

1MFWF FACT SHEET: THE BUSINESS CASE FOR WORK FLEXIBILITY



Work flexibility is a strategic business imperative.

7 WAYS BUSINESSES BENEFIT FROM WORK FLEXIBILITY

1. INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY

- ◆ Stanford University economics professor Nicholas Bloom conducted a 10-month study with a company of 16,000-employees and found that telecommuting led to a 13% increase in productivity. Telecommuting workers worked more hours, took shorter breaks, and used less sick leave.
- ◆ AT&T found its telecommuters worked five more hours at home per week than its office workers. JD Edwards teleworkers were shown to be 20-25 percent more productive than their office colleagues. And American Express employees who worked from home were 43 percent more productive than workers in the office. (*Global Workplace Analytics*)
- ◆ “We have decades of studies showing that people are happier, healthier, and more productive when they feel autonomous. It’s because autonomy is a basic psychological need. The more autonomous we feel, the more likely we are to be engaged.” -social psychologist Ron Friedman

Learn more: [How Work Flexibility Improves Productivity](#)

2. IMPROVED RECRUITING & RETENTION

- ◆ Remote work expands your talent pool to include professionals who aren’t in your geographic area.
- ◆ Along with telecommuting, flexible scheduling and part-time options help recruit highly-qualified candidates who either can’t or don’t want to work a traditional full-time in-office job, including parents, people with disabilities or chronic health issues, caregivers, people living in rural communities, and military spouses and veterans.
- ◆ The increasingly powerful demographic group of millennials is likely to change the economy in many ways. When it comes to their jobs, millennials expect flexibility.
- ◆ Two-thirds of people want to work from home, and 36 percent would choose that option over a pay raise. Furthermore, 95 percent of employers say telework has a high impact on employee retention, and 46 percent of companies that allow telework say it has reduced attrition. (*Global Workplace Analytics*).

Learn more: [How Work Flexibility Improves Recruiting & Retention](#)

3. REDUCED CARBON FOOTPRINT

- ◆ A study of the effects of the flex work policies of Xerox, Dell, and Aetna found that their decision to let workers labor at home on occasion translated into 95,294 metric tons less of greenhouse gas emissions in 2014.
- ◆ 50 percent of the American workforce currently hold telecommute-compatible jobs. If those people worked from home half the time, it would reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 54 million metric tons annually, the equivalent of taking almost 10 million cars off the road. (*Global Workplace Analytics*).

Learn more: [How Work Flexibility Benefits the Environment](#)

4. BETTER COGNITIVE FUNCTIONING

- ◆ Ultradian rhythms are biological cycles that govern our energy, mood, and cognitive function. They operate in 90-minute intervals, so none of us works at our peak for eight hours in a row. Flexibility ensures people can follow the flow of their natural brain functioning for peak performance.
- ◆ Sociologist Christine Carter says creative insights are more likely to occur when we’re not trying so hard to get them. Being able to control a work schedule and take breaks when needed is vital to creativity, especially in the knowledge economy.

Learn more: [Why the Brain Needs Work Flexibility](#)

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5. DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

- ◆ So many unexpected events can prove disastrous to a company's bottom line—hurricanes, floods, and snowstorms; a random power outage at the office; traffic jams; a highly contagious illness going around the office; a key employee's injury. Offering opportunities for employees to telecommute or work flexible hours should be part of any company's continuity plan.
- ◆ Costs of ineffective preparation can be staggering. When massive snowfall hit the East Coast in January 2016, a team of researchers at Moody's Analytics estimated its cost in terms of output would total between \$2.5 billion and \$3 billion.
- ◆ The Federal Government, under the Telework Enhancement Act, now has 20% of all its employees working remotely on a regular basis. In its latest [report to Congress about federal teleworking](#), the Office of Personnel Management says the number one measured outcome from government employee teleworking is "emergency preparedness," ahead of recruitment, retention, and reduced costs.

Learn more: [How Work Flexibility Improves Disaster Preparedness](#)

6. BETTER WORKER HEALTH

- ◆ The Sloan Center on Aging & Work at Boston College points out several ways flexible work options can help people mentally and physically, including: reduced stress, reduced negative spillover (between work and family life, when one or the other is negatively affecting a person), and improving overall well-being.
- ◆ Employees in companies with low work-family balance are more likely to have elevated cardiovascular disease risks, and they sleep almost 30 minutes less per night, according to a Sloan Center study.
- ◆ The NHS Choices website highlights the value of flex in an article that discusses a study on the negative impacts on workers of long commutes.
- ◆ Mental Health America notes the negative impacts on people and businesses when workers aren't healthy.

Learn more: [How Work Flexibility Improves Mental and Physical Health](#)

7. COST SAVINGS

- ◆ When workers are more productive, their employer saves money. Simple as that.
- ◆ The average real estate savings with full-time telework is \$10,000 per employee per year. Telework allowed IBM to cut real estate costs by \$50 million, and Sun Microsystems saved \$68 million a year.
- ◆ 1MFWF supporter A Better Balance warns that absenteeism can cost some large employers more than \$1 million per year. Workday interruptions to care for family can lead to similar large costs for companies. Flexibility is one of the most effective ways to reduce those expensive problems.
- ◆ A business that hires excellent part-time workers can grow without paying the costs of full-time employees.

Learn more: [How Work Flexibility Can Help Companies Save Money](#)

The business case for work flexibility includes: increased productivity, improved recruiting and retention, reduced carbon footprint, better cognitive functioning, disaster preparedness, better worker health, and cost savings.

Flexibility is great for employees, but employers take note: it's also a strategic business imperative.

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