility greatly eases the burden of busy employees as they try to juggle their work and home lives. Creating a work environment with this level of employee control and engagement lifts morale and in turn elevates productivity. Today, our employees tell us that flexibility is the single most important aspect of our work-life environment." **Nancy Mc Millan, Workforce Diversity, Eli Lilly and Company**



#### WHAT ARE FLEXIBLE WORK SCHEDULES?

A flexible work schedule is a type of flexible work arrangement that allows employees to vary when they begin and end their work day to accommodate their individual and family needs. Sometimes called "flextime" or "flexitime", this arrangement focuses exclusively on the work schedule rather than the location of work (telework), work processes (redesign), or the total number of hours worked (part-time work, sabbaticals). Variations include daily and traditional flextime, compressed work weeks or arrangements such as 9/80.

#### Want more related DEFINITIONS?

[http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic\\_extended.php?id=2&type=6](http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic_extended.php?id=2&type=6)

#### WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF FLEXIBLE WORK SCHEDULES?

For employees

- Increased satisfaction and productivity
- Reduced stress and health care costs
- Decreased absenteeism and presenteeism
- Reduced commuting time

For organizations

- Improved retention and reduced turnover
- Higher levels of loyalty and commitment
- No change in manager's supervisory time
- Attracts diverse employees who may not be able to conform to rigid schedules (i.e., disabled)

#### % DID YOU KNOW?

- Employers are increasingly allowing their employees more flexibility in the workplace. Employers permitting some employees to change their starting and quitting times on a daily basis rose from 24% in 1998 to 31% in 2005. Employers allowing compressed workweeks climbed from 37% in 1998 to 44% in 2005 (Families and Work Institute, 2005).
- Deloitte estimates a savings of \$41.5 million in turnover costs alone, by retaining employees who would have left the firm if they did not have a flexible arrangement (Corporate Voices, 2005).
- "Employees with more access to flexible work arrangements are more committed to their current employers - more loyal and willing to work harder than required to help their employers succeed" (Families and Work Institute, 2002).
- "Seventy percent of managers and 87 percent of employees reported that working a flexible arrangement had a positive or very positive impact on productivity" (Center for Work & Family, 2000).

#### Want more STATISTICS or the full references for above statistics?

[http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic\\_extended.php?id=2&type=1](http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic_extended.php?id=2&type=1)

#### WHY ARE ORGANIZATIONS IMPLEMENTING FLEXIBLE WORK SCHEDULES?

- Links shown between satisfied employees, satisfied customers and higher shareholder value
- Provides a low or no cost alternative with high return on investment
- Requested by all types of employees - men and women, younger and older workers
- Positions you as an "employer of choice"
- Responds to 24/7 needs of global economy
- Capitalizes on new technology that facilitates flexible work



#### REPORTS WITH MORE INFORMATION

- Boston College Global Workforce Roundtable. (n.d.) Flexible work arrangements in Asia: Executive summary. Retrieved February 12, 2008, from the Center for Work & Family web site: [http://www.bc.edu/centers/cwf/meta-elements/pdf/AP\\_Executive\\_Summary.pdf](http://www.bc.edu/centers/cwf/meta-elements/pdf/AP_Executive_Summary.pdf)
- Corporate Voices for Working Families with WFD Consulting. (2005, November). Business impacts of flexibility: An imperative for expansion. Washington, DC: Corporate Voices.
- Kornbluh, K. (2005). Work & Family Program Policy Proposal: Win-win flexibility, Washington, DC: New America Foundation.
- Lyons, W. (2006, July). Flex in the city: The story of a mayor and his vision (Brief no. 4). Washington, DC: Center for Law and Social Policy.

#### Want more OVERVIEWS AND BRIEFS or the full references for the above reports?

[http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic\\_extended.php?id=2&type=7](http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic_extended.php?id=2&type=7)



#### SUGGESTED READINGS

- Families and Work Institute. (2006). When work works: Making work "work": New ideas from the winners of the Alfred P. Sloan Awards for Business Excellence in Workplace Flexibility. New York, NY: Families and Work Institute.
- Kossek, E. E., & Lee, M.D. (2005). Making flexibility work: What managers have learned about implementing reduced-load work. Technical report of an Alfred P. Sloan Study. East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University.
- Levin-Epstein, J. (2006). Getting punched: The job and family clock, It's time for flexible work for workers of all wages. Washington, DC: Center for Law and Policy.
- Moen, P., & Kelly, E. (2007). The flexible work and well-being report. Minneapolis, MN: Flexible Work and Well-being Project, University of Minnesota.
- WFD Consulting. (2007). The new career paradigm: Flexibility briefing. Newton, MA: WFD Consulting.

#### Want more READINGS?

[http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic\\_extended.php?id=2&type=2&linktype=suggested](http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic_extended.php?id=2&type=2&linktype=suggested)

The Effective Workplace Series provides a summary of the Flexible Work Schedules Topic Page.

To visit the Flexible Work Schedules Topic Page, go to <http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic.php?id=2>