

Expert Group Meeting

Flexibility Vision for the UN

Quotes from the Experts

“Big Picture Dreams” for the UN with respect to flexibility:

- + “The UN as the normative model for work life balance.”
- + “The UN as setting the example: being the change, the state of the art.”
- + “A UN where behaviours , attitudes and communication are aligned.”
- + “Having policies that would allow every employee to be in their personal work life equilibrium.”
- + “A culture of trust that empowers employees to add flexibility to their lives.”
- + “Having the leaders realize that work life flexibility is about me too.”
- + “Work that helps to contribute to good mental health instead of bad mental condition.”

Definitions of Flexibility

- + “How and when work gets done and how careers are organized so that work ‘works’ for both the employer and employee”
- + “Allows each person to work fully”
- + “A culture of flexibility is characterized by widespread use of flexibility, absence of perceived penalties for using flexibility and an emphasis on results rather than ‘face time.’”

Expert Group Meeting on *Work Life Policy, Practice and Potential*
United Nations, 9 11 November 2010

Flexibility Implies

Organizational Culture

- + A culture of trust that allows employees to add flexibility to their lives

Flexible Work Arrangements Work Methods that are:

- + Beneficial to both men and women
- + Reason neutral and without stigma
- + Increasingly expected as routine work process by younger work force

Career Flexibility

- + Career paths that incorporate differences in organisational unit, functions, location, schedule and role over a full career.

Key Messages

- + Flexibility should not be *presented or perceived* as a benefit, accommodation, or privilege to employees but rather as a responsibility for both the employer and employee so that both may thrive.
- + This is an age of decreasing resources and increasing demands; therefore, must do more with less.
- + Flexibility yields the “more” with

The Case for Flexibility: Surveys and Studies

Survey of Executives

Work/Life or Dual Centric vs. Work Centric

“Dual centric” employees equally prioritize their work and personal lives, and they are equally likely to be women and men

- + A 2008 study* of executives at 10 multinational companies asked: In the past year, how often have you put your:
 - + Job before your personal or family life?
 - + Personal or family life before your job?
- + The study revealed that:
 - + People who place the same priority on work and their personal/family life have the *highest ratings for feeling successful at work*
 - + 42% of work centric people versus only 26% of dual centric ones experience *moderate or high levels of stress*
 - + 56% of work centric people report they find it *difficult* or *very difficult* to manage work and personal life demands compared to only 31% of dual centric people

*Source: *Leaders in a Global Economy* (Families and Work Institute, Catalyst, and The Center for Work and Family- Boston College)
<http://www.familiesandwork.org/site/research/reports/dual-centric.pdf>

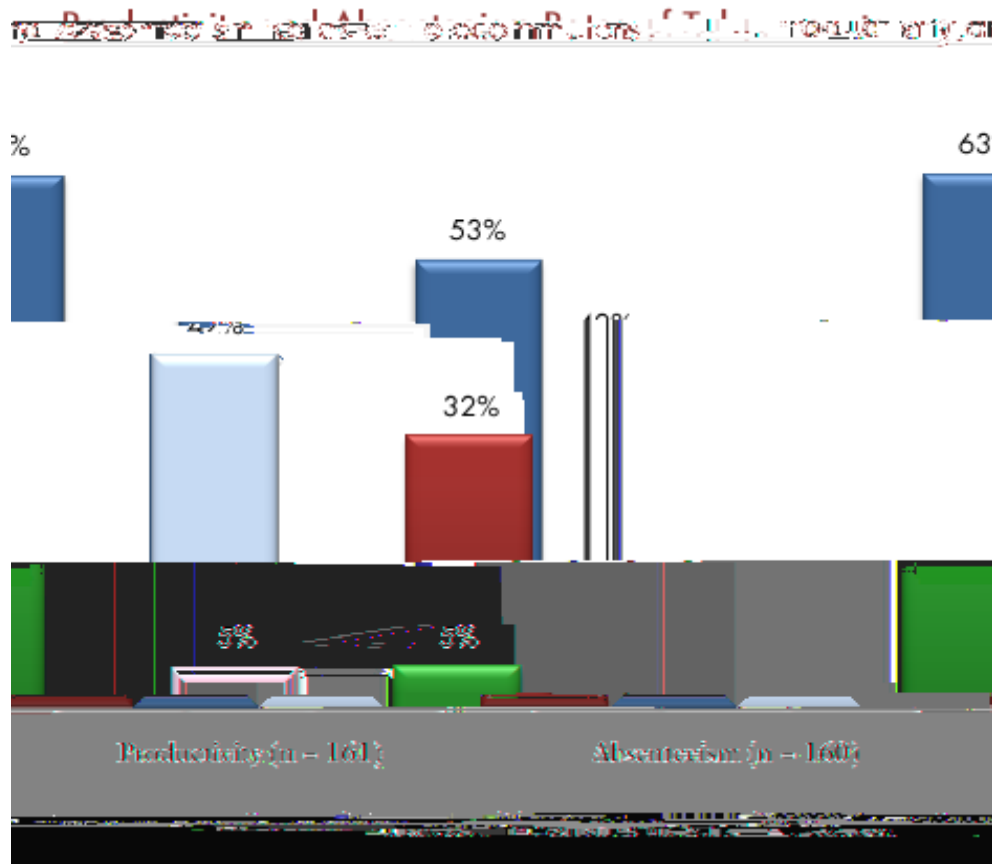
The Case for Flexibility: Surveys and Studies

Surveys of Human Resources Professionals

- + According to a 2009 study conducted by the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM):
 - + *Two thirds* of HR professionals believe that the implementation of flexible work arrangements positively impact:
 - + Employee morale, job satisfaction, engagement and retention
 - + The quality of

The Case for Flexibility: Surveys and Studies

Surveys of Human Resources Professionals ...con't



Source: *Workplace Flexibility in the 21st Century*, Society for Human Resource Management (2010): www.shrm.org/research

The Case for Flexibility: Surveys and Studies

UN OSAGI / DM Survey Results 2009

Approximately 2500 Respondents

- + 64% 69% of FWA users reported higher levels of organizational loyalty and increased productivity, job satisfaction and motivation
- + Nearly 75% of respondents indicated a strong interest in using the existing FWA options
- + 67% indicated that FWAs are a modern tool allowing better work life fit for employees
- + 73% of managers reported telecommuting arrangements were working well (DM survey)

The Case for Flexibility: Surveys and Studies

Relationship with Job Satisfaction, Engagement and Stress

- + Flexibility – even small measures – in when and where work gets done yields powerfully significant influence on:
 - a) **Job satisfaction** Studies show a linear correlation between degree of flexibility and higher levels of job satisfaction
 - b) **Employee commitment and level of engagement** – Flexibility's most powerful effect is an increase in employee engagement and commitment
 - c) **Lower levels of stress and work life conflict; improved health outcomes** Stress is the leading cause across industries and institutions of unscheduled absences, and it is a major source of productivity loss due to presenteeism (i.e., when an employee comes to work and is "present" but not productive)

- + Studies repeatedly demonstrate that FWAs reduce employee stress, yielding the product in the same or less time

Public Sector Work Life Initiatives

Some Examples

- + Singapore – Ministry of Manpower
 - + Flexi Works! – grant of up to S\$100,000 for companies to hire new workers on part time or flexible arrangements
 - + Work Life Works! (WoW!) – up to S\$20,000 of funding available to each selected company to implement work life strategies
 - + Work life toolkit

- + Finland – Statistics Finland
 - + Comprehensive work life policies
 - + Work life surveys since 1977

- + United States – White House Flexibility Forum – Department of Labor
 - + New work life office in the White House and one in every federal office in all U.S. states
 - + Women’s Bureau flexibility dialogue s/s/ À •(Â á X

Private Sector Work Life Initiatives

Some Examples ...con't

Flexibility Program	Description	Companies (notional – not comprehensive)
Flex Hours	+Variable work schedule	IBM Corporation
Career Path Flexibility	+Employees can work part time of adjust hours after pregnancy +Employees aged 59.5 can reduce hours and begin collecting retirement benefits	Deloitte, Intel, Mitre Corporation
Part time/ Reduced Workload	+Employees can reduce their house to less than full time	IBM

Source: Executive Summary of *Overcoming the Implementation Gap: How 20 Leading Companies are Making Flexibility Work* (Boston College Center for Work & Family) – http://www.bc.edu/centers/cwf/meta-elements/pdf/Flex_ExecutiveSummary_for_web.pdf

Flexible Work Arrangements at the UN

- + Flexibility as a concept is not new to the UN: it already exists in many forms and in many entities. It is more than just the FWA options. *So, it is more about implementation, which is often reluctant and grudging.*
- + Maternity, paternity, sick/personal days and emergency leave are already entitlements and part of a culture of flexibility.
- + Therefore, more than a radical change – what is needed is a realignment of understanding and practice and broadening of implementation, especially of the specific Flexible Work Arrangements (FWAs)
- + Flexible work arrangements (FWAs) available to UN staff :
 - Staggered working hours
 - Compressed work schedules: ten working days in nine
 - Scheduled break for external learning activities
 - Work away from the office (telecommuting)
 - Job Share (but often limited to host country nationals due to visa issues)

Areas of Focus

Expert Group Recommendations

- + Organizational culture – trust and respect constitute the foundational elements: You trust and respect my work life needs and I will trust and respect your organizational needs: *UN could do more in this area*
- + Flexible work arrangements – organizational means to manifest culture of flexibility: *UN has the basic policy package and many UN employees are already working flexibly (formally or informally) – needs mostly to broaden and strengthen implementation*
- + Career path flexibility – flexibility to synchronize and meet larger life needs over a career path e.g. burdens of care: *UN has partially achieved this but more needs to be done, especially given demographic and generational attitudinal shifts*

Organizational Culture Recommendations

- + Good flexibility practices can currently be found throughout the United Nations system, but must be more embedded and woven into workplace culture
- + Objective: Transform the UN into an “employer of choice” – not notionally but measurably using standard metrics (available on line free)
- + Create UN partnerships with the greater flexibility field by fostering relationships with external organizations and initiatives, including:
 - + Families and Work Institute’s Sloan Awards for Excellence in Workplace Flexibility
 - + Center for Work Life Policy Hidden Brain Drain Task Force
 - + Corporate Voices Workplace Flexibility Campaign
 - + Obama’s First White House Forum on Flexibility...and report publicly on developments

Organizational Culture Recommendations ..cont'd

+ Communication and awareness raising strategy

- Continue consistent and frequent highest level support (SG and DSG)
- Reframe the discussion to position flexibility not as a “perk,” staff accommodation; rather as a powerful organizational tool and necessary component of optimal and modern management, productivity and outcomes
- Designate “champions” within each large department and/or large unit for FWA
- Use new and validated instruments to generate important metrics to measure for example employee engagement and commitment
- Make the organization aware of the results of the metrics pre and post flexibility pilots
- Conduct Stakeholder analysis which maps receptive and less receptive units – broadening systematically the success stories, working with pilot entities or departments or units to set examples
- Recognition is a powerful motivator for change: publicize good examples of management and staff stories

Organizational Culture

Quotes from Experts

Leslie Perlow, Harvard Business School

- + “Work life flexibility is everyone’s problem. What we are really trying to do is enable ‘good intensity’ and get rid of ‘bad intensity.’”
- + “Can we create a process that can enable us to change the system?”
- + “This is a problem in organizations—and it’s not just about any particular organizations—people have no life outside of work. They have to rethink how they live.”
- + What team based flexibility did for BCG:
 - + “People began to open up because their calendar was mutual. They had to help each other so people who began by openly speaking about work also ended up speaking about their lives. There is a humanness to it.”
 - + “Created passion and care for each other and collective action.”
 - + “Created collective experimentation and increased efficiency and effectiveness, as well as predictability and control.”

Organizational Culture

Quotes from Experts ...con't

Amy Richman, WFD Consulting

- + "People are operating as if they're on the front lines of mortal combat all the time when really, at most organizations, there are key times when most places are busy, and other times, people can be off."

Wendy Breiterman, Johnson & Johnson

- + "Managers see that Gen Yers loyalty is to themselves so that retaining and engaging Gen Yers is a matter of letting them have control of their lives."

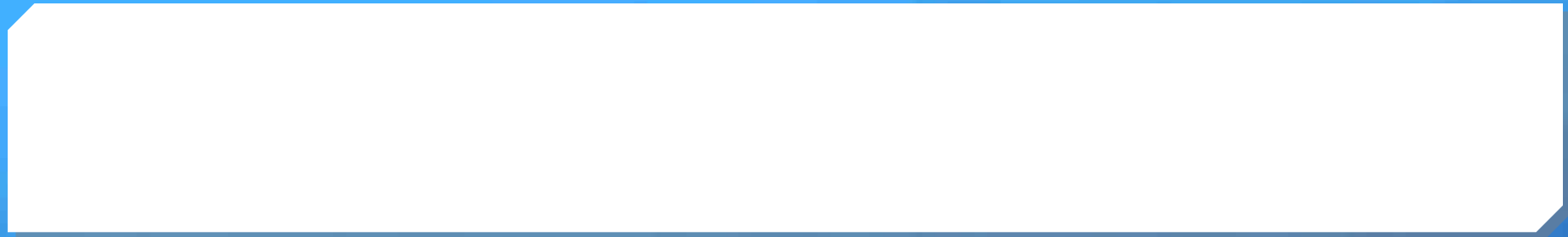
Therese Valadez, American Express

- + "There won't be change without changing the culture."

Flexible Work Arrangements

MYTH: Massive exodus of staff clamouring to use FWA simultaneously and universally – especially F

W



Flexible Work Arrangements Recommendations

- + Establish a Steering Committee to oversee and encourage implementation of flexibility
- + Adopt principles/guidelines for flexibility that aid in establishing, monitoring and contributing to successful FWA outcomes
- + Add a FWA that may allow for seasonal flexibility (e.g. GA extended hours compensated non financially during flexibility at other times)
- + Encourage use of team (e.g. business unit) vs. individual approach to FWA implementation
- + Integrate flexibility into mainstream management practices: Include flexible management as an explicit competency/requirement in job descriptions
- + Select some managers to lead by example (and convince themselves that it works) i.e. pilot output and not face time based staff assessment
- + Systematically use metrics instruments such as surveys to document change in perceptions and use of FWAs, as well as to educate
- + Publicize/designate FWA FPs tasked to assist with informal resolution of FWA cases in each department without burdening administration
- + Monitor requests, approvals and general issues with implementation
- + Showcase current good practices
- + OSAGI/ EO survey is now underway

Flexible Work Arrangements

Quotes from Experts

Amy Richman, WFD

- + Across industries, people spend 20% of time on low value work. So what can we do about that? Imagine all the things people could do if we could fix it so employees would have better work life harmony and companies would have higher productivity. This type of low value work depresses engagement and is especially frustrating for high performers."
- + "Having control of how you work is a very strong predictor of health."
- + On PNC Financial Team Approach to Compressed Work Week: "It makes everyone into a leader."
- + "Strategies have to come from both directions—top down but also a huge part of it is involving the employees to make it work."

Career Path Flexibility

MYTH: Flexibility needs to be limited only to the organization's daily or weekly work

FACT: Flexibility can be applied equally to longer term horizons – monthly, seasonal (e.g. GA Session), and/or yearly work or over a career

Flexibility Metrics Recommendations

- + Conduct surveys on flexibility – what is not measured becomes invisible and what is invisible ceases to exist i.e. no accountability

Focalat

UN Women – the New Gender Entity

- + The composite entity will have eight functions, as outlined in the Deputy Secretary General's papers of August 2007 and July 2008. These include:
 - (h) Monitor and report on system wide compliance with intergovernmental mandates on gender balance, including at the senior and decision making levels. (Page 6 of A/64/588)

- + C. Headquarters level functions
11. At Headquarters, the composite entity will provide substantive support to Inter governmental processes. In addition to other global functions, it will support regional and country level activities. For its key Headquarters functions, the composite entity will:
 - (e) Monitor and report on United Nations system compliance and efforts to develop and apply internal United Nations gender equality policies, including achieving gender balance, eliminating harassment and promoting work life balance; (Page 10 of A/64/588)

Conclusion

- + The United Nations is in a position to lead by example *by implementation of policies that already exist and innovating further.*
- + A culture of flexibility aligns with modern management methodology yielding powerful gains in employee engagement and satisfaction as well as productivity
- + Flexibility is formally already part of the strategic management methods employed across industry management04

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