

WORK life

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The era of the control freak is over. Today smart companies are retaining talent by offering employees programs to help them manage their work and personal life priorities.



Earlier this year Melissa Laird—a general manager in the software enabling division at Intel's offices in Portland—had a bit of a dilemma. She needed to build a development and support team both in the states and overseas that could accommodate the needs of her Oregon team as well as her far-flung software developers in India. With a 12-hour time difference, the question became, how? "No matter how we looked at it, someone was going to be getting up in the middle of the night," Laird recalls. "The only solution was to share the pain."

So six months ago, the 60 folks on the project—half of them in India and rest here in the U.S.—started a split schedule. A three-hour block of time is now carved out of each day, Monday through Thursday, for the American and Indian teams to have meetings, run through solutions, or

simply brainstorm. For a two-month stretch, the meetings have taken place from 9 a.m. to noon Pacific Time. During the next two months, the schedule flips to 9 a.m. to noon India time, which means the group in Oregon must be available from 9 p.m. to midnight.

So far Laird is thrilled with the results. Productivity for her group has increased and cycle time has been cut. "I have never seen teams from different parts of the world work together as well as this," she says. "Everything we've done so far has come in on time, on plan, and with good quality."

She is convinced that Intel's commitment to helping employees balance work and family responsibilities is the key to this success. "When the Oregon team has their turn to work nights, they'll adjust their schedules," Laird explains. "Some come in three hours later, some leave earlier. And everyone in the department knows it, so there's no question of why these people might not be in the office first thing in the morning or later in the afternoon. Getting a split international team to work effectively and efficiently is tough. I truly believe this group is working so well because people feel the company respects them and won't ask for something like this without giving something in return."

Corporate America is at a critical time in the ever-evolving, always highly charged arena known as work-life effectiveness. In years past, work-life policies—flextime, telecommuting, child- and elder-care, to name just a few—were often seen as perks or handouts designed simply to accommodate stressed-out employees. Today CEOs and other senior managers are beginning to view these offerings through a different and, quite frankly, more meaningful prism. They see work-life policies as a catalyst for organizational change.

Says Ellen Galinsky, president of the Families and Work Institute, a New York-based nonprofit research

A Champion of CHANGE

More than anyone else, the CEO has the ability to set the tone and convey the importance of work-life initiatives as part of overall corporate strategy. Philip J. Purcell, chairman and CEO of Morgan Stanley, does just that for the firm's more than 51,000 employees worldwide. As part of that commitment to helping workers balance career and family, this year Morgan Stanley will serve as corporate chair of the National Work-Life Initiative—an annual campaign that provides education about and heightens awareness of work-life effectiveness as a key business issue. Here Purcell talks about his role in promoting this important cause.

"An organization that supports work-life initiatives sends a message to employees that they are respected and understood, not just as contributors to the organization, but also as individuals with interests and responsibilities outside of the

it promotes teamwork and creates dialogue regarding the importance of flexibility. By fostering a corporate culture that is flexible, employees are able to negotiate the right balance between home and career, enabling them to achieve their personal and professional aspirations. And of course, employees who have support for personal issues can be more productive at work. Just think about it: When employees' interests outside of the office are supported, they are more likely to feel more connected and committed to the organization, making it a win-win for everyone.

We do this in a number of ways. For instance, one of Morgan Stanley's core values is respect for individuals and cultures. By that I mean the firm recognizes that employees may have different needs at different times and we look to address both the personal and professional aspects of our workforce through our work-life programs, diversity, recruiting, career



Work-life advocate: Purcell, chairman and CEO of Morgan Stanley

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office. As the CEO, I make every effort to provide support for creating and expanding work-life programs at Morgan Stanley because it is the most direct way to demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of their importance.

Communicating this type of support does a couple of things. It triggers managers and employees to think strategically about the most effective way to get work done. And

development, and leadership programs. We also make every effort to provide support for broadening our work-life programs.

So how do we know it's working? The data is clear: Over the last few years, our Employee Assistance Program usage has increased from 1% to 18% of our workforce. Further, 17% of our employees have used our work-life resource and referral program, and 15% are taking advantage

of the available flexible work arrangements. In fact, 15,000 employees telecommuted at one time or another in the past year alone. And it's not just a working mom or a working dad program, but an inclusive program designed to benefit all employees. We encourage our people to take advantage of what is offered and educate managers so that they can support those who choose to do so.

I think it's pretty clear that our employees are embracing what we have to offer. Our programs have been recognized by various organizations and publications and we proudly display these awards on our internal and external websites. This kind of recognition helps us to attract and retain talented individuals who understand the importance of work-life balance.

People wonder whether the state of the economy has a direct effect on our work-life programs. I would say yes—a positive one! Even in tough market conditions, we continue to maintain a strong commitment to work-life and in return have been rewarded with employee loyalty. I do not believe that work-life programs are cyclical. These programs directly impact employees' lives every day and that is something we care deeply about."



keep them focused on work. Says Galinsky: "When employees don't manage well, work suffers just as much as their lives off the job."

Corporate Alignment

Though scores of work-life experts—including the managers that run these programs at some of America's biggest companies—can't point to strict quantitative evidence linking happy employees with fatter profits, the anecdotal evidence is overwhelming.

In studies done by AWLP over the past several years, companies with work-life programs—such as Hewlett-Packard, Merrill Lynch, IBM, and UPS—have all reported decreases in turnover and increases in productivity that they attribute to work-life effectiveness programs. "The benefits that companies reap—better retention, more satisfied and engaged employees—show up in survey after

survey," says AWLP's Lingle. "When you're making the case for work-life to the CEO, it's going to be pretty hard to dismiss these findings."

The upshot: More and more companies are trusting, and acting on, the connection between satisfied workers and a better bottom line. As a result they are designing, changing, or just plain putting in place, programs and policies that are better at aligning employee needs and business objectives.

Says Galinsky: "This doesn't have to be a zero-sum game, where if the employee benefits the company has to lose. When work-life becomes ingrained in the culture and integrated in the way work gets done, then both parties win."

That was certainly the goal when Prudential Financial launched its work-life initiatives in 1998, says Maureen Corcoran, vice president of diversity at the financial services company based in Newark, N.J.

Rolling out a pilot program in the

organization: "The strategically flexible workplace is not a perk for employees. It is a strategic business tool which enhances employees' engagement and productivity, thereby serving employers as well as employees." In other words, it makes good business sense.

Work-life experts say there are several drivers for this change in philosophy. Improved technology means employees can be virtually anywhere and still stay connected to the office. Indeed, Connie Jacot, Intel's global work-life manager, says that nearly 80% of its employees have a laptop. Cell phones, email, and the ability to conduct meetings all over the world via the Internet just add to the ease with which employees can work without actually being in the office.

Changing demographics also play a role. Younger workers are entering the workforce expecting time for a life outside the office, explains Kathie Lingle, director

of the Alliance for Work-Life Progress (AWLP), an organization that helps companies develop the best methods to improve work-life effectiveness. In fact, in a Families and Work Institute study of 2,810 salaried workers nationwide, 85% of employees under 30 want more overall flexibility in their work schedules.

As Lingle explains it, they've seen their parents put in 70-plus-hour weeks to the exclusion of everything else in their lives, only to be cut loose. No wonder they don't want to repeat the pattern. Recruiting these employees means companies have to be more creative in how and where they allow them to work.

At the other end of the spectrum are the baby boomers. Workers in their 40s and 50s are often coping with the dual stresses of caring for children and elderly parents. Providing assistance with one or both, in the form of child- and elder-care resources, is essential to help



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financial management group first, she says, gave the company all the evidence it needed that this was the right decision. "We had 20% of the employees in that unit participate," says Corcoran, which included such flexible arrangements as telecommuting and compressed workweeks. "We quickly saw a decrease in turnover and an increase in employee satisfaction and decided to roll it out companywide."

Peter Sayre's tax department was one of those areas. As the chief tax officer for the company, he oversees a staff of 100 employees. Sayre admits he wasn't surprised when Corcoran's team approached him about testing Prudential's work-life programs. "We had a reputation for being a little bit quirky, of doing things our own way," he says. "So to us, it made sense."

He wasn't wrong. Almost from the beginning, Sayre says he noticed a difference. In 1999, his department had an annual turnover rate of nearly 21%. Today it's down to less than 3% a year. "Can I demonstrate in any calculated way that our overall work-life programs directly correlate to better productivity or an increase in profits?" Sayre asks. "No. But I can make a very compelling case with those turnover numbers. When you create an environment that rewards output—the work—rather than how or where the work gets done, then morale is going to improve and less people are going to want to leave."

Sayre figures that today 30% of his department uses flexible work arrangements on a regular basis and, at times, utilization goes as high as 49%. Does he make use of a flexible schedule? "When I want to, yes, I do," he says. But he also reinforces Prudential's commitment to work-life balance in other ways. "You can't, as a manager, talk about supporting work-life programs and then tell people they can't take more than 75% of their vacation time," he says. "It all has to be part of the same mindset. When I'm on

vacation, my staff knows it. I work hard and play hard. Employees deserve that same break."

Work-Life Ethics

The challenge for multi-business companies when it comes to work-life efforts is in defining a philosophy that will work across the board. Often, the best and most practical way to help employees is to allow programs and other work-life efforts to vary by individual businesses.

Time-Warner's work-life philosophy is defined more broadly than programs and touches all aspects of the employee experience. "We want our people to feel free to do their best work here. The first step is focusing on the right programs for our diverse populations," explains Debbie Cohen, director of work-life

A driver of the work-life movement is advanced technology that allows employees to be connected to the office anywhere, at any time.

effectiveness for the New York City-based media company. "There are instances where we recognize the individual differences of our companies by tailoring programs to meet specific business objectives," she says. "There are other times when it makes more sense to leverage our commonalities and provide offerings that are consistent across all of our companies."

Across all of its businesses—Warner Bros, New Line Cinema, Turner, HBO, Time Inc., AOL, Time Warner Cable, Time Warner Book Group, and the corporate division—employees have access to inclusive family support programs such as domestic partner benefits, long-term disability benefits, employee assistance, and dependent-care support.



with a return on investment are anecdotal. "To take that to the CEO, especially in the financial services arena where dependence on numbers is so strong, would seem counterproductive," he says.

It is a credit to president and CEO Robert Selander that MasterCard has continued to add and refine its work-life strategies. Says Gingerich: "The one thing we learned through talking to employees and internal surveys was the importance of developing a strategy to continually assess employee needs."

For instance, the company has long offered child- and elder-care

resources to workers. But by listening to the concerns of employees in their 40s and 50s, MasterCard was able to discover that help with college planning was also something they would welcome.

So for the past year the company has engaged the services of College Coach, a Boston-based educational consulting company. The firm provides seminars for MasterCard employees at work to help them to navigate the road for saving and paying for college as well as the application process and the myriad forms for financial aid.

In addition, a survey last fall of

all 2,845 U.S.-based MasterCard employees showed clearly the desire for more and better education surrounding work-life policies. "Managers told us over and over that they needed more information to know how to respond to requests for flexible work arrangements," Gingerich says.

From the employee perspective, not surprisingly, the biggest obstacle was understanding how to make the request. "The survey told us that employees knew they had to make the business case for a flexible schedule, they just weren't always sure how to go about doing that," Gingerich explains.

The Flexible Workforce

For GlaxoSmithKline, a leading pharmaceutical company, the acid test for its work-life strategies is this: Can they align and support the overall business strategy?

Sharon Wilkie, work-life manager for the company, believes that work-life professionals must understand how business decisions and projects get approved within their own organization. "The way to put strength and purpose into any work-life program is to approach it as you would any other business initiative," she says.

When GSK was proposing flexibility in its research and development functions, managers had to be able to answer these questions. How will flexibility help us work more effectively? How will it help us cut down on cycle time so that we can get products to market sooner? "Any business initiative that is proposed has to stand up to that kind of rigor," she says.

As a result, GSK offers not just a wealth of work-life benefits—a \$5,000 adoption subsidy, spouse and domestic partner life insurance, flexible scheduling, and primary and back-up child care—but also team resilience programs that focus on work processes and team effectiveness.

More importantly, however, Wilkie firmly believes that her most vital role is ensuring that the programs consistently meet the needs of employees and the business. "Work-life

initiatives are not run in a vacuum," she says. "You don't set forth an offering of programs and policies and then call it a day. As a work-life professional you have to continually be looking at the programs, the services, the alignment with strategy, and be sure that they are current and consistent with the goals of the business."

For some companies the sign of work-life commitment is not in starting a program. It's in not stopping one. In 1999, Intel, the world's largest computer chip maker began to develop a comprehensive work-life program. By 2001, when the last tremors of the tech bust could still be felt, the company didn't pull the plug. Instead, it expanded the program and for the first time, seriously addressed the issue of flexible schedules.

Says Connie Jacot, Intel's global work-life manager: "This wasn't the best economic time for the company, but the need for employees to have this kind of option in their lives was just so compelling."

Jacqueline Pawela-Crew can certainly attest to that. As a group leader in Intel's material engineering unit, she works Monday through Thursday. But that's not all. On two of those days, she telecommutes from her home. And on the other two, she usually works a flexible schedule, sometimes getting to the office at 6 a.m. so she can be home when her children return from school.

Dan Enloe, her manager and a 20-year veteran of Intel, speaks glowingly of the arrangement that's been in place for nearly two years. "Jacqueline is talented, bright, and communicates well, so this schedule is really a non-issue," he says. "I've found that even though she's not in on Fridays the work she does and the influence it has on our department keeps going."

Enloe appreciates Intel's flexibility not only as a manager but also as someone who uses it himself. As an officer in the Navy reserves and a divorced dad, he too says he needs



the freedom to adjust his schedule to meet both his military and family needs. "My staff knows every Wednesday I have my kids so I'm out at 4 p.m.," he says. On those days, Enloe will start work earlier or make up the time during the week.

"I've had workers tell me flat out, they were going to leave Intel if they didn't have the option of some flexibility with their schedules," he says. "Company leaders need to

understand just how vital this is to attracting and keeping good employees."

The companies in the midst of integrating work-life strategies into the very DNA of their businesses understand that the process is a journey, not a destination. As developing markets grow in importance and corporations face even more intense global competition, attracting and keeping talented workers will require companies to truly "walk the talk."

"I don't think any work-life person can sit back and say, 'Now I've got it figured out,'" says Time-Warner's Cohen.

"It's progressive function that should change as the company's business objectives and employees' needs change." —Susan Caminiti

Contributing Editor: Karol Rose

Ms. Rose consults companies on work-life strategy and programs. She is the author of four books on the subject, including Work-Life Effectiveness: Programs, Policies & Practices (2000), a resource for organizations.



The companies on "The 100 Best Companies to Work For" list acknowledge that their employees' personal lives and work sometimes conflict, and understand that providing tools employees need to do well at work and home eases the conflict and leads to greater business success. Most companies on the list have a representative member of Alliance for Work-Life Progress™, the not-for-profit association that helps organizations maximize work-life effectiveness for employees.

Through research, conferences, education, publishing, and networking, AWLP helps the work-life profession quantify the ROI of corporate work-life programs. AWLP connects the innovators of employee engagement strategies—practitioners, academia, consultants, researchers, and service providers. AWLP is known for its leadership of the National Work-Life Initiative and Innovative Excellence Award. AWLP is also collaborating with the Environmental Protection Agency on its list of "Best Workplaces for Commuters."

AWLP is an affiliate of WorldatWork®, the world's leading not-for-profit education association in compensation, benefits, and total rewards. Both associations advance knowledge in the field and innovative practices in the workplace, helping companies attract, retain, and motivate employees.

For more information, visit www.awlp.org or www.worldatwork.org. Or, call 877-710-2128.

Q&A: Reinventing the Workplace

All employees—no matter what their rank on the corporate ladder—must cope with balancing work and personal life priorities. It's a constant struggle. Recognizing this dilemma, over the past decade companies have increasingly been developing work-life programs—everything from child- and elder-care to workplace-diversity practices—to help alleviate staff stress. The results of such initiatives have been dazzling. Industry studies have shown that such practices help organizations attract and retain talent, as well as improve morale and productivity. They are also drivers for change in corporate culture.

To find out how far corporate America has come in tackling this issue, we went to the experts: work-life managers and directors at some of the country's biggest companies. In a wide-ranging discussion from

Work-life initiatives are not a fair-weather proposition. They must be permanently ingrained into corporate culture.

our New York City offices, *FORTUNE* Custom Projects' Susan Caminiti spoke with Connie Jacot, global work-life manager at Intel, Maureen Corcoran, vice president of diversity at Prudential Financial, Sharon Wilkie, work-life manager at Glaxo-SmithKline, Debbie Cohen, director of work-life effectiveness for Time-Warner (parent of *FORTUNE*'s publisher), and Kathie Lingle, director of

the Alliance for Work-Life Progress, an organization that helps companies develop the best methods to improve work-life effectiveness. Here are some excerpts from the two-hour roundtable:

Q: How is the field evolving?

DC: That question is challenging. A great deal of how companies are responding to work-life issues depends on the nature of their work and the resources they have. I think there is still a great deal of work to be done in order to move the perception of work-life from a set of "soft" programs that are viewed as perks to where its purpose is seen as strategically interwoven with core functions of the organization.

MC: Some organizations could benefit by better linking the programs to the company's business objectives. The folks who design and champion work-life policies have to really understand how to make the business case that particular policies and programs will not only benefit employees, but also bring a payoff to the organization. Years ago it might have been enough to say, "This is good for employees." The programs are still good, but we're at a point now where the smartest companies can pull together data, surveys, and stories to show how a solid work-life culture can really affect and contribute to the bottom line. That's a change.

CJ: I think we're at a transition point where this is becoming a global issue. We do business with

clients, vendors, and partners around the world who are essentially working when we are sleeping. We have to be able to adapt to this and still respect the time our employees have outside the office. That's why companies need to foster this culture of flexibility. If you're going to ask employees to be on the phone with India at midnight here, then you have to trust them enough to give them the kind of schedule that helps them manage their lives.

SW: Companies are offering a lot—flextime, compressed work-weeks, telecommuting. What differentiates them is how the programs are used. By being more global in how we view the business, I think our response to work-life has to be broader too. That's our challenge for the future.

Q: Well then, how do you tie work-life programs to business objectives?

CJ: You have to know what you're trying to accomplish. If retention is an area the business is trying to improve in, then talk to employees. At Intel, employee surveys revealed that work-life policies had a positive effect on retention. They made workers more loyal and helped alleviate on-the-job stress.

MC: I know at Prudential it's all about getting employees to work. What I mean by that is not getting them to do the work, but rather getting them able to be present, to be productive. If employees have children and have to take care of the needs of those children, and they also have a job and need to be able



Debbie Cohen
TimeWarner



Maureen Corcoran
Prudential Financial



Connie Jacot
Intel

to be at work and be focused, then what you ask yourself is, "What kinds of programs would help?" Those can include telecommuting or flextime.

Q: How do you get the buy-in from your CEO or senior managers to support work-life programs?

SW: First, by demonstrating that work-life programs have a positive impact on the business and its employees. In other words, you have to be able to articulate how they can help boost productivity, reduce turnover and absenteeism, and make employees feel more loyal to the company. There is research that proves this point. But you also need to discuss these issues with employees so you can make a compelling case.

MC: Documented research that reveals the benefits of such programs really helps. For years at Prudential we have conducted biannual employee-opinion surveys that ask probing questions on everything from job satisfaction to the relationship with a manager. The ways the questions are designed—and how we weight them—make the connection to things like employee retention, employee commitment, and management effectiveness. So when we go into the executive suite with that business case, it's very hard to say that work-life and the programs that we offer—whether it's flexibility

or any other—aren't helping the company get the job done.

KL: My experience is that internal data alone is not enough. You need three things to capture the CEO's attention. The winning combination is: external data that describes trends in the company's industry; internal data that outlines what employees want and how they describe their needs; and stories from workers that demonstrate how work-life programs have helped them. Have quotes from people whom those senior leaders know and care about. For example, if you're an accounting firm, make sure you're talking about the emergency child-care backup program that kept a senior manager or partner—who bills at \$750 an hour—productive and working when his regular child-care arrangement fell apart.

CJ: At Intel we launched child-care programs during the two worst economic years that we've seen since the early 1990s. Despite economic hard times, it really wasn't that difficult to get upper-management support because we heard from employees that there was a need. It was more of a challenge to get middle managers to quickly understand the benefits of these programs, especially when they are faced with other pressures from many directions.

Q: If that's the case, what tools do you give middle managers to help them

with a changing, more flexible workplace?

CJ: We have seminars and training sessions that lay out different ways for managers to respond to employees who request flexible work arrangements. It's not always easy, because you're asking managers in a lot of cases to behave in ways that they haven't had to do before. But once those flexible arrangements are in place, it's up to the individual employees and often the people with whom they work most closely to make sure the schedule allows for the work to get done.

DC: Middle managers are in a tough spot, trying to be responsive to employees' needs and concerns while also being accountable to performance outcomes. There's a huge risk-reward tug-of-war happening for them. I think they need executive support to overcome resistance—and stories of success from their peers.

Q: What are the biggest obstacles to getting work-life initiatives off the ground or even expanded?

CL: I'll tell you one thing it's not: It's not money. These programs typically cost 1% to 2% of the entire human-resources budget.

CJ: Sometimes the biggest barrier is perception. One employee's misstep can taint a program. There's also a fear among managers that it's



Kathie Lingle
Alliance for Work-Life Progress



Sharon Wilkie
GlaxoSmithKline

harder to manage a staff with flexible schedules. When people come to me and say that their manager won't allow it, I say to both of them, 'Try it.' Give the arrangement good controls and reasonable goals, and prove that it will work. If it still does not, then both parties have to come up with another solution.

MC: I think we have to be very practical in what we design and how we talk about work-life in the company. It's very easy to hype an offering, to hype flexibility as the answer to every employee's woes, and that's not the case. If you have a bad manager or unfulfilling work, a flexible schedule isn't going to mean much. So when you overpromise, senior managers become suspicious of the whole work-life argument.

Q: What's the connection between work-life and economic cycles? Are these programs and services the first to go when times get tough?

CJ: They shouldn't be. This cannot be a fair-weather position. You can't say, well, we're going to be really great to our employees when we have the time and the money, and after that comes to an end, well, we'll just get rid of these things. These are timeless, deeper responses to culture that don't change with the economy.

DC: When people work within a stressed environment, strategically

aligned work-life initiatives take on an even greater role in helping employees remain productive and engaged. In an odd way it provides a great opportunity to assess the investment impact of some programs.

Q: What does the future hold for companies looking to take work-life to the next level?

CJ: I definitely think technology is going to continue to change the way we work. At Intel about 80% of employees have laptops equipped with wireless communications, and that opens the possibility that they can work anywhere and at any time. When you couple that with continued pressure to reduce operational costs, it's clear how a flexible workforce makes more sense.

MC: I think that a lot of what's in our future will be driven by demographic changes. Companies have the capacity to exert a great deal of control over a good part of our lives. And as people work longer into their lives, I think they are asking themselves, "To whom do I want to give that control?" Forward-thinking organizations are the ones that are going to realize they can attract the best workers—and keep them the longest—by acknowledging that people have a life outside of the office. It's not that employees want to work less. They want to work smarter. ■

Seven Ways to Boost Job Satisfaction

- 1 Flex the corporate muscle.** Create a culture that is flexible. Offer work-time options, everything from flextime to job sharing to telecommuting.
- 2 Show them the money.** Pay workers for holidays, vacations, and family leave.
- 3 Be health conscious.** Establish wellness and fitness programs to keep the staff in shape.
- 4 Help workers be dependable.** Have resources available to make child- and elder-care less of a burden.
- 5 Offer financial life support.** Put together a basket of benefits—i.e., 401(k) plan, health and disability insurance, and flexible spending accounts.
- 6 Listen to your corporate conscience.** If you don't have a community volunteer program and a disaster relief fund in place, take action.
- 7 Keep your eye on the melting pot.** Make sure you have a diversity initiative in place that nurtures the advancement of all segments of society, regardless of age, gender, race, and disability.