

# Maximizing the Employee Experience:

How Changing Workforce Dynamics are Impacting Today's Workplace

---

Dr. Brad Harrington  
Boston College Center for Work & Family



BOSTON COLLEGE  
Center for Work & Family  
CARROLL SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

# Table of Contents

Introduction	2
Changing Workforce and Workplace Dynamics	4
How Millennials are Impacting the Workplace	5
Men's Increasing Roles in the Family	7
The Increasing Impact of Family Caregiving	10
Focusing on Employee Well-Being	12
The Shift to Flexible and Virtual Workplaces	14
The Challenges of Pervasive Technology	17
The Shift to More Customized Careers	20
Creating Inclusive Workplaces	21
The Challenges of Managing a Global Workforce	24
From Changing Policies to Changing Culture	26
How to Lead the Change Process	28
Summary	31
References	32
Acknowledgements	36

# Introduction

Since the Center's founding in 1990, our mission has evolved. Initially, we were focused on work-family issues – at that time, that meant the challenges that working mothers faced in their career while also balancing the caregiving needs of their young children. That issue continues to be a significant challenge. In the US, for example, we continue to be the only developed country in the world that does not offer paid leave for new mothers as a matter of national policy and our day care system continues to be a patchwork of solutions with uneven quality and very high costs.

But over the past 30 years, the concept of "work-life" has taken on even greater importance and the field has expanded dramatically. It has often blended with a host of issues that are focused on seeing employees as "whole persons." This has meant that the focus of our work has moved from dependent care for some employees, to an appreciation of the concerns of all employees. As a result, we have expanded our work into a broader set of domains that includes work-life and flexibility, but also employee well-being, talent management, employee development, diversity and inclusion, organization development and cultural change.

*Today, our work is focused on the "employee experience." How do we define that? The employee experience is the sum of the interactions and perceptions that employees have regarding their work, their relationships, and the opportunities for growth within their organization.*

Any organization, regardless of its size, scope, culture or the economic sector it serves should desire to maximize the experience of its people. How do we, as employers, know that we are succeeding at this endeavor? One simple way is to ask: Would our employees answer with an emphatic yes to the following six questions?

- Am I engaged in and passionate about my work?
- Am I making a significant contribution to the organization?
- Am I valued, respected, and included in my work group?
- Does my manager / employer care about my well-being?
- Am I growing and developing in new ways?
- Does my job allow for me time, for life outside of my work that embraces my personal interests as well as my family, friends, and community?

As we have moved to a more knowledge-based economy, competitive advantage mainly comes from an educated, well-trained, and highly functioning workforce. The goal of leading organizations is to attract, retain and engage employees by providing an environment where individuals can be successful in both their professional and personal lives by taking a "whole-person perspective" to organizational effectiveness.

Today, employers face an increasingly dynamic, technologically-enabled global workplace. At the same time, changes in the values, composition, expectations and preferred ways of working of today's workforce has created the need for organizations to challenge long-standing norms and workplace practices in order to create a compelling and appealing employee experience.

This report summarizes nine key workforce and workplace trends that are catalyzing the need for employers to rethink former ways of operating. Letting go of our traditional mindsets and approaches will not be easy, but we believe it will be essential for future success. It is important to note that not every organization needs to grapple with all of these issues. The challenges that are most germane and most in need to attention should be assessed by each employer.

Along with articulating the challenges that organizations face, this white paper also provides recommendations for ways employers can respond to these changes based on what we have seen in the many progressive companies we work with. We believe that attention to these trends will help today's employers create more meaningful work experiences for their employees and more productive and successful organizations.

# Changing Workforce and Workplace Dynamics

As we think about the kinds of organizations that will attract and retain the best talent, there are many forces at play that are dramatically impacting the workplace and the employee experience. Indeed, as we look the challenges in today's business environment, workplace, and workforce, organizational leaders and human resource professionals might look back at the challenges of past years nostalgically. Today's issues are even more complex than ones faced previously and require more comprehensive solutions.

In this paper, we discuss some of the most pressing dynamics and concerns that we face and offer thoughts on how organizations, leaders, and HR professionals can begin to address them with the end goal being to develop a more engaged, healthy and productive workforce.

Below is a list of trends that leading employers are, or will soon be, faced with that are dramatically impacting the workforce and the workplace.



The challenges we present above should not be seen as a "from-to" model. For example, we are not suggesting that work-life is no longer a women's issue. We're simply saying that today, it is every bit as much a men's issue. And we are not suggesting child care is no longer a pressing work-life issue; we are suggesting that the challenges of family caregiving -- for elders, family members with special needs, persons with exceptional and chronic health problems -- is also a significant problem that confronts many of our

employees. While most employers have examined and acted on one or more of these trends in the past, addressing all the challenges will require ambitious efforts to embrace these new realities.

## How Millennials are Impacting the Workplace

Until 2017, Baby Boomers (i.e. those born between 1946-1964) were the dominant generation in the workplace, But in 2017, the demographics shifted and Millennials (those born between 1982-2000) took on that role. Much has been made of the unique traits and characteristics of the Millennial generation. A wide-range of labels has been assigned to this generation, many of a pejorative nature. Terms sometimes attached to Millennials include, for example: lazy, entitled, impatient, disloyal, and the most socially conscious generation since the 1960's.

In evaluating the assertions made about this generation, we feel that many of these are not based on rigorous research but rather anecdotal evidence. Generalizations about large groups of people, especially those connected only by arbitrary birth dates, are bound to be fraught with problems and likely have highly questionable validity. That said, there is evidence that the world Millennials have experienced has been different from previous generations in a number of important ways:

**The impact of technology:** There is no doubt that young adults today have grown up in a time of increasingly pervasive (one might suggest omnipresent) technology in their lives. Smartphones and other portable devices that connect to the internet have dramatically altered the speed and way in which we gather information, communicate with others, find a destination and shop for new products.

**Delays in making "adult commitments":** Millennials are less likely than previous generations to have completed the traditional milestones of "adulthood" by age 32 (Arnett, 2000). Today, young adults get married later, have children later, and are less likely to own a home by age 30 than was the case a generation ago (Taylor, Parker, Morin, Patten, and Brown, 2014).

**Changing gender roles:** As we will discuss later in this paper, there has been a steady shift in gender roles in higher education, in the workplace, and in the home. (See pages 7-10).

**Changing nature of careers and the workplace:** In the last two decades, people have come to see careers and the employee-employer contract much differently. In addition, technology, flexible work arrangements, and a much greater emphasis on knowledge-based industries have made the nature of working far different than it once was. All of these trends will be discussed more fully later in this paper.

In a 2015 study by the Boston College Center for Work & Family, of 1100 primarily white-collar, college educated Millennial employees, salary and salary growth rate were considered highly important determinants of career success, with over 95% of participants placing these in the "important / very important / extremely important" range. However,



job satisfaction ranked even higher than salary measures at 98%. In fact, job satisfaction was rated as very / extremely important by 84% compared to 76% for salary. A 2008 study of the Silent Generation, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y (Millennials) also found that job satisfaction, followed by salary, were the two highest rated measures of career success for all four generations (Dries, Pepermans, De Kerpel, 2008 ).

We also found that development of new skills, work achievements and achievement of personal goals were important career success measures (about 95% rated them as important to extremely important). Work-life balance (94% important to extremely important) was viewed as extremely important by 44%, which was the highest rating of all of the measures.

According to a 2016 Millennial Survey conducted by Deloitte, clear trends are shaping up amongst Millennials when it comes to the things they assign value to in the workplace. According to the data, young professionals evaluate career opportunities based on the following "most important" criteria:

- Good work/life balance -- 16.8%
- Opportunities to progress/be leaders -- 13.4%
- Flexibility such as remote working, flexible hours -- 11.0%
- Deriving meaning from work -- 9.3%

Participants in the Boston College study showed high levels of ambition and a willingness to put in the extra effort needed to advance professionally. For example, more than 4 out of 5 responded that they "were willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help their organization be successful." More than 80% also agreed or strongly agreed they wanted to take on a role with greater responsibility, 77% wanted to be seen as an expert in their chosen field, and 74% wanted to advance up the management ladder.

But not at the expense of their lives outside of work.

The importance of "life over work" was reinforced by study participants. The majority (66%) clearly felt that their lives outside of work were much more important to their sense of identity than their careers, with only 23% of participants indicating that life and work were equally important. Although as stated, a very high percentage of respondents want to advance up the career ladder. Only 20% agreed that they were willing to pursue this goal at the expense of time with their families and their personal lives, and only 4% strongly agreed with this.

### **How Organizations Can Respond:**

While many organizations are heavily investing in understanding the needs of the growing Millennial workforce, our sense is that the differences between Millennials and previous generations have been overblown. Many of the things Millennials want are not different than what employees have always wanted. Leading organizations are responding by:

- Understanding that Millennials are looking for a good salary and benefits, and most importantly for career development opportunities. Opportunities to grow professionally are most important to Millennials at this early stage of their career. (see the section on career development, pages 19-21)
- While Millennials are ambitious and want to grow and advance, they are not willing to do so at the expense of their life outside of work. Work-life balance is extremely important to this generation of workers. Benefits, supports, and flexibility that enable professionals to focus on their family, friends, communities, and their own personal well-being are becoming more prevalent in progressive organizations.
- Work that makes a meaningful contribution has often been cited by researchers with regard to this generation. There are three ways to do this:
  - First, be sure young employees fully understand how the work they are doing contributes to the goals of the organization as a whole.
  - Second, provide opportunities for employees to give back to their community and / or to contribute to global issues that will increase their commitment to contribute to society in meaningful ways.
  - Third, strive to help employees find intrinsic meaning in their work, which is one of the key motivators for an engaged employee. Providing career workshops can help to ensure that their work is aligned with their personal values and interests.

## Men's Increasing Roles in the Family

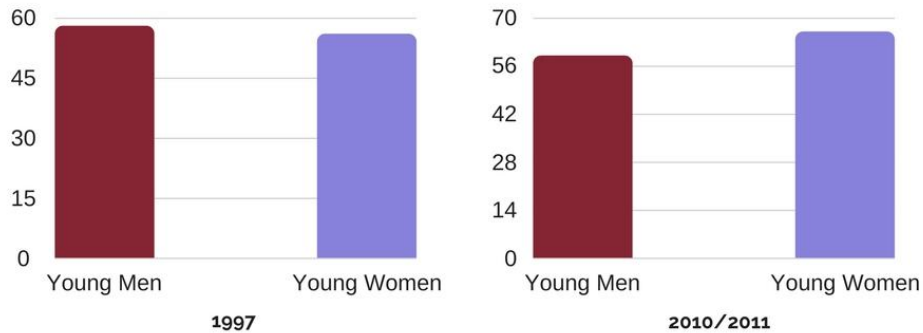
Over the past 25 years, women have made enormous strides in higher education. Today, 60% of bachelor's and master's degrees in the US are awarded to women. At the same time, the workplace is also changing, with 70% of mothers with children age 18 or younger working and over 75% of those employed full-time. Currently, the number of mothers who are the primary or sole earners represents 40% of households with children under 18, compared to 11% in 1960. Among married-couple families with children, 97% had at least one employed parent and 61% had both parents employed. (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017).

In 2012, The Pew Research Center released the results of a study showing, for the first time in their polling, that women reported a higher level of career ambition, defined as a desire for high earnings and career advancement, than their male counterparts (Pew Research Center, 2012). In addition, there have been changes in how men and women spend their time, with moms working more and dads being responsible for more chores and childcare on the home front (Pew Research Center, 2013).



## Career Importance, By Gender

% of 18-34 year olds saying being successful in a high-paying career or profession is "one of the most important things" or "very important" in their lives



**Note:** "Somewhat important", "Not important", and "Don't know/refused" responses not shown. Based on adults ages 18-34. In 1997, n=188 for women and n=195 for men. In 2010/2011, n=610 for women and n=703 for men.

**Source:** 2010/2011 data combines two Pew Research Center surveys from Dec. 6-19 2011 and Jan. 14-27 2010. 1997 data from Washington Post/Kaiser/Harvard Univ. survey, Aug. 14- Sept. 7, 1997.

These changes in the career prospects and orientation of women have meant changes for men as well. A number of studies conducted in recent years have concluded that fathers experience as much or more conflict related to work-family balance as their female counterparts. It seems we should now acknowledge that men are more fully internalizing what it means to be a working professional and a highly engaged parent. It is also time for employers to better understand the role that organizations play in helping them do so. Fathers are spending significantly more time caregiving for their children on workdays than they did a generation ago and their reported levels of conflict have increased accordingly.

Studies conducted by the Boston College Center for Work & Family from 2010-2017 have provided significant insights in better understanding how white-collar, American fathers manage and balance their work and family lives. One finding has emerged in nearly every study: While today's fathers are caring and committed to their roles in the workplace and at home, a significant number of fathers are also highly conflicted. For example, we have seen frequent evidence of this dilemma with fathers who want to take on greater responsibility at work, including attaining positions in top management in the large organizations where they were employed, but at the same time, are seeking more time with their children. Fathers who assert that their children's interests are their top priority but are also highly susceptible to the demands of their corporate cultures. And perhaps most conspicuously, fathers who state that caregiving should be divided equally with their partners but admit that it is not.

## Three Paradigms of the New Dad

- **Traditional Dads**

- Spouse should do more and she does

- **Egalitarian Dads**

- Caregiving should be 50/50 proposition and it is

- **Conflicted Dads**

- Caregiving should be 50/50 proposition but...

- Spouse does more than I do

In our research, two-out-of-three fathers said that caregiving should be divided 50/50 with their partners, but fewer than one-out-of-three actually do so (Harrington, Fraone, and Lee, 2017). In analyzing their responses to these questions, we were able to break the fathers into one of three groups or fatherhood types – *Conflicted*, *Egalitarian* and *Traditional*. Conflicted fathers represented the largest of the three groups in our sample at 37%, Traditional fathers represented 32% and Egalitarian fathers 31%. In addition we also stratified the sample by generation – Baby-boomers (those born from 1946-1964), Generation X (born 1965-1981) and Millennials (born 1992-2000).

Differences noted consistently throughout our sample were far more pronounced by the fatherhood type than by generation. The most observable pattern across a broad range of questions was the distinctly lower scores on job and career satisfaction experienced by the Conflicted fathers. On question after question, the Conflicted fathers reported lower levels of satisfaction, greater sensitivity to the work-centric values of their organization, higher intention of leaving their present employer, and other indicators that would raise concern for their employers. In our 2016 study of Millennial fathers, we found that those who faced this dilemma were also struggling in other areas --- they showed the lowest levels of life, job and career satisfaction (Harrington, Fraone, Lee, and Levy, 2016).

### How Organizations Can Respond:

Leading employers are coming to recognize that, as women's careers progress, men need and often want to increase emphasis on their caregiving roles. While there is clearly still a lag in understanding and appreciating the ramifications of these gender role changes, it is becoming more apparent that seeing work-life balance as a "women's issue" is out of step with the reality for today's men and families.

Some of the ways to address gender-biased assumptions might include the following:

- Survey all employees to determine what work-life challenges they are facing and which work-life initiatives or programming would be most meaningful and helpful to them. A greater understanding of this will allow employers to resist making assumptions about employees' work-life needs based on gender, marital or parental status or other demographic factors.
- Develop and communicate all work-life offerings as gender-neutral. While few organizations would overtly discriminate between genders in the design of such offerings, subtle (or not so subtle) messages about who uses or should use such policies as family leave or flexibility need to be understood. This notably includes parental leave which includes a "bonding period" following birth and recovery leave.
- Employee Resource or Affinity Groups that appeal to the needs and interests of your diverse workforce are quite widely available in workplaces. If, for example, a parenting group exists, make this available to both men and women. Or, start a father's employee network and/or mentoring program that focuses not only on career development, but also on the work-life challenges faced by men.

## The Increasing Impact of Family Caregiving

Finding high-quality child care continues to be a challenge facing today's working families, particularly for lower income families. A 2017 study found that 48% of working families spend more than 10% of their income on child care, while 32% of families spend 20% or more of their household income on such care. However, the historic focus on childcare needs to be broadened to understand the challenges faced by all families. Today's working families need to manage many types of caregiving issues. These include, but are not limited to, elder care as well as caring for partners with medical issues and children or adults with special / exceptional health care needs.

It is well known that the birth rate in the world's developed countries is extremely low. At the same time, the population in these same countries is aging dramatically, thanks to the large group of baby boomers who are now reaching or passing age 65. Also, the medical and nutritional progress in these parts of the world that has led to the extension of life spans.

In 2015, nearly 48 million people were age 65 and older in the U.S., accounting for almost 15% of the total population. It is projected that in 2060, 98.2 million people will be age 65 and older, representing nearly 25% of the U.S. population, with almost 20 million individuals at age 85 or older. The problem we are increasingly facing today, which will be more acute in the future, is how those of us that have lived in a mobile society will provide care to aging parents and other loved ones. As expensive and complex as the child care system is in the US, it cannot compare with the complexity, cost, and toll that elder care will exact in the coming years. It is estimated that sixteen percent of the US population provided elder care during 2013-2014.

Some of the additional complexities of elder care when compared to childcare include:

- While child care has relatively well-established delivery systems in most developed countries, elder care delivery systems are often informal and piecemeal for those who are not living in a 24-hour nursing care facility.
- Unlike child care, older adults who need care are far less likely to “live under our roof” with their children and may live great distances away. Approximately 5-7 million caregivers in the U.S. (about 15% of all caregivers) are long-distance caregivers who live an average of 450 miles (724 km) from their care recipients.
- Unlike child care, where one set of parents makes all the critical decisions involved in caregiving, meeting the needs of elderly parents is often negotiated and determined by siblings who may have widely differing views of the most appropriate solutions.
- Unlike child care, which can often be planned in predictable stages, care of elders is often unpredictable and its duration can be vary widely.
- Nearly all elderly will at some point need exceptional caregiving which requires the coordination complex medical treatments, insurers, and providers.
- The cost of child care, while high, can pale in comparison to elder care. Providing care for elders full-time at a nursing home facility in the US can range from \$85,000-100,000 per year.
- There is an emotional toll caring for a loved one whose health deteriorates over time.

Caregiving also has a negative impact on personal health resulting in more doctor visits and higher insurance costs for caregivers' employers. Working caregivers are estimated to have health care costs as high as \$29 billion per year. In addition, the cost of “presenteeism,” time away from work and other disruptions adds up to \$34 billion per year. Employers who offer elder care benefits reap rewards, with AARP estimating a \$3 to \$14 return for each \$1 spent on elder care. (AARP, 2013)

In addition, organizations should be aware of the growing number of lawsuits related to family responsibilities discrimination. In the last 10 years, these cases have increased by 269% with employees winning 67% of the cases that go to trial. Blatant bias against caregivers could greatly increase the likelihood for liability in this area.

Finally, while there has been some significant progress recently with regards to employers offering paid parental leave, a potential problem is worth noting. Many leading employers in the US have begun to extend paid leave to their parents for bonding time (this is typically in addition to the time provided for birth and recovery afforded to mothers). In such cases, an additional six to as many as 20 weeks is offered for this bonding period. In some organizations, mothers are extended more bonding time than fathers (e.g. mothers are given eight weeks while fathers are given two weeks). Recently, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and the US government have each filed suit against an organization that differentiates paid bonding leave by gender, claiming such policies discriminate against men. There is reason to believe such suits will be upheld under Title VII. So, if paid parental leave for bonding time is offered, we recommend a gender-neutral policy.

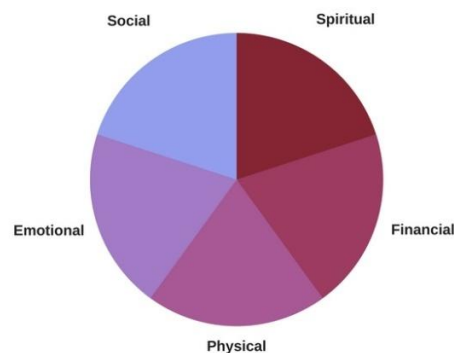
## How Organizations Can Respond:

- Offer support for caregivers in your organization keeping in mind the entire spectrum of caregiving, from prenatal, to special needs individuals, to mental health issues, to caring for the elderly. Services can include EAP, resource and referral, backup care, on site care, assessments, caregivers' affinity groups, and care management.
- Increase awareness regarding the issue of family caregiver discrimination. Ensure that leaders and managers understand that both women and men can be caregivers.
- Provide gender-neutral parental leave policies so dads can bond with their child and learn hands-on caregiving skills.

## Focusing on Employee Well-Being

In the United States, many, but certainly not all, employers provide health care coverage for their employees and their families. As health care costs have continued to rise each year, organizations are paying more attention to this employee benefit. One result of this has been greater cost sharing between employer and employee, with fewer than 10% of Fortune's Most Admired Employers offering coverage that is 100% employer-paid. In addition to cost sharing for insurance dividends and increasing copayments, employers have also shifted their focus from reactive to proactive wellness strategies to help prevent the onset of serious illnesses. This is being done through a broad range of offerings that encourage healthy eating habits, a regular exercise regimen, stress management, and mindful living. Progressive organizations are not only focusing on an employee's physical health but expanding this vision to incorporate the concept of "well-being."

### Health & Wellness



The definition of well-being has been dramatically expanded to include multiple components that contribute to employee wellness in all areas of life -- work, relationships, community environment, as well as physical, emotional / mental, financial and even spiritual health. Organizations are motivated to foster an organizational culture of well-being since it is both a competitive advantage and a key driver of business success. In fact, companies with substantial health and wellness programs outperformed the S&P 500 stock market index over a six-year time period. (Casey, Boston College Center for Work & Family, 2017)

According to a 2014 Aon Hewitt survey of more than 2,800 workers and their dependents, an individual's financial situation is considered to be the most commonly cited stress factors with 51% of workers indicating that their stress levels resulted in lower productivity. This is just one example of how a broader, more holistic approach to well-being can not only diminish stress, but also increase overall well-being.

Research suggests that this holistic approach is linked to employee engagement, retention, and productivity, as well as positive health outcomes. In BCCWF's Millennial Study (2015), we found that employees who view their managers as caring about their well-being report dramatically higher levels of job satisfaction. Specifically, employees who strongly agreed that their manager cared about their well-being scored a 4.2 in job satisfaction on a 1-5 scale (with 5 being "Extremely Satisfied"). In contrast, employees who strongly disagreed that their manager cared about their well-being scored their job satisfaction as 2.1 on the same 1-5 scale.





In spite of well-intentioned and comprehensive wellness initiatives, it is important to note that such efforts can be undermined and their impact eradicated by stress inducing “toxic” workplace practices. In his 2018 book, *Dying for a Paycheck: How Modern Management Harms Employee Health and Company Performance – and What Can Do About It*, Stanford Business School Professor Jeffrey Pfeffer reviews workplace practices that an exhaustive review of epidemiological literature suggest have deleterious effects on human health and longevity. Pfeffer’s list includes such problematic practices as: lay-offs, employee feelings of job insecurity, not offering employees health insurance, employees working long hours, employees struggling with work-family conflict, having little control over one’s job, working in a very high-paced work environment, having no paid time off, and working in a setting that offers low levels of social support (Pfeffer, 2018).

In workplaces that employ all or, more likely, some of these practices, efforts aimed at promoting employee well-being may be seen as less credible or perhaps a Band-Aid approach to solving serious underlying problems that lead to unhealthy employees and an unhealthy workplace. It is important for organizations to address these issues in addition to providing health promotion opportunities for their employees.

#### **How Organizations Can Respond:**

- Assess current workforce practices to determine whether the workplace culture is one that promote employee well-being. If policies, practices or the culture of the organization are undermining health promotion efforts, work to eliminate those.
- Convey that the organization cares about the well-being of employees as “whole persons.”
- Ask employees how their managers and the organization can reduce stress levels and support employees on a range of issues: travel, workload, time in meetings etc.
- Develop broad-based initiatives (that include physical, mental, financial well-being, etc.) with incentives for employees to improve their well-being.
- Offer seminars on a wide range of wellness topics ranging from parenting to smoking cessation to weight loss to sleep management and financial wellness.

## **The Shift to Flexible and Virtual Workplaces**

In former days when the majority of the workforce was engaged in direct labor roles and information technology was in its infancy, work was a place to go to do your job for a specific set of hours. Employees in manufacturing, distribution, retailing, and customer service, for example, were involved in work that required one’s physical presence at the workplace. While many individuals involved in these activities continue require “on-site” presence in order to do their work, advances in technology and a shift toward the knowledge economy have changed the nature of work for many others. Now for many, work is what you do and it can be done anywhere and anytime.

Many organizations have embraced flexible work arrangements including flex-time, telework, compressed workweeks, and reduced work-hours programs. In some cases, these arrangements have become a standard way of operating. Flexibility remains the most popular and often requested work-life benefit for many employees, especially working parents, who at one time were seen as the primary driver for its popularity.

But as organizations have become more global, operating in a 24/7 environment, as they seek to eliminate non-value-added time (such as commuting time to offices), and ways to minimize the cost of expensive real estate, flexibility becomes less an accommodation for employees than a win-win for both employers and employees.

Indeed, the business case for flexibility is a powerful one which includes many potential cost savings and productivity enhancements, and often flexibility costs an organization little to implement. The benefits can also spill over into minimizing the environmental impact of daily commuting. Finally, we have seen many organizations see remote-work capabilities as part of a business continuity / disaster management strategy. During times of inclement weather or other emergencies (e.g. hurricanes in Texas and Florida, wildfires in California, etc.), organizations with employees who had the capability to work remotely have been able to maintain business continuity even if offices were closed due to such events.



**Business Case for Flexibility**

- **Global Organizations:** Meet 24/7 demands
- **Technology:** Anytime, anywhere workplace
- **Productivity:** Lower absenteeism, improve morale
- **Attraction:** Reputation as "employer of choice"
- **Corporate Social Responsibility:** Green approach
- **Well-being:** Control reduces employee stress
- **Cost:** Retain employees, reduce real estate costs, diminish no value commuting time

Today, many organizations have taken flexibility a step further and have moved to a more virtual workplace. Many employees and departments no longer report to "work" in person and increasingly do not have designated office space. Call centers are increasingly staffed with distributed employees working from their own homes. And employees need not necessarily relocate in order to take on new or expanded roles in their companies. This is

especially true when jobs are part of distributed teams or when they require extensive travel to a variety of work locations.

This shift toward more flexible and virtual ways of working does, however, raise many questions and challenges for leaders regarding trust, measuring employee output, and getting comfortable in a low or no face time environment. The shift to virtual work takes these concerns to an even higher level to include questions regarding building relationships, fostering teamwork, creating and maintaining corporate culture, cross-cultural competence, measuring and evaluating performance, and manager preparedness to lead virtually.

The rise in the virtual workplace also brings with it a host of practical issues resulting from many, and sometimes many thousands of, employees housing their own offices. These can include issues that touch on technology and technology support, home office costs, as well as workers' compensation insurance and taxation. Home offices can also create far greater levels of spillover and permeability between home and work. In the today's virtual workplace, it could be said that there is "no place called home," one that is insulated from and provides a respite from today's demanding workplace. Overall, we need to better understand the implications of this blurring of home and work and understand how to maintain a healthy segmentation between one's work and home life.

#### **How Organizations Can Respond:**

The cornerstone that underpins most flexible work arrangements is trust. When employees are allowed or encouraged to work different hours or from home, there is a leap of faith that must occur to make this non-traditional work arrangement successful. While some work-at-home roles are easy to monitor (e.g. call center representatives), others are not. Trust is required along with a performance management system that focuses on results (not face time) and a concerted effort to find ways to build teamwork in spite of the lack of daily face-to-face interactions.

While there have been a number of high profile cases where organizations have moved away from work-from-home arrangement in recent years (e.g. BestBuy, Yahoo, etc.), most companies continue to see this new way of working as simply that, and support it for the reasons cited above. To make this kind of arrangement successful, organizations have implemented a number of measures including:

- Emphasize that working flexibly can mean working better to meet the needs of customers as well as the desires of employees for greater flexibility, given the needs of our increasingly global, 24/7 work environment.
- Improve communications with a focus on performance and results rather than face time in the office. Managers and employees can put measures in place to determine accountability for their projects and performance. These metrics can offer far better assessment of performance than "face time" or "seat time."
- Ensure that employment agreements specify how this different form of working will be managed including who is responsible for technology connections, office equipment and furnishings as well as how work will be reviewed. Provide tools for

employees to work in a location away from the office and to facilitate team connectedness (e.g. video conferencing, social networking, etc.).

- Train managers how to manage in a remote and virtual workplace. Teach employees how to effectively work remotely and be fully accountable for their work responsibilities. Encourage teams to discuss and determine how to manage workload to accommodate the work and personal issues of all team members.

## The Challenges of Pervasive Technology

Much of the movement and success of flexible workplaces has been the direct result of new technologies that have made it possible for many employees to work from almost any location. Today, few of us have jobs that have not been impacted by technology in significant ways. While the personal computer and companies Apple and Microsoft were founded in the 1970's, they didn't become a major force in the industry until the 1980's. And while email and the Internet were invented decades before, it was not until the 1990's that these technologies were in widespread use. Perhaps most importantly, the genesis of the smartphone in 2007 put unprecedented access to technology in our pockets.

The growth of technology companies demonstrates the depth of belief that we have in technology and its promise. For example, Apple, Alphabet (the mother company of Google), Amazon and Microsoft are now the four most valuable companies in the US with market caps that dwarf companies such as Exxon-Mobil, Johnson & Johnson, and General Electric. When you add Facebook to this group, the dominance of these tech giants is clear. According to a recent piece by Samuel Earle in *The Times Literary Supplement* (TLS), Google controls more than 90% of search-engine traffic in Europe and 88% in the US, Amazon takes more than half of every new US dollar spent online, and Facebook recently reached 2 billion members (Earle, 2017). That's 27% of the world's population.

In spite of our love affair with technology and social media, the unprecedented rise in their use has also brought many challenges along with their benefits. While we marvel at our small devices that can allow us to access our communications, take and share photos, bring us instant news and weather updates, play our favorite songs, or get us to our desired location no matter where we find ourselves, we are now also connected to our workplace 24/7. And many of us balk at the ways that these same technologies have invaded our personal lives. There are a number of ways that technology innovations can prove problematic.

First, one of the fundamental paradigms in the work-life field is that of *segmentors* and *integrators*. Segmentors are people who like to keep their work life separate from their home life. They are happy to put in their time at work but want to leave their work at the office. Integrators are those who seamlessly move from work to life to work without clear boundaries. Since the first smartphones surfaced in 2007, we have all been pushed toward being integrators. Nancy Rothbard from the University of Pennsylvania has used the term "unintended integrators" to describe the effect that technology is having – it forces us to blur the boundaries of our work and personal domains, whether we want to or not.

Second, technology can alter the rhythm and the nature of the way we live and work. Stanford Professor of Communications Byron Reeves studies our digital lives. Reeves stated that the average user of a smartphone turns that phone on and off about 300 times a day. According to Reeves, research with Stanford students found that "If you put software on laptop computers and smartphones to measure how long they spent with any given segment of life that they intend to do -- how long they wrote their paper, how long they watch a news story -- it's about ten seconds." Ten seconds – an extremely short timespan without seeking or being distracted. (CBS Sunday Morning, April, 2018)

This constant change in focus impacts not only our attention spans, but also the quality of our conversations and our relationships. Professor Sherry Turkle of MIT describes scenes – in a college library, a corporation, a law office – where we are "alone together ... Connected to phones and screens and headsets, we are in proximity to one another, but not working together." Turkle goes on to state that, "we are tempted to think that our little 'sips' of online connection add up to a big gulp of real conversation. But they don't." (Turkle, 2012). Not when it comes to connecting on a deeper level – to be present, to support one another, or to problem solve.

Third, the widespread use of technology tools can also invade our formerly private lives in ways many of us do not fully grasp. When we access something, "like" something, or put something online, it's public and it's permanent. It can be used by all manner of enterprises and individuals for reasons that we likely never have suspected. This is increasingly a matter of concern as our work and non-work lives become integrated and our worlds become intermingled.

As *NY Times* columnist David Brooks observed about the two-edged sword of technology, "The big breakthrough will come when tech executives clearly acknowledge the central truth: Their technologies are extremely useful for the tasks and pleasures that require shallower forms of consciousness but they often crowd out ... deeper forms of consciousness that people need to thrive. What's happening today is that we seem to be unconsciously reordering our priorities as technology in the workplace and at home change many of the habits and approaches of living. What's needed now is a rethinking of how technology can serve our needs without becoming our masters." (Brooks, 2017)

### **How Organizations Can Respond:**

It is often difficult for organizations to solve this problem, in part because individuals need to take primary responsibility for monitoring and containing their use of technology. However, using the measures listed below can help mitigate some of the negative impacts that technology is having and limit the intrusions that technology can have that limit the quality of our interactions:

- Encourage boundaries between work and personal life. Technology that is available anywhere, anytime shouldn't mean that employees are working everywhere and all the time. Some employers are going as far as "shutting down" the email systems after hours, while others advocate disconnecting on weekends and holidays to avoid overload and burnout.
- Consider making certain meetings tech-free zones to ensure that employees are fully engaged in the conversation. One pharmaceutical company that has worked

with the Center displays a prominent sign in their meeting rooms exclaiming "Be Here Now."

- Emphasize quality over quantity of connections. Ask users to analyze their email traffic by looking at sent and received messages and evaluate when to use "reply all" or respond directly to the sender.
- Establish certain times of the day for uninterrupted working. The constant notifications from our email inboxes and social media can prevent our full attention and stifle innovation and strategic thought.

## The Shift to More Customized Careers

It is evident that the career model that existed a generation ago has been dramatically altered. In the more traditional career model of days past, many individuals would go to work for an organization with the hope (and perhaps even expectation) of a long-term, or in some cases lifelong, employment relationship. The career goal of many new graduates was to find a good employer where they could grow and advance up the "career ladder." Often doing so involved significant personal sacrifices, including long work hours and multiple relocations, but the presence of an at-home spouse, the promise of long-term employment, and the increased financial rewards that came with longevity supported taking on such challenges. In this more traditional career model, the organization played the critical role of designating career paths, planning for its "manpower needs," and orchestrating career moves, especially for "high potential" employees.

For many reasons, this organizationally-driven career model has changed. Two primary reasons are:

- Since the 1990's, employers have shown a far greater willingness to reconfigure and "right-size" their workforce. This has been the result of a number of factors including advances in technology, the move toward globalization, and dramatic economic and business model shifts. Never was this last trend more obvious than during the 2008 recession when many organizations engaged in large-scale downsizing that sometimes impacted tens of thousands of employees within a single employer. This led to individuals acknowledging that they must play a more active role in updating their skills and navigating their own careers.
- In addition, there have been significant increases in the number of women in the workplace, dual career couples, and increase in single parent heads-of-household. As discussed, these changes have meant that assumptions regarding "someone being home to care for the children" are no longer valid. This has resulted in a desire for careers that allow for greater individual differences and greater flexibility of career paths.
- Finally, there has been a marked rise in individuals engaged in "alternative work arrangements" defined as temporary help agency workers, on-call workers, contract company workers, and independent contractors or freelancers. This



segment of the workforce rose dramatically from 10.1 percent in February 2005 to 15.8 percent in late 2015 after being a stable percent of the workforce from 1995-2005. It is important to point out that unlike individuals who make the choice to follow a more individualized path, many people who work in these arrangement do so out of necessity, and not a lifestyle choice to be part of a contingency workforce. (Katz & Kruger, 2016)

Today, a new career model has emerged that is increasingly independent of the organization. This "free-agent" model has been fueled by an increasingly educated workforce, lower levels of organizational commitment to long-term employment, and the greater complexity of managing and coordinating professional commitments given the profound changes that have occurred in the American family. The term first applied to this new career model was "the Protean Career" by Boston University Professor Emeritus Douglas T. Hall (2001). Hall was prescient in anticipating the shift to a more individually-driven, customized career model by framing this concept initially in the mid-1970's.

## Comparison of Traditional and Customized Careers

Issue	The Traditional Career	The Customized Career
<b>Who's in charge?</b>	Organization: Career development is heavily driven by prescribed organizational career paths and internal development opportunities.	Individual: Individuals see the locus of control of their careers residing primarily within themselves. Individuals must take greater responsibility for navigating their own career.
<b>Core values</b>	Advancement: Focus is on advancement through the organizational hierarchy (the "career ladder").	Freedom, growth: Career development can encompass different directions (the "career lattice").
<b>Degree of organizational mobility</b>	Lower: Tendency to look mainly at opportunities within one's current organization	Higher: Investment in one's profession and increasingly portable benefits allow individuals to change employers more easily
<b>Success criteria</b>	Position, level, salary: More external, objective measures	Psychological success: More internal, subjective measures. Success is defined not by position, but by the person
<b>Key attitudes</b>	Organizational commitment: The willingness to do what it takes to demonstrate commitment to the organization's priorities, even when that comes at the cost of one's own priorities	Work satisfaction / Professional commitment: Focus is more on commitment to one's career and life and the opportunity to do meaningful work. More attention to one's professional development rather than to any particular organization.

As a result of the changes outlined, many employees are now following this “customized” or individualized model characterized by greater individual agency in navigating careers, greater organizational mobility (in terms of being able to move from one employer to another), and a less prescribed career path that does not assume one-size-fits-all. Hall has postulated that this career model requires two clear meta-competencies, *identity* and *adaptability*. Hall described identity as having a clear sense of one’s self. That would include self-knowledge of one’s interests, skills, and values, as well as one’s professional and personal life goals. Adaptability refers to one’s ability to use this clear sense of identity to adapt to changing personal and professional circumstances (for example, a promotion, being laid off).

### How Organizations Can Respond:

For most employees, especially those early in their professional journey, career development is the top retention factor around the globe, rated more highly even than compensation. Robust career development programs can foster organizational commitment and help employees progress and contribute in greater ways.

- Offer career-life education programs that include both self-assessment and career planning elements. For managers, offer similar programs that also include career coaching skills as a critical part of the curriculum.
- Encourage mentorship and sponsorship throughout the organization. Develop events to help connect potential mentors/sponsors with those who can benefit from their assistance. While informal, more “organic” forms of mentoring relationship are likely the most effective, realize that formal mentoring programs can be especially helpful for women and members of minority groups that often lack access to mentors and sponsors.
- Encourage organizational leaders to create a work environment that supports employees to live rich, full, and balanced lives and that convey respect for their employees’ obligations outside of their work.
- Have a clearly articulated organizational position on those employed in alternative work arrangements. Understand the challenges for these workers and determine what can be done to support those who work these arrangement out of necessity.

## Creating Inclusive Workplaces

Organizations that value and appreciate each employee for their individual differences and life experiences benefit from their employees’ diverse perspectives. In the early days of corporate affirmative action and diversity programs, efforts were primarily focused on changing the composition of the workforce through recruitment targeted at increasing the representation of female employees and persons of color.

In recent years, the concept of diversity has broadened significantly to include a very wide range of characteristics beyond race and gender. To illustrate how the view of diversity has been enlarged, Johns Hopkins University created the “Diversity Wheel” (see following page) which incorporates many more elements of diversity. The center of the wheel represents dimensions that are the most permanent or visible (such as gender, race, or age). The outside of the wheel represents dimensions that are acquired and may change over the course of a lifetime (such as religion, education, political beliefs, or socio-economic status). According to Johns Hopkins, the combination of all of these dimensions influence our beliefs, behaviors, experiences and expectations and make all of us unique.



Source: Johns Hopkins Diversity Leadership Council

Another way that the diversity focus has changed is in moving beyond numerical measures of representation to assessing and trying to create an inclusive workplace culture. Inclusion means more than simply having a diverse workforce; it focuses on providing a sense of belonging; feeling respected and valued for who you are; feeling a level of supportive energy and commitment from others so that employees can do their best work. The concept of inclusion should take into consideration both the ways in which an organization interacts with its employees as well as the ways in which the organization interacts with customers, clients, partners, and vendors.

Organizational inclusion and work-life efforts support diversity by looking at each individual and their unique needs. Work-life programs that are sensitive to individual and family needs, especially those that show sensitivity to the increasingly diverse nature of today's families, illustrate how companies can assist in addressing the diverse influences that are impacting employees' lives.

In addition, there are a host of inclusive workplace strategies that can impact the experience for a diverse employee base. These begin with organizational branding and recruitment efforts that cast a broad net and decrease unconscious bias in the talent acquisition process. These initiatives are designed to increase representation, but following that, the challenge of offering an environment that supports the visible and invisible differences that each individual brings to the workplace begins. The goal is to celebrate the variety of life experiences and perspectives of a diverse employee base while providing a sufficiently common culture and language to facilitate working across differences. This requires an on-going commitment from organizational leaders.



#### How Organizations Can Respond:

- Work to minimize unconscious bias in the recruitment, hiring, and promotion processes to ensure diverse representation throughout the hierarchy of the company.
- Establish and encourage supports for employees from diverse backgrounds aimed at supporting professional development, such as mentoring, support networks, and training and career development opportunities.
- Develop and engage "Employee Resource Groups" to capitalize upon the knowledge and experience of ERG members to contribute to the development of new products and marketing initiatives that serve new market segments.

- Identify leaders who are committed to being champions of diversity and inclusion and ensuring that all people managers are accountable to the goals of the inclusion strategy.

## The Challenges of Managing a Global Workforce

In the past, organizations were able to shape workforce policies and initiatives to reflect the generally consistent nature of operating within one country. In spite of this consistency, implementing effective workplace policies and practices requires a high level of sophistication in order to understand and consider the legal framework, the needs of various employee audiences, the labor market skills required by unique business sectors, and the critical business priorities that will ensure the programs have the desired, positive impact on organizational productivity and employee engagement.

Most very large corporate organizations are moving, or have moved, to a more global approach to managing their business and their people. While in many such organizations geographic management structures continue to exist, there is a desire to create global structures and policies, where appropriate, which meet the needs of a global workforce.

In some ways, this might seem to run contrary to the logic of organizational diversity efforts that recognize and celebrate differences, and it can prove to be extremely difficult given the widely varying cultural norms, employment practices, and labor laws that exist from country to country. In addition, a global approach must also consider differing expectations about the employee-employer relationship, diverse views of gender roles and the current political and economic climate in each country or region in which an organization operates.

The Center's work on the Global Workforce Roundtable (2006-2016) and the series of Global Executive Briefings we have produced have effectively demonstrated and recognized the diverse approaches needed to create effective people programs when operating globally. The Center has produced publications highlighting the unique workforce needs of many countries including Brazil, China, Germany, India, Japan, South Korea, Mexico, Russia, Sweden, and Switzerland. To access these briefings, go to:

<https://www.bc.edu/bc-web/schools/carroll-school/sites/center-for-work-family/research/ExecutiveBriefings.html>

The legal environment, including employment and family law, gender roles, family systems, and socio-economic differences, will all dictate the need for unique, country specific workforce policies that are aligned with the local legal environment.

In addition to providing workforce management approaches that can be effective in multiple countries, organizations must also support employees who are working in global teams and organizations. These employees face additional challenges in terms of working across time zones, traveling to other countries on short or long-term assignments, and working productively with those from different cultures and who likely have English as a second (or third) language. The work hours and work locations during these assignments may adversely impact their time to cope with life challenges including time with their families and their commitments to their communities.

### How Organizations Can Respond:

- Provide training that facilitates more effective cross-cultural communications and understanding.
- Develop work-life policies, programs, and services that are culturally sensitive and customizable to meet the needs of individuals in each area of the world where your organization operates.
- Understand the special demands that come from working in global teams. Provide employees with the technology and flexibility to work more effectively across time zones and other challenges inherent in global operations.



## From Changing Policies to Changing Culture

For many years, human resource practitioners and scholars have worked within individual HR departments, e.g. staffing, compensation, benefits, training, diversity, etc., and implemented initiatives and programs aimed at improving organizational efficiency and effectiveness in one of these areas. But there has always been a desire in the field to better understand how to make these initiatives less programmatic and more integral to the culture of the organization. This has continued to prove a significant challenge.

But as we move toward enhancing the entire employee experience, it is evident that accomplishing such a strategy will necessitate a comprehensive approach where individual HR efforts are integrated and organizational leaders take responsibility for shaping a positive workplace culture. Taking a systems-oriented approach as the foundation of an organization's people strategy will require more cross-functional collaboration with HR's various functions and much greater alignment and integration with organizational leaders.

A strategic and integrated people strategy begins with two clear components that serve as its guiding light and its foundation. The guiding light is the organization's mission and objectives. Simply put, the mission and objectives state, "What do we want the organization to be?" This includes the products and services it will provide, the markets it will serve, and the value it will give to its stakeholders, most especially its customers and its employees.

The foundation consists of the organization's values and its workforce expectations. An organization's values reflect how it desires to work and behave toward its customers, its shareholders, its employees (most importantly) and the communities in which it operates. These values are driven by the culture which has been created initially by its founders and leaders (Schein, 2010). But it must also be forged with a clear understanding of the needs and expectations of its workforce which, as we have pointed out, have changed significantly in recent years. The mission and strategy are focused on what we do and the values and expectations on how we will do it.

For the organization to operate effectively and with integrity, there are two important things that must be kept in mind. First, workforce strategies must be aimed at achieving the goals of the organization. Second, they must reflect the values of the organization and the needs of its workforce. Programs that do not support these will likely be counter-productive.

The ability to achieve the mission, execute the strategy, and do so in accordance with the organization's values requires the effective collaboration of the three major constituents: organizational leaders, employees, and the human resource function. Their roles in creating culture can be represented by the diagram and text that follow:



- **Leadership:** Leaders - from top management to first line supervisors - play a crucial role in developing and sustaining an effective organizational culture. In order to create a culture that is responsive to employees' needs, senior managers must have and communicate a clear vision of the mission, values, and goals for the organization. This should include, as a central element, a people strategy that stresses integration and commonality between organizational aims and positive outcomes for organizational members (i.e. employees.) This will create a culture where employees see strong alignment between their goals and those of the organization which is the key to ensuring employee engagement.
- **Human Resources:** The human resources function plays a critical role in developing an effective and inclusive workplace. To do so, it is critical that HR be well grounded in the business strategy, labor market trends, and employees' changing needs. Utilizing employee surveys, best-practices benchmarking, and other internal and external research, the human resource function should make recommendations to leaders that address the needs of the workforce. They should develop policies and initiatives across the spectrum of HR activities (e.g. staffing, inclusion, total rewards, development, work-life, and health and wellness) that facilitate the achievement of organizational objectives through sound people management processes. Perhaps most importantly, HR should play the critical role of facilitators of organizational and culture change. All of these efforts will ensure that people are truly seen as an organization's greatest asset and will increase the retention and engagement of top talent.
- **Individual Employees:** Today, employees need to take greater responsibility for effectively and proactively managing their own careers. With the right training and policies from the HR function and support from an aligned management team,

individuals should take ownership of a number of key things. First, they should establish their own career and work-life priorities. Second, they should initiate conversations with their managers to discuss ways that they can achieve organizational and individual objectives. Third, they should maintain career plans that are mutually beneficial to both themselves and their employers.

It is critical that these three groups not only carry out their individual roles effectively, but also work together in an integrated manner. Disconnects or lack of alignment between these three groups will lead to problems that will undermine the effectiveness of organizational efforts and lead to an underperforming workplace. For example, if HR launches employee initiatives that are not owned and fully supported by organizational leaders, they will lack credibility in the eyes of organizational members. If policies are instituted but are not well communicated, employees will be unaware of them, and those policies will suffer from low utilization. Or if employees are not clear on their own career-life priorities, they will not be in a position to discuss ways to develop the most appropriate career solutions that will meet the organization's needs as well as the employee's own (both professional and personal).

What is needed is an integrated and aligned approach to facilitate how the organization can optimize the employee experience. All players in the organization need to be well-versed in their roles and well-connected with one another to turn this vision into a reality.

## How to Lead the Change Process

It is important to recognize that cultural change is easier said than done. Many organizations set out to implement cultural change, but only a small number of such efforts are successful. Changing culture cannot be achieved by simply changing policies and implementing training programs. Corporate cultures are built upon years of experience and leadership's underlying assumptions about how things get done. These assumptions are often extremely deep-seated and difficult to change and nearly always involves an in-depth, patient process for making sure such changes "stick."

A step-by-step process can be used to ensure that there is a readiness, willingness, strategy, and implementation plan to increase the likelihood that the desired change has the greatest likelihood of success. One model that has been used by our Center is the **7 Step Change Model**. This model provides a systematic approach to planning and managing the change process. The steps and brief descriptions are listed below:



- **Establish the Case for Change:** This is classically known as “the business case.” Not all major changes in organizations are driven by such a case, but it is always useful to try to clearly determine and communicate to organizational members why we are embarking on the change in the first place. Without that, the challenges that are inherent in all major change efforts will often delay or even negate the desired change from occurring. Typically developing the case for change involves examining market and competitive realities, linking the change to meaningful business outcomes, and Identifying how the changes can avoid a crisis or potential crisis or take advantage of a major business opportunity.
- **Form a Powerful Guiding Coalition:** Major changes often change the power base within an organization. Therefore, it is important to ensure the change is led by people who can effect change and also address the critical issues that will be raised. What are the characteristics of the people needed to lead a major change? They need to have the position power to enact the changes proposed. They need the right level and breadth of expertise to ensure what is proposed is correct. They should be leaders with high levels of organizational credibility and be willing to drive the change process, not simply delegate responsibility for this to others.
- **Creating a Vision for the Change:** Vision is an often overused term in organizations today. What we mean here by vision is simply developing and communicating a “picture of the mission achieved.” It gives employees and other stakeholders a sense of what the organization will look like when the change process is completed. It is both a guiding light for the work and a vehicle to communicate what is happening and why.

- **Identify Obstacles to the Change:** Before developing a plan for moving forward, it is important to tap into the expertise of team members and the organization as a whole to identify issues that could prevent the vision from being achieved. Identifying the vision / end result for the process, as well the obstacles that need to be overcome, gives you the two primary building blocks for your planning and implementation.
- **Develop a Plan for the Change:** The change leaders should collectively develop a detailed plan and work outline to achieve the desired end-result that takes into account the resources of the organization (e.g. human, financial, etc.) needed to achieve it. This should also include a realistic timeline for the change implementation.
- **Lead the Implementation:** The guiding coalition needs to lead the implementation of the change process. Implementation is never a smooth, steady process (except perhaps in retrospect). Major changes are subject to many fits-and-starts, critics of change are often widespread in the organization and balanced evaluation on the change implementation is often rare. Implementing large-scale change can take years, making it difficult to maintain momentum and focus. It is important to set interim milestones and do extensive and regular "in-process reviews" in order to check progress and take corrective action when needed. It is also critical to reward and communicate progress which is being made.
- **Institutionalize the New Approach:** Finally, to institutionalize the change, there are a number of actions that need to be taken. First, communicate the new approach to organizational members. Then, ensure that it is codified as new way to operate, incorporated in organizational policies and management / employee training materials, and the criteria for evaluation and compensation used in the organization's performance management system (Kotter, 1993).

#### How Organizations Can Respond:

If the changes and dynamics outlined in this paper require significant changes in workplace policies and culture, acknowledge that such an undertaking is complex and time consuming. Using a structured change process to take on the cultural shift is critical to ensure the greatest likelihood of success. Specifically:

- Work at all levels within the organization: leader, line manager, individual contributor, to help instill a culture that values employees as whole persons with lives outside of work.
- Make sure leaders are aware of demographic changes in the workforce and current workforce trends that will require shifts in the way work gets done and in the evolution of the employee culture.

## Summary

For the last 30 years, the Boston College Center for Work & Family has been engaged in work with a dual agenda - to make organizations more productive and to do so through an investment in the quality of employees' work and lives. We have been very fortunate to work with some of the world's leading employers in a broad range of sectors including banking, consulting, energy, healthcare, high-technology, hospitality, insurance, manufacturing, professional services, and higher education. From that unique perch, we have been able to observe a wide range of organizations that are continuously striving to offer a superior value-proposition to their employees that focuses on the "whole person."

Our corporate members lead a wide variety of HR functions: workforce effectiveness, diversity and inclusion, employee well-being, total rewards, talent management, employee engagement, and leadership and organization development. A spectrum of initiatives coming from each of these groups all have a similar end result in mind: *making their employees' experience second to none*. And that proposition includes providing employees with the opportunity for a rich and rewarding life outside of work - with family and friends, in their community, or to pursue their own personal passions and interests.

Through research, information exchanges, and best practice sharing, we have learned a great deal about what actions leading employers are taking in order to operate successfully in today's' global, technology-enabled, complex and dynamic business environment. Regardless of the industry we work with or our members' specific areas of focus, our goal as organizational and human resource leaders is to create an employee experience that makes each of our partner organizations an employer of choice.

We hope this publication will increase the awareness of how current and future workforce changes will impact the workplace and will inspire organizations to new and innovative ways of responding. What works best for your particular organization is up to you.

Good luck in your efforts!



# References

Arnett, J. (2000). Emerging Adulthood: A Theory of Development From the Late Teens Through the Twenties. *American Psychologist*,

AARP. (2013). How Employers Can Support Working Caregivers. Retrieved from <https://www.aarp.org/work/employers/info-06-2013/employers-support-working-caregivers.html>

Baicker, K., Cutler, D., & Song, Z. (2010). Workplace Wellness Programs can Generate Savings. *Health Affairs*, 29(2), 304-311

Bookman, A. & Kimbrel, D. (2011). Families and Elder Care in the Twenty-First Century. *The Future of Children*, 21(2), 117-133.

Boston College Center for Work & Family. (2011) The MetLife Study of Financial Wellness across the Globe: A look at how multinational companies are helping employees better manage their personal finances. Research Report. MetLife Life Insurance Company.

Boushey, H. (2009) The New Breadwinners. *The Shriver Report*. Retrieved from <http://www.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/issues/2009/10/pdf/awn/chapters/economy.pdf>

Bowling, N. A. & Kirkendall, C. (2012). Workload: A review of causes, consequences, and potential interventions. In Jonathan Houdmont, Stavroula Leka, and Robert R. Sinclair, (Eds.), *Contemporary Occupational Health Psychology: Global Perspectives on Research and Practice* Vol. 2 (221-236). West Sussex, UK: John Wiley & Sons.

Boyar, S., Maertz, C., Jr., Pearson, A. and Keough, S. (2003). Work-Family Conflict: A Model of Linkages Between Work And Family Domain Variables And Turnover Intentions. *Journal of Managerial Issues*, 15(2), 175-190.

Brooks, D. (2017). How Evil is Tech? *The New York Times*. November 20, 2017.

Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2011). Families by presence and relationship of employed members and family type, 2010-2011 annual averages. Retrieved May 1, 2012 from <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/famee.t02.html>.

Casey, J. (2017). Employee Well-being: A Comprehensive Approach. Boston College Center for Work & Family.

Diestel, S. & Schmidt, K. (2009). Mediator and moderator effects of demands on self-control in the relationship between workload and indicators of job strain. *Work & Stress: An International Journal of Work, Health & Organisations*, 23(1), 60-79.

Earle, S (2017). How tech companies like Facebook think that they can become God. *The Times Literary Supplement*. Retrieved from <https://www.the-tls.co.uk/articles/public/technology-companies-facebook-god-earle/>

Family Caregiver Alliance (2016) *Caregiver Statistics: Demographics* [www.caregiver.org](http://www.caregiver.org)

Galinsky, E., Aumann, K., and Bond, J., (2008). Times are Changing: Gender and Generation at Work and at Home. *Families and Work Institute: 2008 National Study of the Changing Workforce*.

Gajendran, R.S. & Harrison, D.A. (2007). The Good, the Bad, and the Unknown About Telecommuting: MetaAnalysis of Psychological Mediators and Individual Consequences. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 92(6), 1524 –1541.

Hall, D. T. (2001). *Careers In and Out of Organizations*. San Francisco: Sage Publications.

Harrington, B. and Hall, D. T. (2007). *Career Management and Work-Life Integration: Using Self-Assessment to Navigate Contemporary Careers*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishing

Harrington, B. and Ladge, J. (2009). Work–Life Integration: Present Dynamics and Future Directions for Organizations. *Organizational Dynamics*, 38(2), 148-157.

Harrington, B. and Ladge, J. (2009) Got Talent? It Isn't Hard to Find: In Boushey, H. and O'Leary, A. (2009) *The Shriver Report: A Woman's Nation Changes Everything*. Washington, DC: Center for American Progress.

Harrington, B., Fraone, J., Lee, J., and Levy, L. (2017). *The New Dad: The Career-Caregiving Conflict*. Chestnut Hill, MA: Boston College Center for Work & Family.

Harrington, B., Fraone, J., and Lee, J. (2016). *The New Millennial Dad: Understanding the Paradox for Today's Fathers*. Chestnut Hill, MA: Boston College Center for Work & Family.

Harrington, B., Van Deusen, F., Fraone, J. and Morelock, J. (2015). *How Millennials Navigate Their Careers: Young Adults View on Career, Life and Success*. Chestnut Hill, MA: Boston College Center for Work & Family.

Harrington, B., Van Deusen, F., and Ladge, J. (2010). *The New Dad: Exploring Fatherhood within a Career Context*. Chestnut Hill, MA: Boston College Center for Work & Family.

Harrington, B., Van Deusen, F. and Humberd, B. (2011). *The New Dad: Caring, Committed and Conflicted*. Chestnut Hill, MA: Boston College Center for Work & Family.

Hartmann, D., Series Editor (2009-2012). *The Global Executive Briefing Series*. Chestnut Hill, MA: Boston College Center for Work & Family.

Hill, E.J, Jacob, J.I., Brennan, R.T., Blanchard, V.L., & Martinengo, G. (2008). Exploring the relationship of workplace flexibility, gender, and life stage to family-to-work conflict, and stress and burnout. *Community, Work, & Family*, 11(2), 165-181.

Hill, E.J., Erickson, J.J., Holmes, E.K., & Ferris, M. (2010). Workplace Flexibility, Work Hours, and Work- Life Conflict: Finding an Extra Day or Two. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 24(3), 349 –358.

Katz, L.F. & Krueger, A.B. (2016) The Rise and Nature of Alternative Work Arrangements in the United States, 1995-2015. G20 Insights. Policy Brief.

Kotter, J. (1993). Why Transformation Efforts Fail. *Harvard Business Review*.

Levit, A. & Licina, S. (2011). *How the Recession Shaped Millennial and Hiring Manager Attitudes about Millennials' Future Careers*. DuPage, IL: DeVry University.

Mennino, S.F, Rubin, B.A., and Brayfield, A. (2005). Home-to-Job and Job-to-Home Spillover: The Impact of Company Policies and Workplace Culture. *The Sociological Quarterly*, 46(1), 107-135.

Patten, E., Parker, K. (2012). A Gender Reversal on Career Aspirations: Young Women Now Top Young Men in Valuing a High-Paying Career. *Pew Research Center*. Retrieved from <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2012/04/19/a-gender-reversal-on-career-aspirations/>.

Parker, K., Wang, W. (2013). Modern Parenthood: Roles of Moms and Dads Converge as They Balance Work and Family. *Pew Research Center*. Retrieved from <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2013/03/14/modern-parenthood-roles-of-moms-and-dads-converge-as-they-balance-work-and-family>.

Perlow, L. (2012) *Sleeping with Your Smartphone*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Business Review Press.

Pfeffer, J. (2018). *Dying for a Paycheck: How Modern Management Harms Employee Health and Company Performance – and What Can Do About It*, New York. Harper-Collins Publishers.

Sabattini, L. & Carter, N. M. (2012). *Expanding Work-Life Perspectives: Talent Management in Asia*. New York, NY: Catalyst.

Schein, E. (2010). *Organizational Culture and Leadership (Fourth Edition)*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Taylor, P., Parker, K., Morin, R., Patten, E., and Brown, A., (2014). *Millennials in Adulthood*. Pew Research Center

The University of Pittsburgh Institute (2010). *Aging, University Center for Social and Urban Research, and Department of Behavioral and Community Health Services*.

The MetLife Study (2010). *Working Caregivers and Employer Healthcare Costs: New Insights and Innovations for Reducing Healthcare Costs for Employers*. Research Report. New York: MetLife Life Insurance Company.

Turkle, S. (2012). The Flight from Conversation. *The New York Times*. April 22, 2012.

Van Deusen, F. and James, J. (2008). *Overcoming the Implementation Gap: How 20 Leading Companies are Making Flexibility Work*. Chestnut Hill, MA: Boston College Center for Work & Family

WFD Consulting. (2010). *Workload in America*. Retrieved from <http://www.wfd.com/PDFS/Work-load%20in%20America%20Report%202010%205-13-10.pdf>

WorldatWork. (2011). *Telework 2011: A WorldatWork Special Report*. Retrieved from <http://www.worldatwork.org/waw/adimLink?id=53034>

# Acknowledgements

Many thanks to the team at the Boston College Center for Work & Family for their contributions to this white paper. I would especially like to thank Jennifer Sabatini Fraone, Brianna Dougherty, Anne Thomson, Judi Casey, Julianna Marandola, and Audrey Ballard for their contributions to researching, writing, and editing this paper. While much of the research cited was done by the Center for Work & Family, far more was conducted by leading scholars and practitioners, too numerous to mention, who have a relationship with our Center. We owe a debt of gratitude to these researchers for their contributions to this paper and to the field.

Prof. Brad Harrington  
Executive Director