



Unify New Way to Work Index

The Flex Work Imperative

Survey Analysis

In the fourth edition of our New Way to Work Index, we examine the Flex Work Imperative, a new era in workplace culture and management that will require organizations to accommodate employees' changing attitudes about work, their personal lives, and what matters to them most. We examine the employee attitudes, legal mandates and other factors driving the Flex Work Imperative and discuss how businesses can avoid this perfect storm of circumstances and, in fact, leverage technology and the desire for flexible work schedules to increase productivity and attract top talent.

The Flex Work Imperative is the product of a perfect storm of employee demand, an improving job market and a wealth of Right to Request laws that are shifting flex work from a job perk to an employee's right.

Imagine that tomorrow you return to your office, only to find that:

- 36% of your co-workers and employees had just left for other jobs.
- Nearly half of your employees under 30 leave IT or customer service.
- A federal or state employee has just formally requested flex work, referencing new Right to Request guidelines or laws.

And all for the same reason: They were offered more flexible work - the chance to have more choice over *when* and *where* they work.

Say hello to the Flex Work Imperative

For the past several years, many employers have treated flexible work arrangements for the most part as a job perk for some, a necessity for select functions, a subject to avoid for many. External sales representatives or software developers might qualify for flexible work, but other employees were still expected to show up in the office every day. In 2013, Yahoo CEO Marissa Mayer generated a maelstrom of news coverage when she cancelled a longstanding work-at-home policy.

But the reality is this—increasingly, businesses can no longer ignore employee requests for more flexible work arrangements.

- Employees want flex work, and consider it nearly as important as pay raises. The desire for flex work exists in virtually every department at every level within organizations. It also transcends gender barriers.
- Called “Right-to-Request” laws, cities, states and countries are requiring employers to give more consideration and reasonable accommodation to employee requests for flex work.
- In the UK, the law was extended in July to accommodate all employees—not just those caring for children and the elderly.
- In the US, a Presidential Memorandum from July 2014 compels all departments to increase focus on flex work requests – a trend also found in a growing number of cities and states.
- Increasingly, reasonable requests for flex work are not so much considered perks as they are employee rights.
- Additionally, a rising job market is empowering employees to change jobs to get what they want.

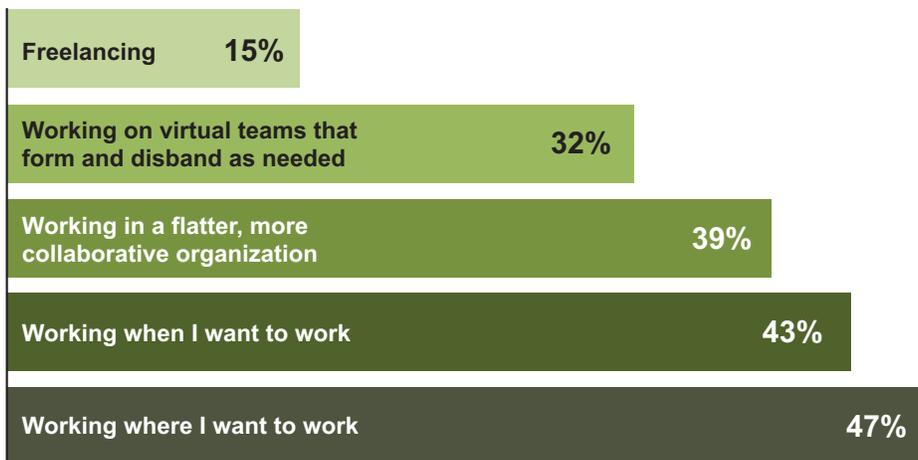
Unify is dedicated to developing technology and solutions for the way we work today. With our New Way to Work Index we continue to examine the habits and constructs of successful virtual teams and the anywhere worker. We are working to identify real business and communication needs; and to understand how technology can help people and organizations adapt, and thrive, in an

environment where work is mobile, global, and distributed across the globe.

In our largest study ever, nearly 1,000 people told us how they define the New Way to Work. In our follow-up study, 800 gave us more detail on exactly what they want and why when it comes to how they work, from both an employee and a management perspective.

When asked what they think of when they hear “A New Way to Work,” 43% said it means working when they want to work, and 47% said working where they want to work.

What is the New Way to Work?



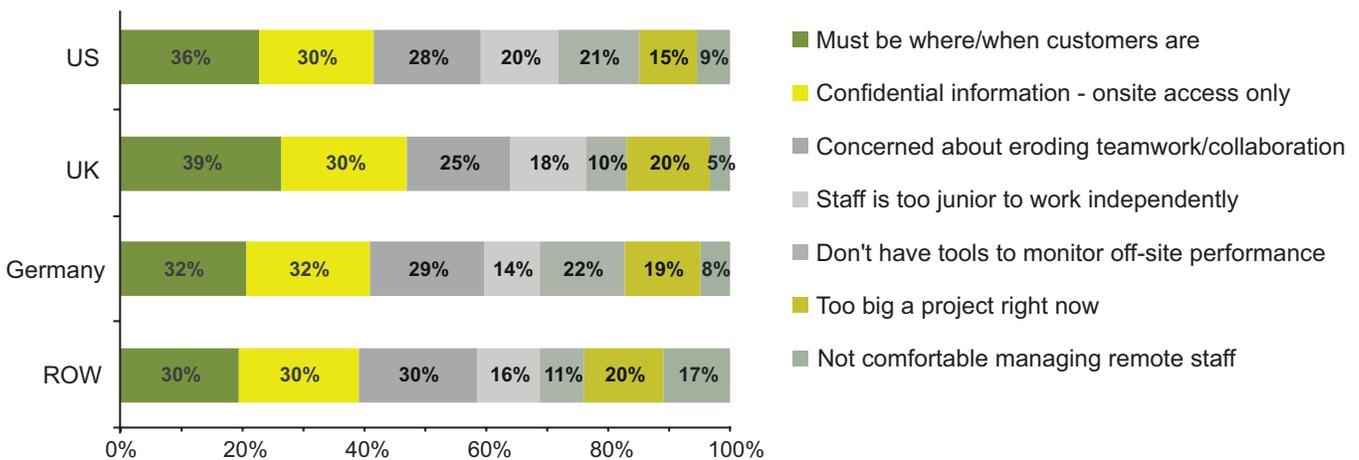
What do you think of when you hear A New Way to Work?

Employees Are Serious About Flex Work

Our New Way to Work research points to big changes needed in management philosophies, practices, and employment policies. The Flex Work Imperative is about the growing need for employees at all levels, across sectors and job functions, around the world to have better work-life manageability in our always-on world. But, for many business leaders, flex work is a subject laced with more than a little trepidation. They legitimately worry about a loss of control, degrading collaboration, and inertia. While there are plenty of studies that show the business

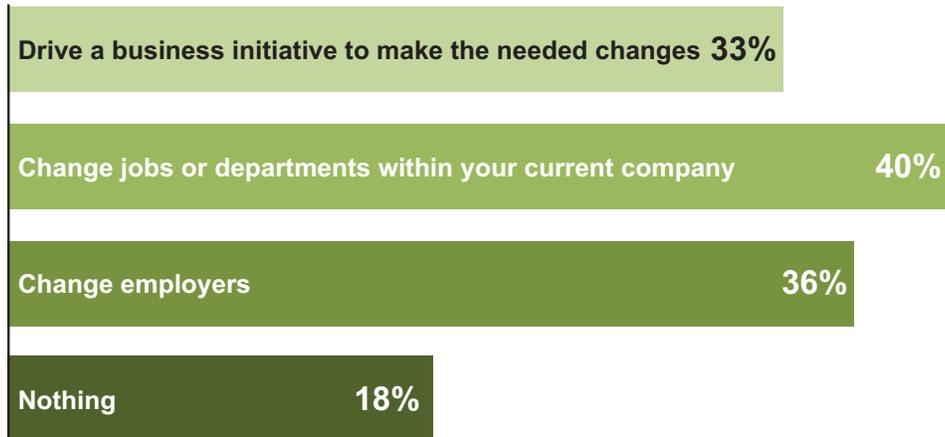
and economic advantages to employers who offer flex work, no manager in their right mind would give up control or compromise the things that create value in their department. The problem is, employers just can't avoid this very real trend—economically, operationally or legally. Business leaders need help finding ways to address their concerns, protect employee engagement, and effectively lead, and manage, dispersed teams—all while responding to employee and legal pressures to accommodate flex work.

Management: why flex work isn't offered



If you do not currently offer flexible work options to most employees, what is the reason?

What would you do in order to have flex work?



What would you do to have a job that meets your ideal of the New Way to Work?

The thoughtful use of technology, policy, and a clear code of conduct for teams with flex workers can, in most instances, preserve the behavior and dynamics that make teams perform well in the office. Of course, not every employee or every job function is easily adapted to employee flex work wishes.

Our research gives us significant insight into how strongly employees worldwide feel about flex work. More than one-third of all respondents said they would leave the company they work for if they were offered more flexible work somewhere else. 40% would change jobs

or departments within their current company. Only 18% said they would do nothing. As one might expect, employees under 30 (Millennials) are most likely to leave. Half would change jobs within their company and 43% would change companies to have more work flexibility.

No department is safe. Half of the employees in marketing and over 40% in customer service said they would move to gain flex work. This trend persists moving up the corporate hierarchy. Fully 38% of managers and 34% of directors said they would leave their employers to gain more flexible work options.

36% of respondents said they would change employers if offered flexible work somewhere else and 40% said they would change departments.

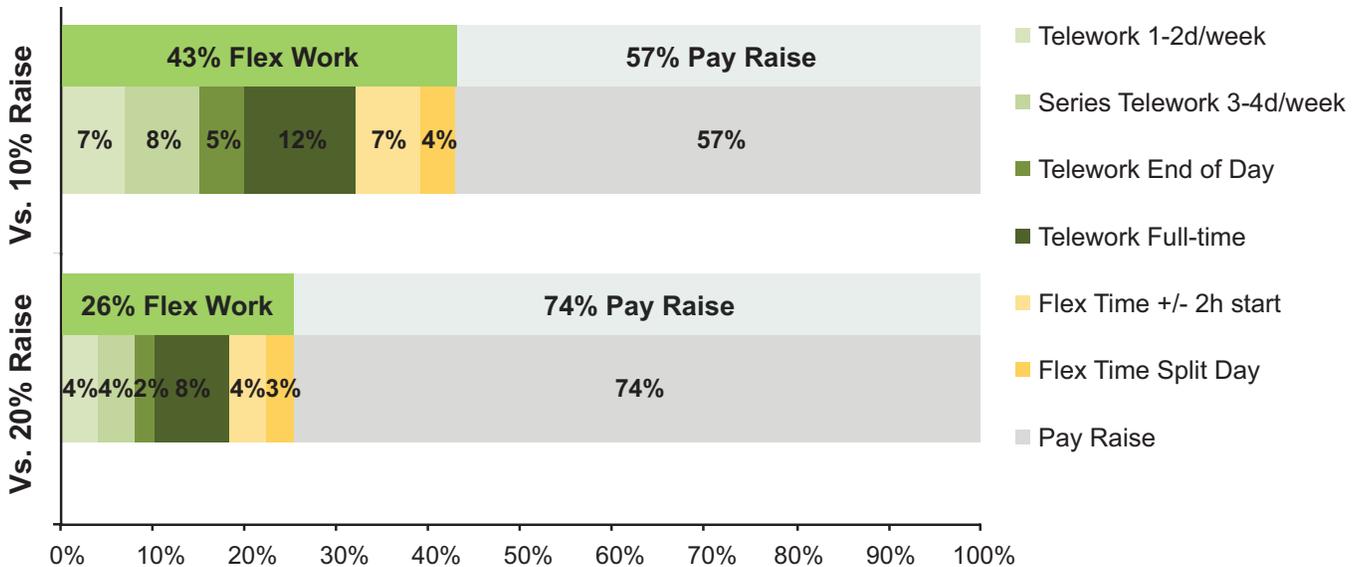
More Time Than Money

When asked whether they would prefer a 10% pay raise or some type of flex work, 43% chose flex work over the 10% raise.

What was even more eye-opening was the monetary value that workers place on flexibility. Respondents were asked whether they would rather have a 10% pay raise or some sort of flex work—either part- or full-time teleworking; or schedule flexibility, such as starting and ending their shift up to two hours earlier or later than the standard time. A total of 43% chose flex work over a 10% pay raise. Think about this. We’ve just come through the greatest economic crisis since The Great Depression and a global economic meltdown that started in 2008. Against this backdrop, nearly half of employees said they’d rather have a more choices in when and where they work than what would, in most cases, be a fairly substantial raise.

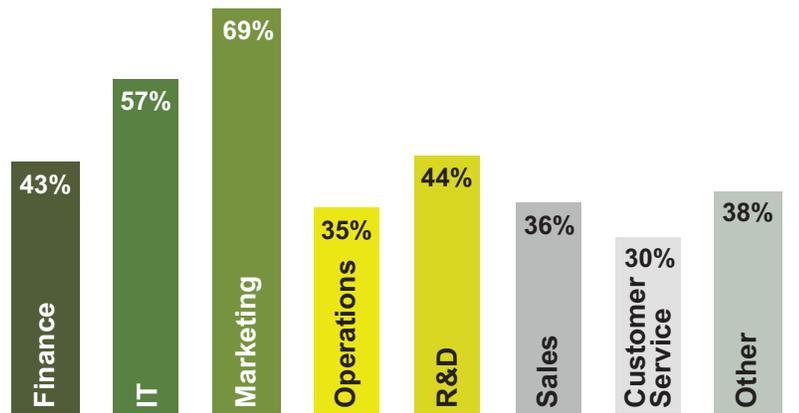
And the desire for flex work remained as the raise increased. When offered a 15% raise, 36% of respondents said they’d still choose flex work. When the pay raise was increased to 20%, 26% still opted for flex work. Interesting for employers, of course, is that flex work, if implemented properly, doesn’t actually cost much; in fact, it can actually save money. A 20% increase in pay across the board, however, would be difficult to meet. And, again, the preference for flex work spans departments and geographies. 69% of marketing opted for flex work, so did 44% of people classified as R&D and 57% of IT. Some 49% of employees in finance opted for flex work over a 10% raise, and so did 58% in manufacturing.

Money or flex work?



If your current employer told you that you could choose either a 10% increase in your pay OR any ONE of the flex work options below, which would be your first choice?

Flex work wanted across departments



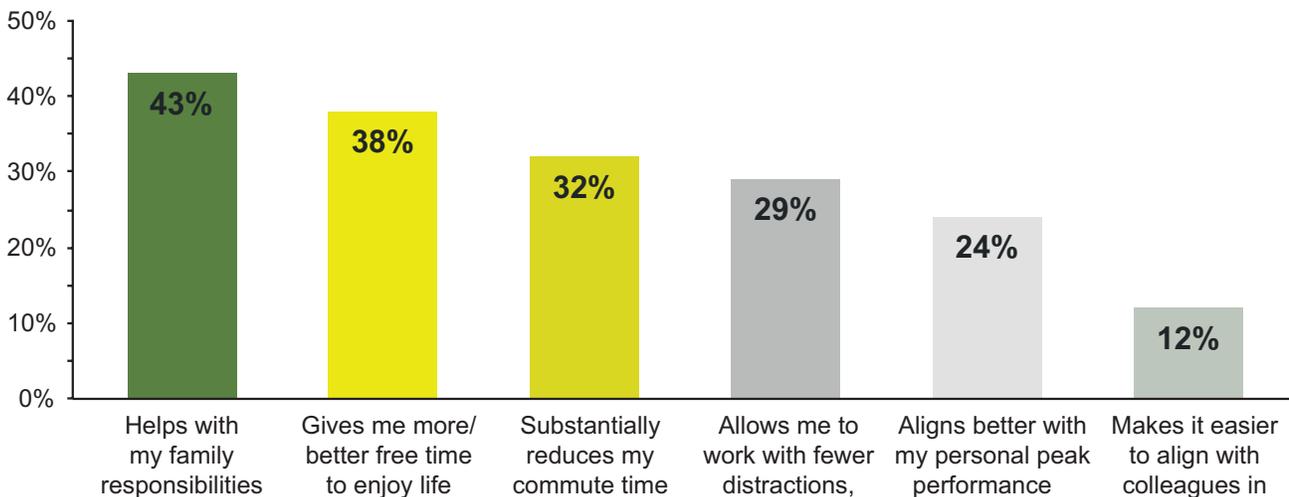
Our research shows that employees across all departments prefer flex work over a 10% pay increase.

No matter how you slice the data, a significant portion of today's workforce would change jobs or employers and nearly half value flexibility over a pay increase. When asked why then want flex work, 43% of employees surveyed said it would help them with family responsibilities. 38% said it would give them time to enjoy their life, while 31% said they wanted a reduced commute time. Reclaiming personal time is clearly the big issue.

At the same time, the next three most popular answers are telling in that employees also viewed flex work as enhancing their productivity – 29% said it allowed them to be more productive and 24% said it aligned better with their peak times for performance. Another 12% said it helped them align with colleagues in different time zones. Nearly half (47%) of those who chose flex work over money say it's important because it helps them do their job better.

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Why we want flex work



If you selected some form of flexible work as being more valuable than a pay increase, what are the reasons flexible work is so valuable to you?

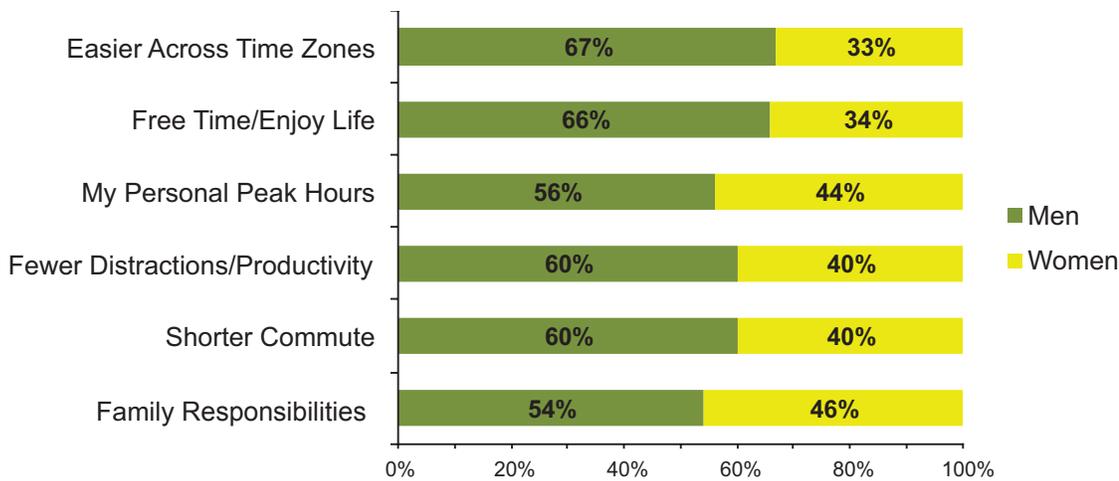
Flex work is NOT a “woman’s” issue. 54% of those who chose flex work because it helps them meet family responsibilities were men.

By the way, flex work is NOT a “woman’s” issue. Business leaders will make a big mistake if they think employees are talking about a modern-day “Mommy Track.” Though many of the Right to Request laws have their origins in helping employees care for children or elderly parents, the laws and the data are much broader. Of those who chose flex work to help with family responsibilities, just more than half (54%) were men. In fact, men were also more emphatic about flex work giving them more time to enjoy life.

What kind of flexibility are employees seeking?

In general, flex work options fall into two categories—teleworking, which can involve full or part time teleworking; or flexible schedules—that is, being able to leave the office for two-to-three hours any day, then return to finish your shift; or starting up to two hours before or after the normal start time.

Why is flex work more important than a pay raise?



Why did you choose flex work over a raise?

What flex work options are most popular?



If you chose flex work over a pay increase, what kind of flex work would you prefer?

Managers & Employees Have Different Definitions of Flex Work

Interestingly, dichotomies are already emerging between what management offers and what employees want in terms of flex work. Flexible schedules, for instance, are more popular with employers than teleworking. When managers were asked which flex work options were easiest for them to offer, flexible schedules beat out teleworking about two-to-one.

But, when we look at the flex work options employees chose over a pay raise, about three-fourths choose some level of teleworking. About one-fourth chose schedule flexibility. Employers, in other words, prefer flexible scheduling, while employees prefer telecommuting.

The response of employers in accommodating flex work also varies by geography. In the US and UK, managers offer flexible schedules about equally with teleworking. In Germany and other parts of the world, flexible scheduling is far more popular.

What also emerged from our data is that the call for more flexible work is not about

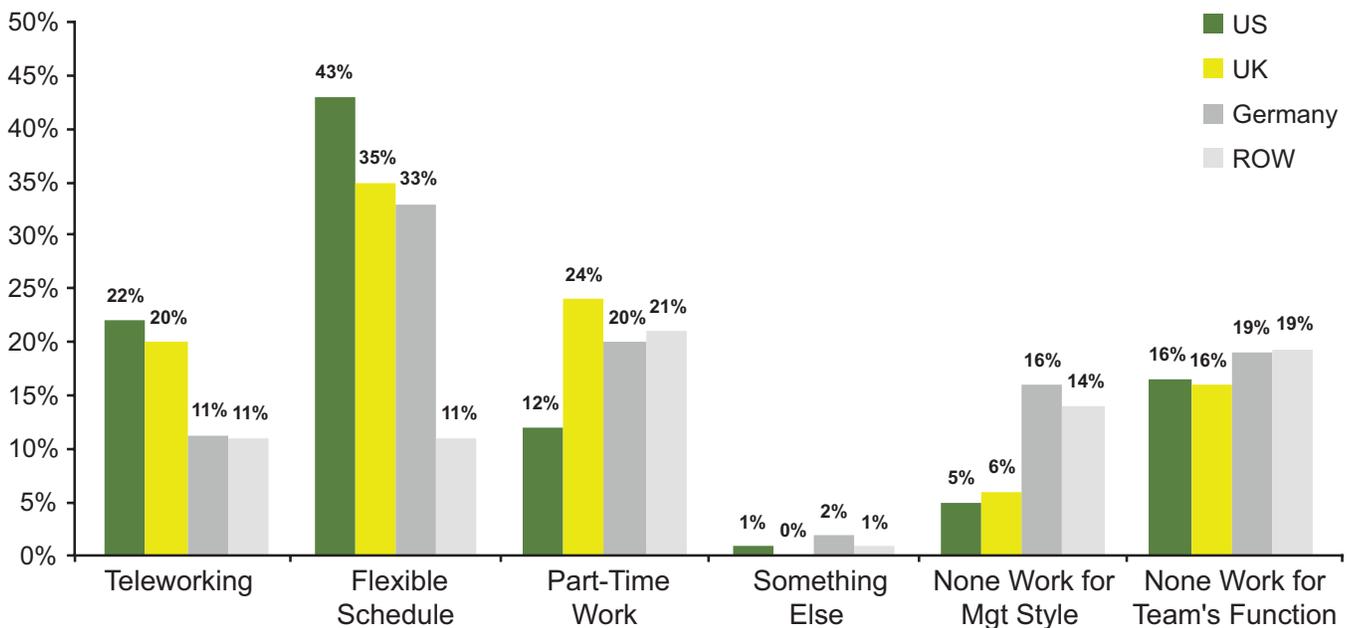
accommodating occasional needs, such as going to the dentist during the work day or leaving early to attend a child's piano recital. It's about work-life integration on a daily basis and the desire for it cuts across genders, all management levels, and all job types around the world.

It's important to note that, even though three fourths of employees who want flex work want teleworking, the number who chose full-time telework over a pay raise ranges from 8 to 12%. This tells us that flex work is not an all-or-nothing situation. A few days a week working from home or the ability to work in the office for part of the day, in other words, meets the requirements of most employees.

To be sure, the challenges of keeping teams performing when we have less overlap time in the office must be met, as well as dealing with increasingly mobile and global work teams. It's clear that full-time teleworking is the prize for many employees. But managers anxious about offering full-time teleworking to all employees can breathe a little easier—at least for now.

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Management's Easiest Flex Work Options



Which is easiest for you to offer employees wanting more flexible work

The Laws, They Are Changing

Flex work is clearly no longer just a job perk. Legal actions or “Right to Request” mandates are popping up around the world, giving employees the right to request flex work.

Employers are coming to the realization that that flex work is increasingly becoming a legal matter, not merely an employee wish.

- This spring, the UK expanded a “right to request” law that allows all employees with 26 weeks or more of tenure, not just parents or caregivers, to request flexible work arrangements. Employers must create procedures to reasonably accommodate these requests.
- In Canada, pivotal court cases are playing a decisive role in casting reasonable requests for flex work as an employee’s right. Some even consider it a human rights issue.
- In June, President Obama issued a Presidential Memorandum requiring all US federal agencies to provide more extensive flex work options where possible.
- Also in the US, Florida, Oklahoma, North Carolina, Maine, Massachusetts and more have implemented or are considering flex work mandates, as have cities such as San Francisco, and New York.
- A bill has been proposed in Germany to limit email and voice messages sent after hours in an effort to protect workers’ personal time.

Flex work is clearly no longer just a job perk.

So, what are the barriers?

Of course, there are some job functions where flex work is challenging. In retail, education, some forms of customer service, and some jobs in healthcare and manufacturing, employees need to be in a particular place during set business hours. If you work in a factory, you need to be where the equipment is. In some key sectors, like finance and public sector, there are groups of employees dealing with highly sensitive information, and employers need to carefully control access to it. That can impact the cost of and appetite for enabling remote work. Our studies fairly consistently point to about 30% to 40% of the work force falling into these situations.

But, nearly half of all those in manager or higher roles pointed to management culture and beliefs as the number one barrier to enabling flex work. A third perceived it as too difficult or expensive. When we dig into management views on why managers don’t offer flex work, we can be more specific. Twenty-five percent to 30% are worried about eroding teamwork and collaboration. Some feel they don’t have the tools or methods to manage off-site performance. 15% to 20% consider it a too big a project to tackle at this time. In the major regions studied, less than 10% said they are simply uncomfortable managing remote staff.

What makes the New Way to Work work?



What are the key factors in making a New Way to Work a reality in your current job?

How to Win with Flex Work

How can business leaders make this trend work for them?

- 1. Embrace the Trend.** For starters, businesses need to be aware of this trend and the differences between what employees want and what employers are offering. They need to understand the employee flight risk and potential cost of NOT responding, which is losing your best employees
- 2. Start Small.** Additionally, we need undo the paradigm that flexible work, including teleworking, is an all-or-nothing situation. Enabling remote or mobile workers can come in small and affordable increments. In fact, if employers combine an office hoteling arrangement with teleworking solutions they can usually see a rather nice business case.
- 3. Functional Requirements – Do What You’d Do in the Office.** As you consider technology solutions to support flex work, focus on the use cases rather than a feature checklist. List the things your team does in the office that are vital to your success. Then challenge technology vendors to show you how to do it with remote and mobile staff.

At the same time, have your best performing employees envision working from home and identify what will make them most productive.

The functional requirements should form the basis for technology purchases. When we ask managers what makes their team really work in the office, and what makes their

Business leaders must embrace the Flex Work Imperative. The potential cost of NOT responding is the loss of their best employees.

Flex work succeeds when business practices, technology, and cultural norms can be implemented to foster dynamic interaction despite differences in schedule and location.

best employees valuable, we find that great teams talk to each other—both casually and spontaneously. Employees learn from each other and sharpen their ideas by bouncing them off of each other.

Flex work succeeds when business practices, technology and cultural norms at work can be implemented to foster this type of dynamic interaction despite differences in schedule and location. Virtual meetings and tools that enable remote interactions have to be just as effective as or better than sitting in the same room.

In taking this view, businesses can understand that keeping people and conversations connected—both in real-time and asynchronously—involves more than just email or content management apps. Rather, enabling social engagement among team members—such as the ability to share ideas or easily loop a new team member into a complex conversation that has been going on for a week—THESE are the killer apps in enterprise communications.

- 4. Define Your New Way to Work.** Document a virtual team code of conduct. The right technology is critical to supporting a team working in different places with fewer overlapping hours. As you create your functional requirements, identify the five or six things employees need to do to make it work. Consider requirements to log into groupware, keep presence indicators current, to be accessible by phone and IM for unscheduled “drop-in” questions. Don’t take the flex out of flex work, but do make it clear that flex work doesn’t mean staff are no longer required to be accessible

and accountable to managers and colleagues. More than anything, do what you’d do if you were all in the office together. A good technology vendor can show you how.

- 5. Train Your Staff.** Once you understand the behaviors you need to protect and you have the technology in place, make sure your staff is fully trained—on both! Technology with an intuitive user interface is paramount. But realize that this really is, for most people, a new way to work. So the baseline experience that produces great intuition might not be there. They have to know how to do what they would do in the office and how to use the tools to make those high value things keep happening.
- 6. Keep Managing.** The golden rule for teleworking is this: Do What You’d Do in the Office! If you’d drop by an employee’s desk for a progress report, do it on the phone or via IM. Would you be alarmed if your team emailed each other all day when they are all sitting at their desks? Would you ignore an employee who came into the office, didn’t say anything, didn’t talk to anyone all day long, never said a word in a conversation, never offered a comment or an idea or volunteered to help a colleague in a crunch? Likely not.

As a manager, you set the example for your virtual team norms. As a virtual worker, stay connected and engaged, just as you would in the office. Say good morning. Keep in touch with colleagues. Share what you know or hear. Ask for help when you need it and give it when you can. Distance is not a barrier. Pick up your phone. Go to a social team space. Ping a colleague for a virtual coffee break. Managers should be the

first ones to work from home a day or two a week, along with a couple of their most trusted staff. Learn how to use technology to find a new balance between connectedness and productivity. As others begin working in different places and times, teach the team the new normal.

Beyond this, be alert to the legislative issues around Bring Your Own Device (BYOD), information security, Right to Request, compliance as it relates to BYOD, flex work for labor unions, what's a benefit and what's a cost of work—and the exponential lift of all of these for global businesses. The legal landscape on these issues is changing quickly. Multi-national enterprises, in particular, would do well to monitor different rates of acceleration on these matters in different countries.

Finally, flex work isn't coming—it's already here. The combination of employee demand, an improving job market and a wealth of Right to Request laws have transformed flex work to an employee's right from a job perk. And it can be successfully implemented without missing a beat. But staying on the beat means not pretending that flex work isn't happening or inexorable. It is imperative that companies engage with and embrace this sea change in how workers across the globe are re-evaluating and changing their relationship with work, with their own lives, and what matters to them. Those companies that do not will see their competitors that do embrace flex work prosper at their expense.

About the Unify New Way to Work Index

The Unify NW2W Index examines the habits and constructs of successful virtual teams and the anywhere worker. Produced quarterly, findings include research on management and behavioral trending of virtual teams around the globe. The Unify NW2W Index is distributed via email, social media, and website by Unify and its partners at the Ferrazzi Greenlight Research Institute.

Follow the New Way to Work (#NW2W) conversation on Twitter at #NW2W and on LinkedIn.

Let Us Help.

Flex work requires technology that protects the employee and team habits that create business value. Our global experts can show you how.

www.unify.com/nw2w

In the US: (800) 765-6123

In the UK: 0800 158 5236

In Germany: +49 (0) 800 8 22 22 72

About Unify

Unify is one of the world's leading communications software and services firms, providing integrated communications solutions for approximately 75 percent of the Fortune Global 500. Our solutions unify multiple networks, devices and applications into one easy-to-use platform that allows teams to engage in rich and meaningful conversations. The result is a transformation of how the enterprise communicates and collaborates that amplifies collective effort, energizes the business, and enhances business performance. Unify has a strong heritage of product reliability, innovation, open standards and security.

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