Trends in Workplace Flexibility

research

A Report by WorldatWork,
Underwritten by FlexJobs
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Introduction & Methodology

This report summarizes the results of a May 2015 survey of WorldatWork members, "Trends in Workplace Flexibility," to gather information about current trends in workplace flexibility practices. This survey is designed to measure flexibility options offered to employees and commonly used flexible work arrangements. It also analyzes how these programs are managed.

On May 20, 2015, the survey opened to U.S., Canadian and international WorldatWork members. Members were notified of the survey through direct, electronic invitations as well as targeted messages through Facebook and LinkedIn.

The survey closed on June 19, 2015, with 379 responses. The dataset was cleaned and analyzed using statistical software. Any duplicate records were removed, resulting in a final data set of 375 responses. Data comparisons with any relevant, statistically significant differences are noted in this report.

The demographics of the survey sample and the respondents are similar to the WorldatWork membership as a whole. The typical WorldatWork member works at the managerial level or higher in the headquarters of a large company in North America.

The frequencies or response distributions listed in the report show the number of times or percentage of times a value appears in a data set. Due to rounding, frequencies of data responses provided in this survey may not total 100%.

WorldatWork conducted similar trends in flexibility program surveys in 2013 and 2010. These reports can be viewed on the WorldatWork website. Where possible, historical comparisons from data gathered in the previous survey are shown.

Table of Figures

Additional Analysis

Demographics

Figure 1: **"Which of the following best describes your employer:"** (n=301)
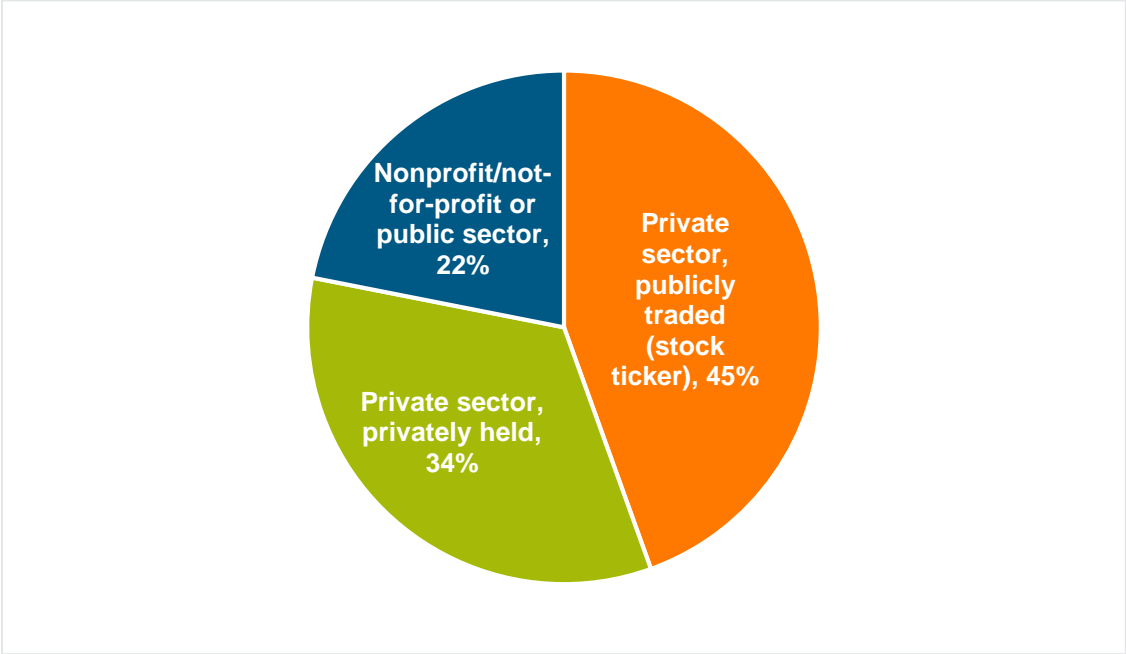
Figure 2: **"Please choose the total number of full-time employees (FTEs) your organization employs worldwide:"** (n=302)

Option	Percentage
Fewer than 100 employees	4%
100 to 499	10%
500 to 999	12%
1,000 to 2,499	21%
2,500 to 4,999	14%
5,000 to 9,999	11%
10,000 to 19,999	13%
20,000 to 39,999	7%
40,000 to 99,999	4%
100,000 or more employees	5%

Figure 3: **"Please choose one category that best describes the industry in which your organization operates:"** (n=301)
Industries with less than 2% are not listed in this table.

Option	Percentage
All Other Manufacturing	15%
Finance and Insurance	13%
Consulting, Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	11%
Utilities, Oil and Gas	9%
Health Care and Social Assistance	7%
Information (includes Publishing, IT, etc.)	6%
Educational Services	3%
Pharmaceuticals	3%
Public Administration	3%
Retail Trade	3%
Computer and Electronic Manufacturing	2%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	2%
Other	15%

Figure 4: **"What is the approximate annual voluntary turnover for employees?"** (n=297)
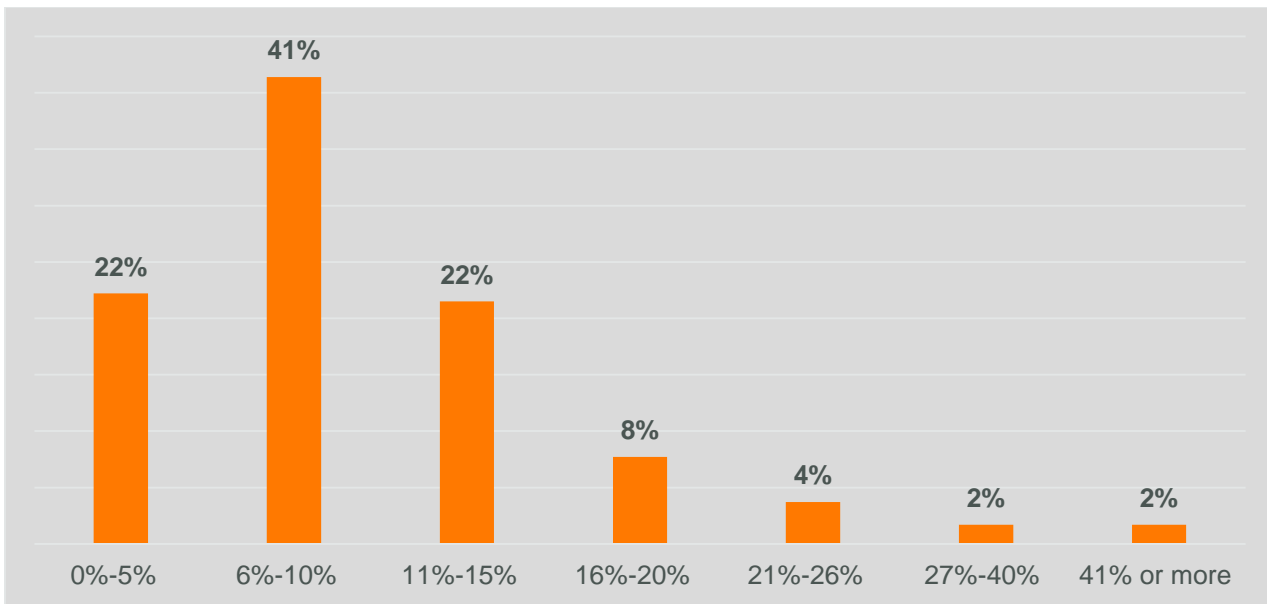
Executive Summary

While workplace flexibility practices continue to vary significantly within organizations, the prevalence of flexible work arrangement programs has remained steady since 2013. (See Figure 6.) These programs are still offered by the majority of responding organizations, with staple programs including ad-hoc telework, flex time and part-time schedules.

It appears that, from 2011 through 2015, flexibility program design has continued to vary by the type of programs that work best for the demographics, industry and culture of an organization. Mastering flexibility through program design and/or striving for a culture of flexibility is not something that organizations do on the first or even second try. It's an evolutionary process that occurs as employees tap into what they need to achieve work-life effectiveness. Employers understand valid business reasons for cultivating new ways of working.

In addition to capturing prevalence data, this survey examines the degree of flexibility culture in place at organizations and uncovers any relationships to program offerings, practices and total rewards success. (See Figures 37-43.) There is a clear demonstration that organizations with a more strategic-embedded culture tend to have higher perceived employee satisfaction and engagement and motivation. They also train their managers and employees at a higher rate, offer more flexible work arrangements to their workforces and market their flexible work options more when advertising for open positions.

Flexibility Programs

- By far, the most prevalent flexibility programs offered are telework on an ad-hoc basis, flex time and part-time schedules (with or without benefits). These programs are each offered to some or all employees in more than 80% of organizations. When offered, flex time and telework on an ad-hoc basis are also the most commonly used since 2010, with flex time ranked highest. Usage of part-time schedules has dropped from third to sixth, and compressed workweeks moved to third in 2015. (See Figures 5 and 11.)

- The average number of flexibility programs offered by responding organizations is 6.1, not including "combination of programs" as a possibility. This has marginally decreased since 2013, by one-tenth of a percentage point. (See Figure 8.) In addition, 1% of organizations offer all flexibility programs listed while 3% offer none of the surveyed programs.

- Of the 3% of organizations without flexibility programs, resistance from management and lack of jobs conducive to flexible work arrangements are frequently cited. Top management tends to be more of a barrier than middle management, and often acts as an obstacle to telework programs. More than half of organizations noted that some jobs are not conducive to flex time (54%) nor part-time schedules (53%). A lack of expressed interest from employees is also an obstacle, reported most commonly in career on/off ramps (39%) and phased retirement (38%). (See Figure 9.)

- Ad-hoc teleworking is consistently utilized and within the top three programs, if not the top program utilized, among all sectors. However, 97% of nonprofit/not-for-profit or public-sector organizations use part-time schedules (with or without benefits). (See Figure 10.) The differences in work environments and operations needs cause variance among flexibility options in industry and organization size. (See Figures 11 and 12.)

- Over two-thirds of managers (67%) offer flexibility to all or most of their employees either at their own discretion, or they are generally encouraged to find mutually beneficial solutions. However, 21% of managers do not offer informal flexibility programs at their discretion. (See Figure 14.)

Types of Programs Offered

- A 4/10 schedule (work four, 10 hour days with one day off) remains the most common compressed workweek arrangement in 2015. However, this has dropped by 20 percentage points. Gaining in popularity are a lack of a specific flexibility schedule in place or employees developing a schedule with supervisors (28%) and a 4/9 workweek (work four, nine hour days with one half day off) (20%). (See Figure 16.)

- Core work hours are typical with flex time. For half of responding organizations, hours vary by business unit/department. While 34% of organizations agree that all or most employees are required to work during the core hours, and on average the hours of 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. This has remained unchanged since 2010. (See Figure 17.)

- 66% of organizations cover the purchase of laptops for their teleworkers, by far the most provided expense. (See Figure 19.) Technology purchases are the greatest expense covered by employers, and teleworkers utilize the following products regularly: virtual private network (VPN) (86%), instant messaging (74%), communication and collaboration software such as WebEx (70%) and telephone systems (61%). (See Figure 18.)

- While many managers still find it difficult to estimate the productivity of teleworking employees, 48% believe teleworkers are equally as productive as in-office employees. This trend has inversely shifted since 2013 where only 36% of organizations agreed teleworking employees were equally as productive, and 53% of managers found it difficult to estimate teleworker productivity. (See Figure 20.)

Program Administration and Communication

- Flexibility training for managers and employees remains a rarity in many organizations. Training is not specifically provided for employees nor managers about how to be successful with flexible work arrangements. (See Figures 21 and 22.)

- 44% of organizations do not feature or market flexibility as a key employee benefit when attempting to attract new employees. (See Figure 23.)

- More than three quarters of organizations (82%) have a written business continuity plan that involves the use of flexibility in response to a disaster or circumstances that may prevent operations as normal. Not nearly as many organizations have, or are considering, the use of flexibility as a strategy for real estate issues (24%) or green or corporate sustainability initiatives (20%). (See Figure 24.)

- While more organizations agree that the guiding principles of their flexibility programs are formal (37%) than the administration of the programs (28%), a majority of organizations believe

both the principles and administration are informal. (See Figures 25 and 26.) Informal flexibility is defined as no written strategy/philosophy, no/few written policies, as well as no forms or at the discretion of managers for administration.

Program Strategy and Measures

- 53% of organizations do not have a flexibility strategy or philosophy. However, of those that do, only 19% have a formal, written document. (See Figure 28.)

- The access of flexible work arrangements often depends on workforce segments or departments, but is not widespread to all employees in 41% of organizations. (See Figure 29.)

- Frequently, only a small portion of managers/leaders (42%) buy in to the idea that flexibility is an essential element to organizational success. (See Figure 26.) When managers are hired or promoted, 76% of organizations do not consider their propensity for managing in a flexible work environment. (See Figure 31.) Furthermore, 93% of a managers stated performance objectives do not typically include goals that encourage consideration and/or use of flexibility options by their employees. (See Figure 32.)

- Only 3% of organizations attempt to quantify the ROI of flexibility programs by measuring items such as productivity, employee engagement and performance rating. (See Figure 33.)

- Workplace flexibility is believed to have a positive effect on engagement, motivation and satisfaction, although to a lesser degree since 2010. More than half of participants anticipate their workforce would say there is a positive or extremely positive effect on employee engagement (60%), motivation (57%) and satisfaction (68%). (See Figure 34.)

- More organizations are feeling that their workforces would say that career progression or development are positively impacted, causing employees to have more opportunities. This has increased to 18% in 2015, an 11 percentage point shift since 2013. However, 10% of organizations also believe their workforces would agree there is a negative effect, a 7 percentage point rise. While growths have occurred both in positive and negative effects, the majority of organizations (53%) continue to agree that career progression or development opportunities are not impacted by an employee's use of flexibility. This has largely declined from 69% in 2013. (See Figure 35.)

Results and Analysis

Flexibility Programs

Figure 5: **"What types of flexibility/flexible work arrangements does your organization offer to some or all employees? (Please select all that apply.)"** (n=375)
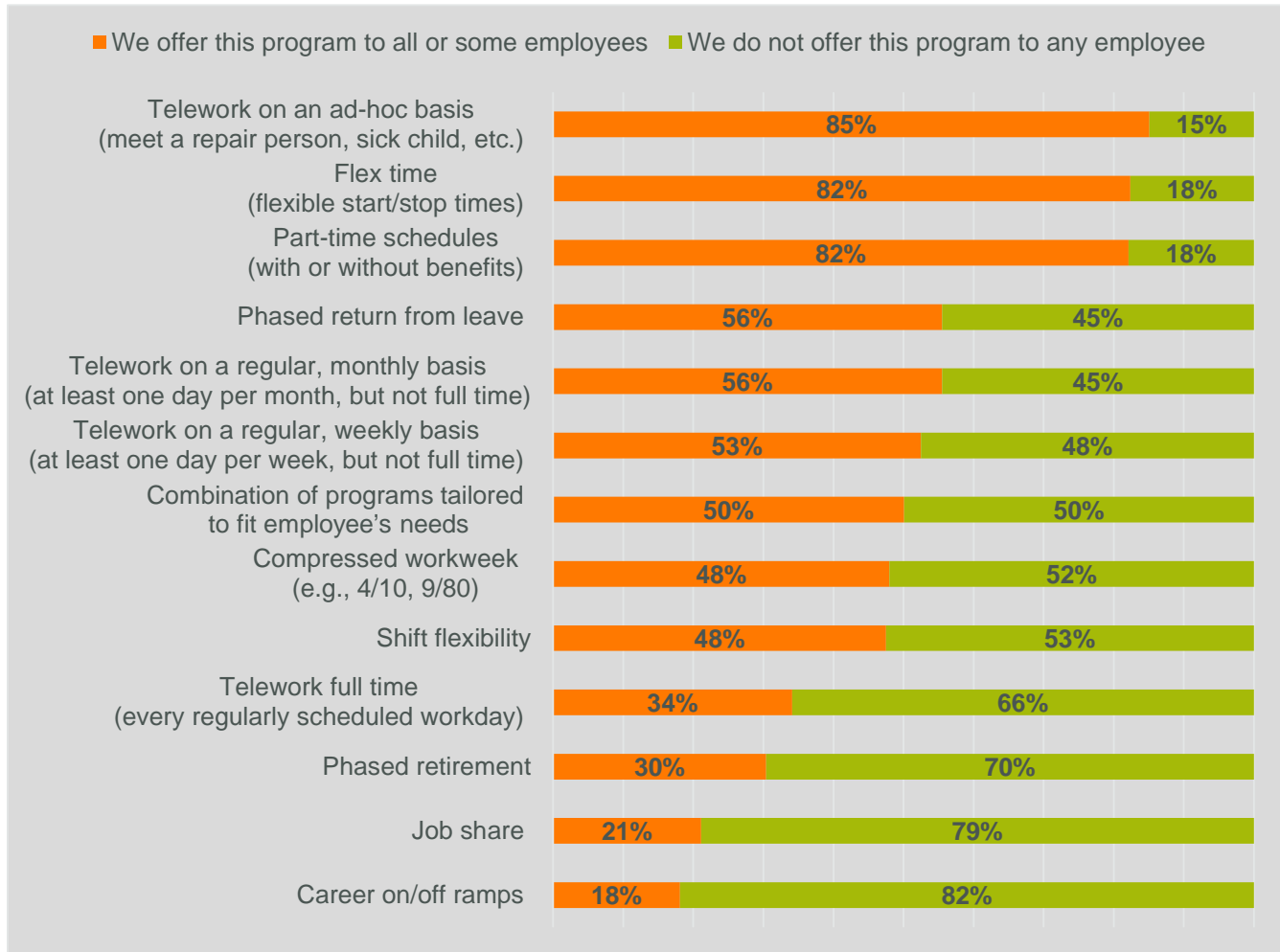
Figure 6: **Prevalence of Flexibility Programs Offered to All or Some Employees, Year-Over-Year Comparison**

	2010	2013	2015
n=	537	566	375
Telework on an ad-hoc basis (meet a repair person, sick child, etc.)	83%	83%	85%
Flex time (flexible start/stop times)	84%	82%	82%
Part-time schedules (with or without benefits)	84%	81%	82%
Phased return from leave	59%	60%	56%
Telework on a regular, monthly basis (at least one day per month, but not full time)	58%	56%	56%

Telework on a regular, weekly basis (at least one day per week, but not full time)	57%	52%	53%
Combination of programs tailored to fit employee's needs	52%	48%	50%
Compressed workweek (e.g., 4/10, 9/80)	52%[1]	43%	48%
Shift flexibility	44%	51%	48%
Telework full time (every regularly scheduled workday)	37%	34%	34%
Phased retirement	27%	31%	30%
Job share	27%	24%	21%
Career on/off ramps	19%	22%	18%

Figure 7:   Prevalence of Flexibility Programs, by Employee Coverage (n=375)

Legend: ■ Offered to all employees   ■ Offered to some employees   ■ Not offered to any employees

Program	Offered to all	Offered to some	Not offered
Telework on an ad-hoc basis (meet a repair person, sick child, etc.)	45%	40%	15%
Flex time (flexible start/stop times)	49%	34%	18%
Part-time schedules (with or without benefits)	43%	39%	18%
Phased return from leave	47%	9%	45%
Telework on a regular, monthly basis (at least one day per month, but not full time)	24%	32%	45%
Telework on a regular, weekly basis (at least one day per week, but not full time)	22%	30%	48%
Combination of programs tailored to fit employee's needs	21%	27%	53%
Compressed workweek (e.g., 4/10, 9/80)	32%	18%	50%
Shift flexibility	23%	25%	52%
Telework full time (every regularly scheduled workday)	13%	22%	66%
Phased retirement	18%	12%	70%
Job share	10%	11%	79%
Career on/off ramps	12%	6%	82%

[1] A statistically significant higher percentage of organizations offered compressed workweeks in 2010 (52%) compared to 2013 (43%).

Figure 8:   Number of Flexibility Programs Offered (n=375)
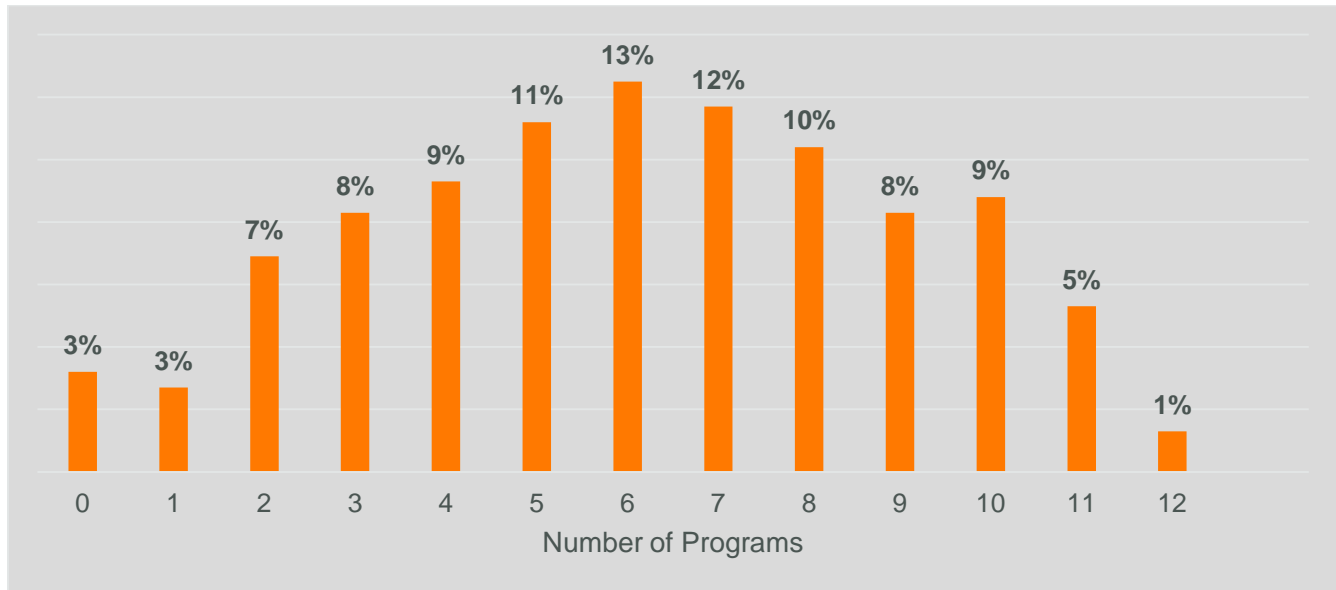
Figure 9:   "In a previous question, you noted that you do not offer the programs listed below for some or all employees. Which of the following are primary obstacles to your organization's adoption of flexibility programs or flexible work arrangements? (Please select all that apply.)"

Flexibility Option	Resistance from Top Management	Resistance from Line Managers /Supervisors	No Expressed Interested from Employees	Lack of Jobs that are Conducive to Flexible Work Arrangements	Other
Telework on an ad-hoc basis (meet a repair person, sick child, etc.) (n=170)	37%	26%	1%	44%	18%
Flex time (flexible start/stop times) (n=166)	42%	25%	2%	54%	11%
Part-time schedules (with or without benefits) (n=180)	21%	15%	12%	53%	14%
Phased return from leave (n=173)	25%	14%	27%	23%	27%
Telework on a regular, monthly basis (at least one day per month, but not full time) (n=252)	49%	26%	5%	37%	18%
Telework on a regular, weekly basis (at least one day per week, but not full time) (n=257)	54%	28%	4%	37%	15%
Shift flexibility (n=261)	20%	15%	14%	45%	20%
Compressed workweek (e.g., 4/10, 9/80) (n=255)	44%	20%	10%	36%	19%
Telework full time (every regularly scheduled workday) (n=296)	52%	29%	6%	39%	13%
Phased retirement (n=274)	22%	6%	38%	15%	31%

Job share (n=301)	26%	14%	28%	37%	19%
Career on/off ramps (n=297)	20%	9%	39%	17%	30%

Figure 10: Prevalence of Flexibility Programs, by Sector

Flexibility Option	All Respondents (Refer to Figure 1.)	Private sector, publicly traded (stock ticker)	Private sector, privately held	Nonprofit/not-for-profit or public sector
n=	375	129	97	65
Average number of programs offered	6.1	6.3	6.4	6.9
Telework on an ad-hoc basis (meet a repair person, sick child, etc.)	85%	90%	90%	83%
Flex time (flexible start/stop times)	82%	88%	79%	86%
Part-time schedules (with or without benefits)	82%	80%	83%	97%
Phased return from leave	56%	52%	64%	55%
Telework on a regular, monthly basis (at least one day per month, but not full time)	56%	58%	56%	51%
Telework on a regular, weekly basis (at least one day per week, but not full time)	53%	52%	56%	52%
Combination of programs tailored to fit employee's needs	50%	47%	52%	60%
Compressed workweek (e.g., 4/10, 9/80)	48%	47%	40%	60%
Shift flexibility	48%	45%	53%	51%
Telework full time (every regularly scheduled workday)	34%	29%	36%	34%
Phased retirement	30%	29%	31%	28%
Job share	21%	23%	14%	29%
Career on/off ramps	18%	19%	17%	19%

Figure 11: Prevalence of Flexibility Programs, by Organization Size (Number of Employees)[2]

Flexibility Option	Fewer than 100	100-499	500-999	1,000-2,499	2,500-4,999	5,000-9,999	10,000-19,999	20,000 or More
n=	12	31	35	59	40	31	37	47
Average number of programs offered	6.4	6.9	6.0	6.4	5.6	6.4	7.6	6.9
Telework on an ad-hoc basis (meet a repair person, sick child, etc.)	100%	87%	86%	85%	88%	90%	95%	87%
Flex time (flexible start/stop times)	92%	94%	69%	88%	80%	90%	76%	92%

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[2] The count for certain groups is less than 30; data corresponding to larger sample sizes will have stronger statistical power and validity.

Part-time schedules (with or without benefits)	75%	81%	86%	88%	85%	90%	84%	81%
Phased return from leave	67%	65%	69%	56%	50%	61%	49%	51%
Telework on a regular, monthly basis (at least one day per month, but not full time)	50%	58%	49%	54%	38%	58%	70%	62%
Telework on a regular, weekly basis (at least one day per week, but not full time)	42%	58%	51%	51%	38%	55%	68%	57%
Combination of programs tailored to fit employee's needs	50%	68%	43%	54%	38%	52%	65%	45%
Compressed workweek (e.g., 4/10, 9/80)	33%	39%	40%	56%	40%	48%	57%	53%
Shift flexibility	33%	52%	37%	48%	50%	42%	68%	49%
Telework full time (every regularly scheduled workday)	17%	32%	34%	36%	20%	26%	46%	34%
Phased retirement	50%	26%	37%	20%	25%	32%	32%	30%
Job share	17%	7%	14%	24%	20%	13%	41%	28%
Career on/off ramps	17%	23%	17%	9%	13%	19%	32%	21%

Figure 12:   Prevalence of Flexibility Programs, by Industry[3]

Flexibility Option	All Respondents (Refer to Figure 1.)	All Other Manufacturing	Finance & Insurance	Consulting, Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	Health Care & Social Assistance
n=	375	41	40	32	19
Average number of programs offered	6.1	5.0	7.4	7.3	6.8
Telework on an ad-hoc basis (meet a repair person, sick child, etc.)	85%	78%	95%	91%	79%
Flex time (flexible start/stop times)	82%	78%	83%	94%	79%
Part-time schedules (with or without benefits)	82%	68%	83%	91%	90%
Phased return from leave	56%	46%	73%	66%	58%
Telework on a regular, monthly basis (at least one day per month, but not full time)	56%	44%	68%	56%	63%
Telework on a regular, weekly basis (at least one day per week, but not full time)	53%	37%	63%	63%	58%

[3] The count for certain groups is less than 30; data corresponding to larger sample sizes will have stronger statistical power and validity.

Combination of programs tailored to fit employee's needs	50%	37%	53%	66%	58%
Compressed workweek (e.g., 4/10, 9/80)	48%	49%	50%	31%	58%
Shift flexibility	48%	44%	55%	41%	63%
Telework full time (every regularly scheduled workday)	34%	20%	50%	44%	32%
Phased retirement	30%	24%	35%	41%	32%
Job share	21%	20%	20%	22%	26%
Career on/off ramps	18%	15%	15%	31%	21%

Figure 13: **Prevalence of Flexibility Programs by Employee Eligibility, If Offering a Program to Some or All Employees**
Respondents could select more than one employee category. For example, of organizations who offer telework on an ad-hoc basis, 61% of these offer this option to nonexempt/hourly employees.

Flexibility Option	Nonexempt/Hourly	Exempt/Salaried	Officers/Executives
Telework on an ad-hoc basis (meet a repair person, sick child, etc.) (n=319)	61%	99%	86%
Flex time (flexible start/stop times) (n=309)	74%	97%	80%
Part-time schedules (with or without benefits) (n=308)	94%	82%	56%
Phased return from leave (n=208)	92%	100%	93%
Telework on a regular, monthly basis (at least one day per month, but not full time) (n=208)	54%	97%	69%
Telework on a regular, weekly basis (at least one day per week, but not full time) (n=197)	54%	98%	64%
Shift flexibility (n=178)	89%	62%	51%
Combination of programs tailored to fit employee's needs (n=188)	78%	97%	82%
Compressed workweek (e.g., 4/10, 9/80) (n=180)	83%	78%	59%
Telework full time (every regularly scheduled workday) (n=128)	52%	95%	54%
Phased retirement (n=114)	68%	82%	89%
Job share (n=79)	77%	87%	56%
Career on/off ramps (n=68)	77%	90%	81%

Figure 14: **"For any flexibility program that is not formally offered to all or most employees, are managers allowing that type of flexibility at their own discretion?"** (n=327)

Of the managers allowing flexible work arrangements at their discretion much of the variation of flexibility programs is based on business or operational needs, as well as many noting the use of flexible schedules and telework.
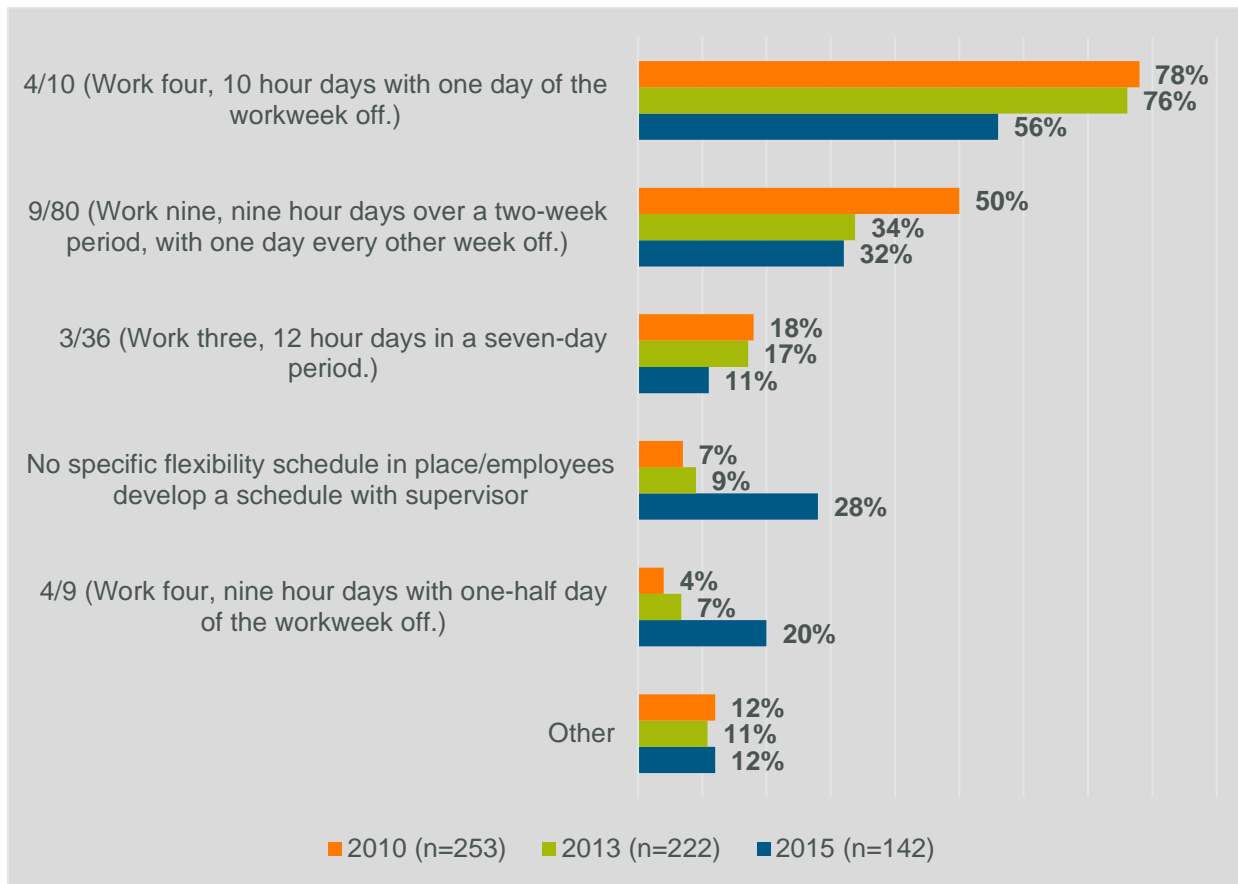
Figure 15: **"Please rank the flexibility programs your organization offers by employee usage and employee type."**

Flexibility Option	Average Item Ranking		
	2010	2013	2015
Flex time (flexible start/stop times)	1.6	1.9	1.4
Telework on an ad-hoc basis (meet a repair person, sick child, etc.)	2.6	2.6	2.1
Compressed workweek (e.g., 4/10, 9/80)	3.4	3.4	3.0
Telework on a regular, weekly basis (at least one day per week but not full time)	3.9	3.8	3.1
Shift flexibility	3.7	3.3	3.3
Part-time schedules (with or without benefits)	3.3	3.0	3.5
Phased return from leave	4.6	4.4	3.5
Telework on a regular, monthly basis (at least one day per month but not full time)	4.3	4.4	4.1
Telework full time (every regularly scheduled workday)	4.7	4.5	4.5
Phased retirement	5.9	5.3	5.1
Job share	6.3	5.7	5.1
Career on/off ramps	5.2	5.2	5.4

In 2010, 65% of surveyed organizations stated that men and women use flexible work arrangements equally. In 2013 and 2015, WorldatWork asked respondents to rank arrangement usage for males versus females. There was not sufficient response received to report for males versus females either year. However, the majority of organizations reported that males and females use programs equally, and the ranking of the usage of those programs mirrors the overall response set shown in Figure 7.

Types of Programs Offered

Figure 16: **"What types of compressed workweek schedules does your organization offer? (Please select all that apply.)"**[4]

Schedule type	2010 (n=253)	2013 (n=222)	2015 (n=142)
4/10 (Work four, 10 hour days with one day of the workweek off.)	78%	76%	56%
9/80 (Work nine, nine hour days over a two-week period, with one day every other week off.)	50%	34%	32%
3/36 (Work three, 12 hour days in a seven-day period.)	18%	17%	11%
No specific flexibility schedule in place/employees develop a schedule with supervisor	7%	9%	28%
4/9 (Work four, nine hour days with one-half day of the workweek off.)	4%	7%	20%
Other	12%	11%	12%

Organizations that selected "Other" listed a variety of compressed workweek arrangements, such as summer hours, rotating shifts and schedules allowing half days off or early releases on Fridays.

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[4] In 2015 a statistically significantly lower percentage of organizations offer 4/10 compressed workweeks (56%) than in 2013 (76%).Hhowever, a statistically significantly higher percentage of organizations do not specify flexibility schedules/employees develop a schedule with supervisors (28%) compared to 2013 (9%).

Figure 17: "Regarding your organization's use of flex time whereby start and stop times vary, are there core hours that can't be interfered with (e.g., all schedules employees must be working from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., or some other block of time)?"

	2010 (n=395)	2013 (n=397)	2015 (n=253)
Yes, hours vary by business unit/department	44%	47%	50%
Yes, hours are the same for all or most employees	35%	32%	34%
No	22%	21%	16%
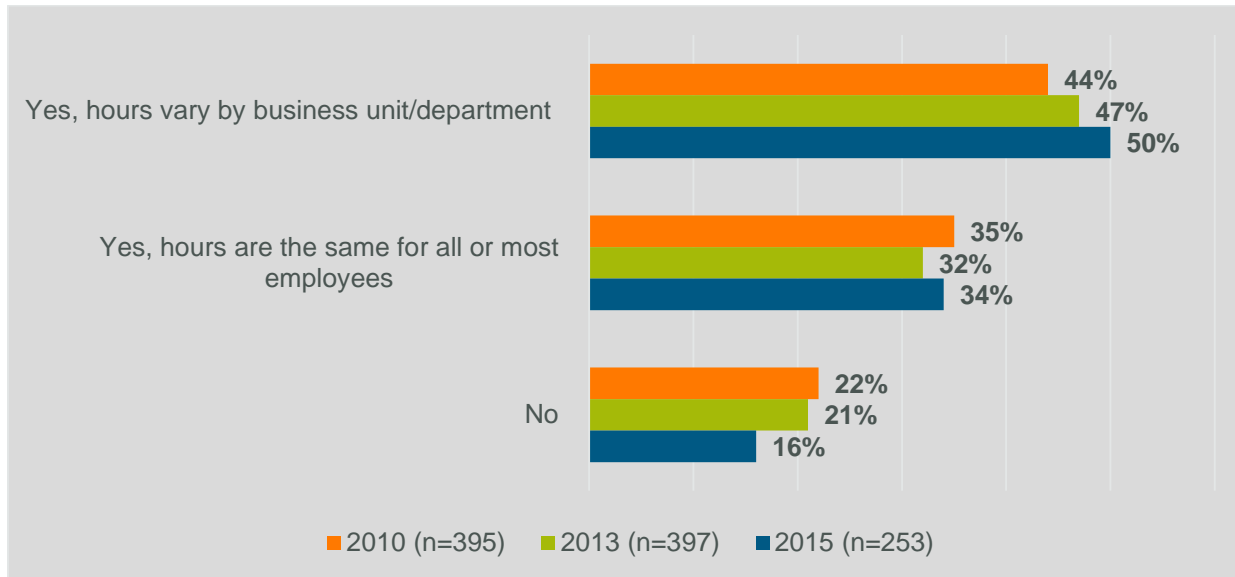
34% of organizations agreed all or most employees must accommodate the hours of 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., on average, as to not interfere with core work hours.

Figure 18: "What technologies do you use with teleworkers? (Select all that apply.)" (n=264)

	2015
Virtual private network (VPN)	86%
Instant messaging	74%
Communication and collaboration software such as WebEx	70%
Telephone systems	61%
Shared desktops	39%
Security equipment	25%
Time and attendance software such as Time Doctor or Timesheet	21%
Project management software such as Basecamp	10%
Virtual whiteboards	9%
None	5%

Figure 19: "What expenses does your organization cover for teleworkers? (Select all that apply.)" (n=256)

	2015
Laptop	66%
Smartphone	36%
Software	34%
Mobile device data/voice plan	31%
Long distance phone calls	22%

We do not cover any expenses for teleworkers	22%
Internet access	21%
Office supplies (e.g., paper, pens)	16%
Desktop	9%
Tablet	8%
Allowance for home-office supplies	4%
We cover all expenses for full time teleworkers	4%
Office chairs	2%

Figure 20: **"What do managers report regarding productivity of teleworking employees?"**

	2013	2015
n=	417	257
Teleworking employees are equally as productive as in-office employees	36%	48%[5]
It's difficult to estimate the productivity of teleworking employees	53%	39%[6]
Teleworking employees are more productive than in-office employees	8%	8%
Teleworking employees are less productive than in-office employees	2%	4%

Program Administration and Communication

Figure 21: **"Is training provided to employees about how to be successful as an employee with a flexible work arrangement?"[7]**

No 83% / Yes 17% — 2010 (n=455)
No 88% / Yes 12% — 2013 (n=483)
No 89% / Yes 12% — 2015 (n=295)

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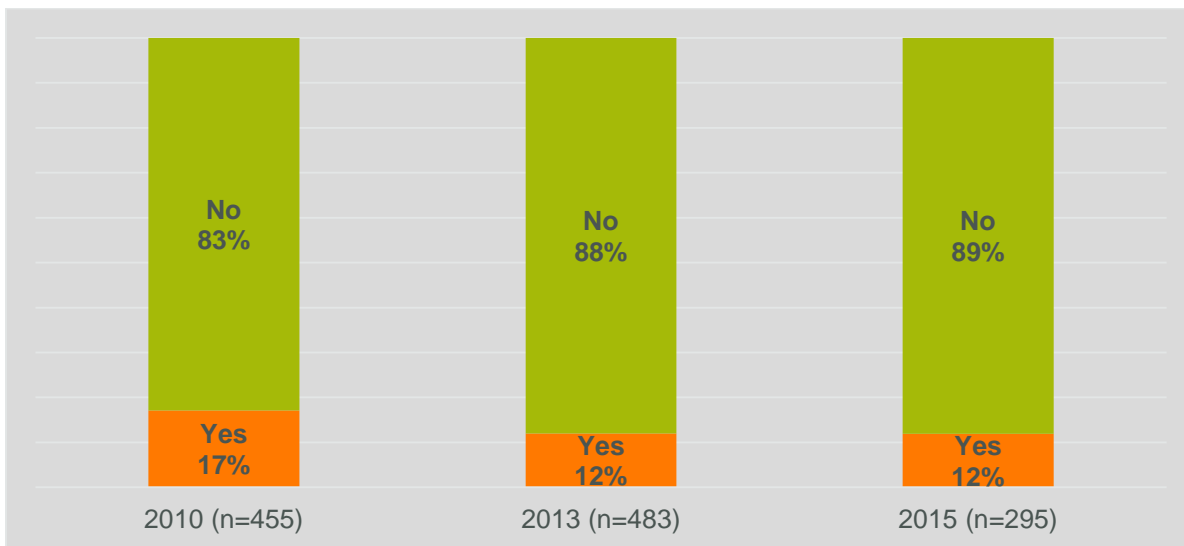
[5] Organizations report a statistically significantly greater percentage of teleworkers being equally as productive as in-office employees (48%) in 2015 compared to 2013 (36%).
[6] A statistically significantly smaller percentage of organizations report that it's difficult to estimate the productivity of teleworkers in 2015 (39%) than 2013 (53%).
[7] In 2015, a statistically significantly greater percentage of organizations did not provide training to employees about how to be successful with a flexible work arrangement (89%) as 2010 (83%).

Figure 22: "Is training provided to managers about how to successfully manage employees with flexible work arrangements?"

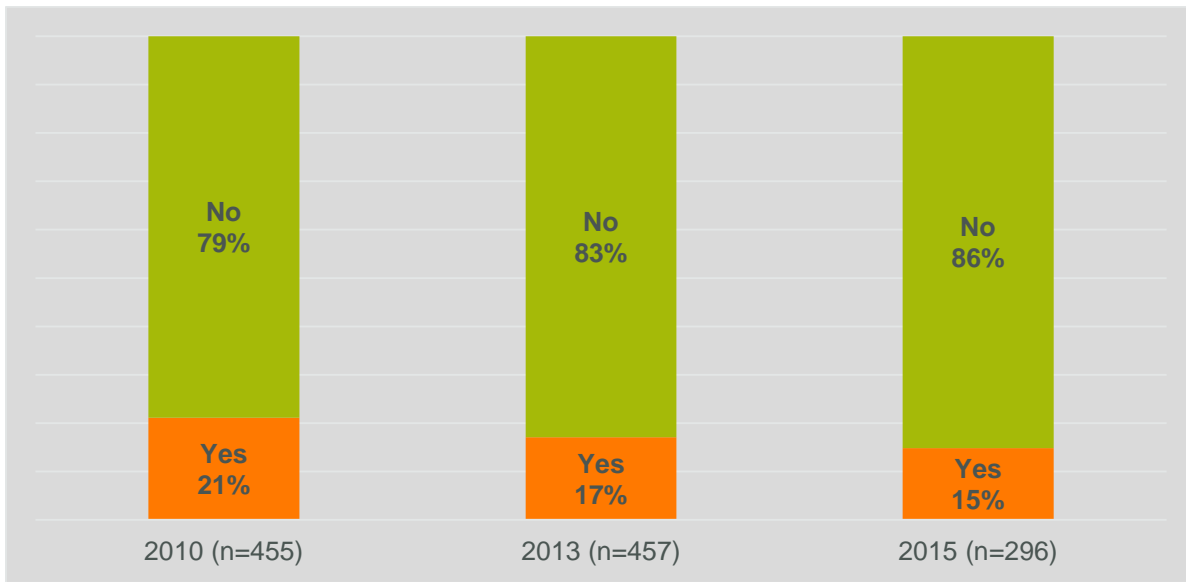|	2010 (n=455)	2013 (n=457)	2015 (n=296)
No	79%	83%	86%
Yes	21%	17%	15%

Figure 23: "Does your organization feature or market flexibility as a key employee benefit when attempting to attract new employees?"

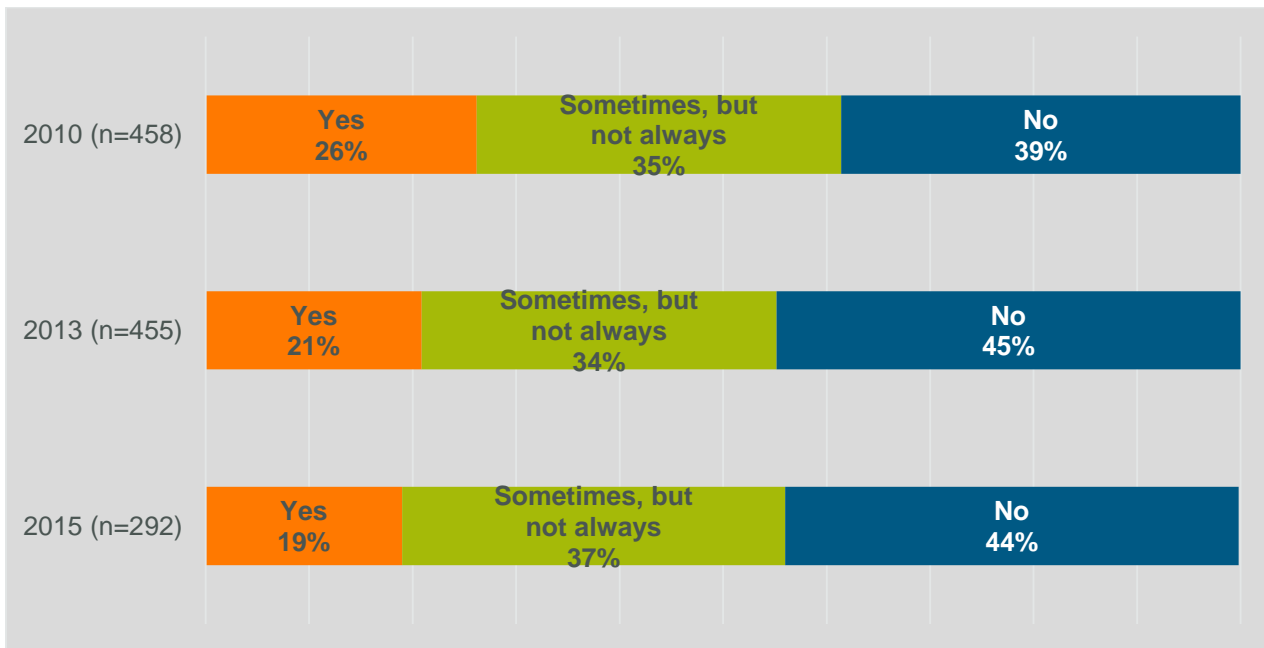|	Yes	Sometimes, but not always	No
2010 (n=458)	26%	35%	39%
2013 (n=455)	21%	34%	45%
2015 (n=292)	19%	37%	44%

Figure 24: "Please indicate which statements reflect your organization's use of flexibility for business continuity, real estate solutions and/or green initiatives. (Select all that apply.)" [8]

	2010	2013	2015
n=	**464**	**455**	**214**
We have a business continuity plan that involves the use of flexible work arrangements if there was a disaster or circumstances that prevent our business from operating as normal.	56%	46% [9]	82%
We have (or are considering) the use of flexibility as a strategy for real estate issues.	n/a	n/a	24%
We have (or are considering) the use of flexibility as a strategy for green or corporate sustainability initiatives.	n/a	n/a	20%

Figure 25: "Would you say the guiding principles of your organization's flexibility program are more formal or informal?" (n=293) [10]

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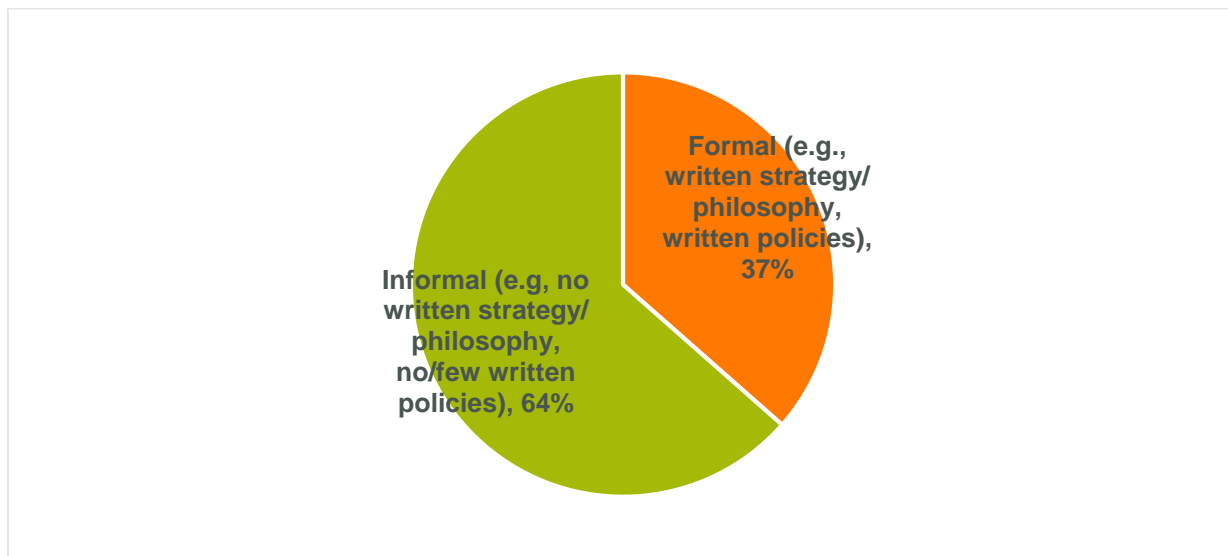
[8] In 2010 and 2013, this question was asked as "yes/no," while in 2015 it is a "select all that apply."

[9] In 2010 a statistically significantly higher percentage of organizations had a written business continuity plan (56%) vs. 2013 organizations with a written business continuity plan (46%).

[10] In 2010 and 2013, this question was asked: "Would you say your organization's flexibility program is more formal or informal?" and 32% of organizations believed their flexibility programs were formal, a 9 percentage point decrease from 2010.

Figure 26: **"Would you say the administration of your organization's flexibility program is more formal or informal?"** (n=293)

Formal (e.g., employee request forms, approval channels), 28%

Informal (e.g., no forms, discretion of manager), 72%
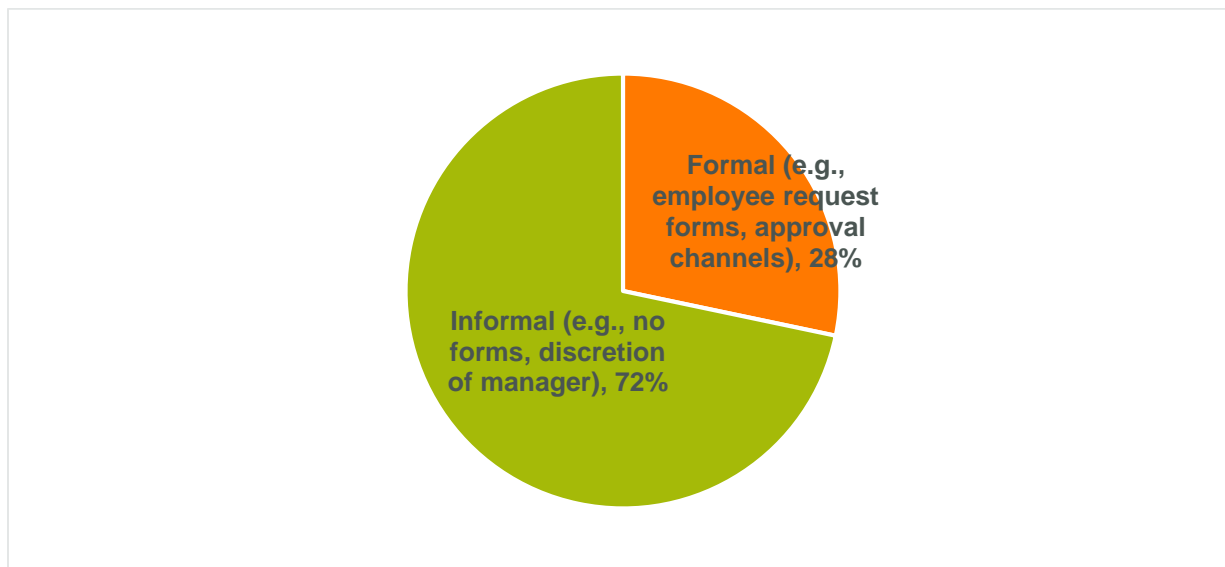
Program Strategy and Measures

Figure 27: **"Using the scale below, how would you rate the culture of flexibility at your organization?"**
Using the self-assessed flexibility scale, participants with a score below 2.5 were categorized as nonexistent-inconsistent, and those with a score of 2.5 and above were categorized as strategic-embedded.

1.0   2.5   4.0

Nonexistent	Inconsistent	Strategic	Deeply Embedded
• Flexibility is rarely used, if at all, and is not viewed as an important element in attracting, motivating and retaining employees, nor achieving organizational success. • Flexibility is viewed as a special perk, if allowed at all.	• We have some formal programs and policies, but they are not widely applied. • Some departments use flexible work arrangements, but their use is inconsistent and not organizationwide. • Flexibility options are limited and may still be viewed as a special perk.	• Flexibility is strategic and viewed as an essential element in achieving organization success, and is widely used around the organization. • However, formalities in the process or policy may limit the use of flexibility.	• The concept of workplace flexibility is part of our organization's culture. • There is universal access to flexibility and it is integrated into the everyday work environment. • Employees feel free to request flexibility as needed and managers are encouraged to be "flexible" as they work in partnership with employees to find solutions that lead to employee and organizational success.

Degree of Flexibility Culture	2010	2013	2015
n=	470	465	305
Nonexistent-inconsistent (less than 2.5)	64%	71%	67%
Strategic-embedded (greater than or equal to 2.5)	36%	29%	33%

Figure 28: "Which statement best describes your organization's flexibility strategy or philosophy?" (n=302)

53% — We have no flexibility strategy or philosophy
29% — We have a flexibility strategy or philosophy, but it is not formally documented
19% — We have a formal, written flexibility strategy or philosophy
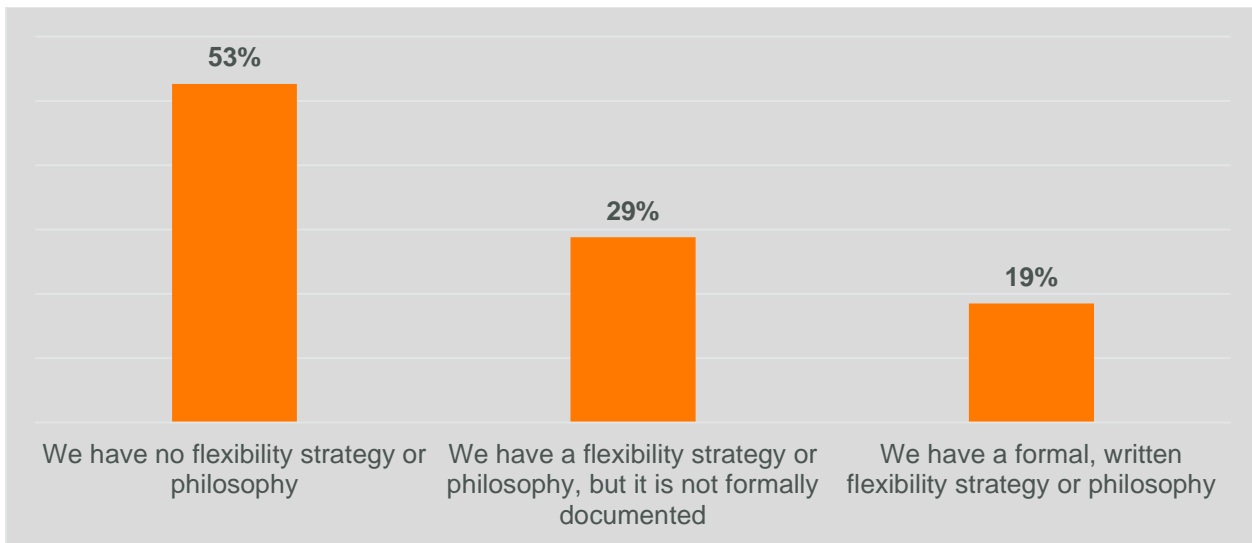
Figure 29: "How widespread is the access to flexible work arrangements at your organization?" (n=290)

Flexible work arrangements are possible in most or all workforce segments or departments — 25%
Flexible work arrangements are available in some workforce segments or departments, but not all — 41%
Flexible work arrangements are available on a limited, case-by-case basis only; there is no widespread access — 35%
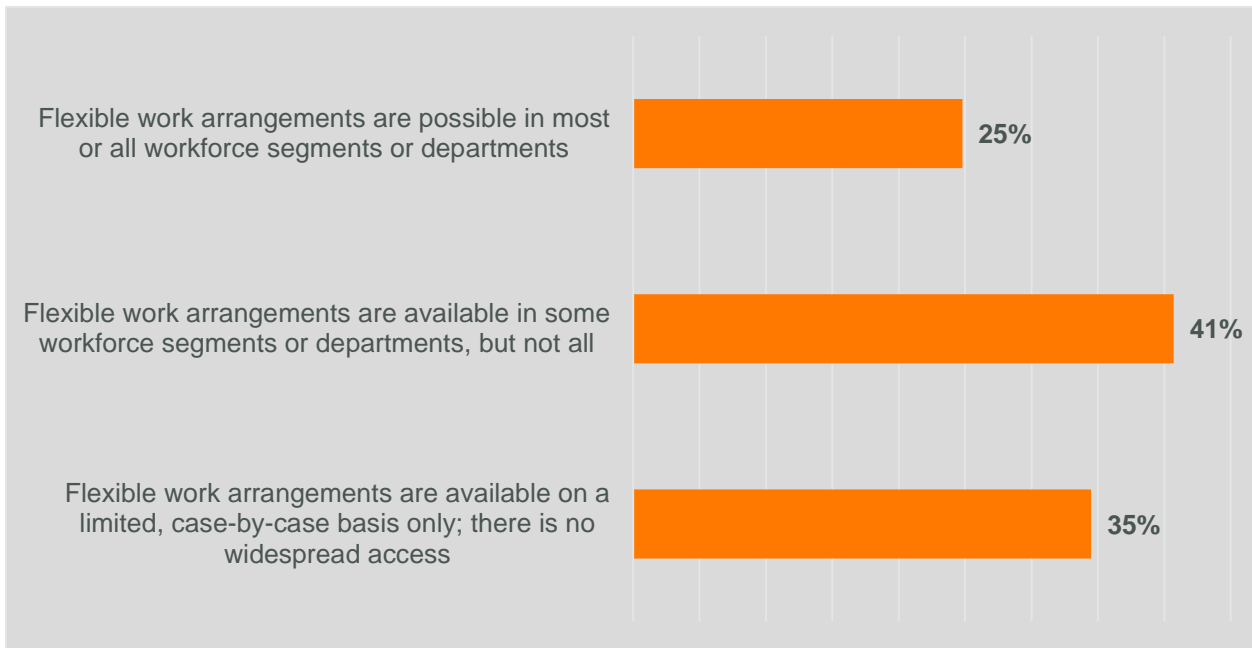
Figure 30: **"What portion of your managers/leaders buy in to the idea that flexibility is an essential element to organizational success?"** (n=291)
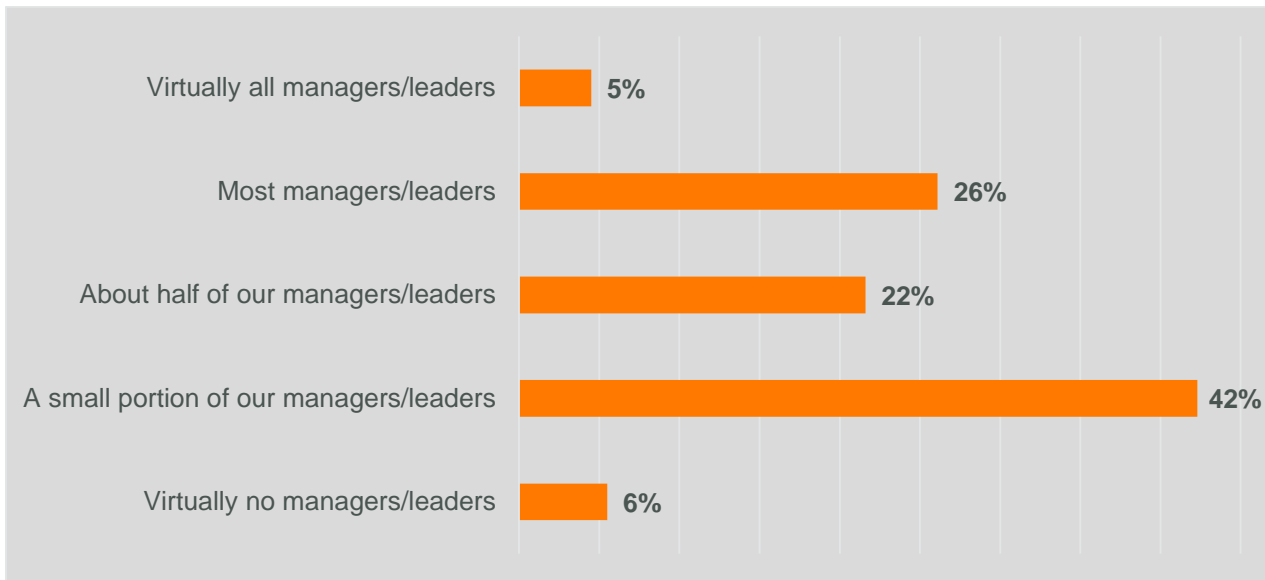

Virtually all managers/leaders	5%
Most managers/leaders	26%
About half of our managers/leaders	22%
A small portion of our managers/leaders	42%
Virtually no managers/leaders	6%

Figure 31: **"When managers are hired/promoted, is their propensity for managing in a flexible work environment considered?"** (n=288)

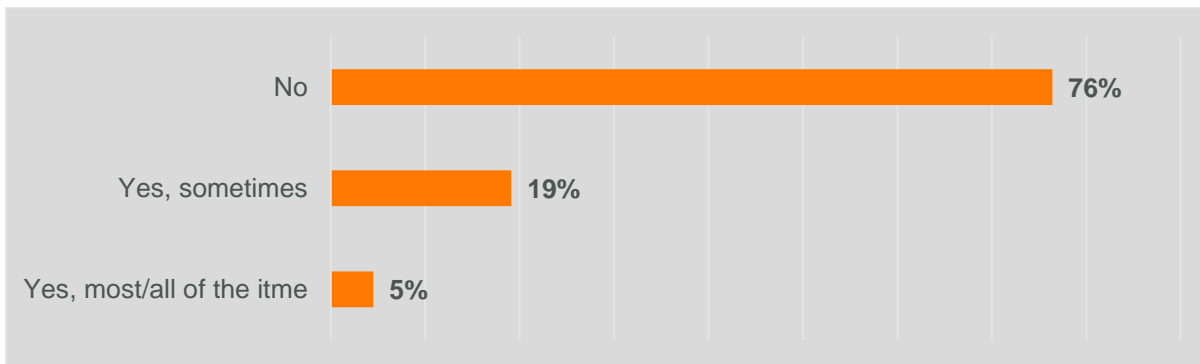|	
No	76%
Yes, sometimes	19%
Yes, most/all of the itme	5%

Figure 32: **"Do stated performance objectives for managers typically include goals that encourage consideration and/or use of flexibility options by their employees?"** (n=296)

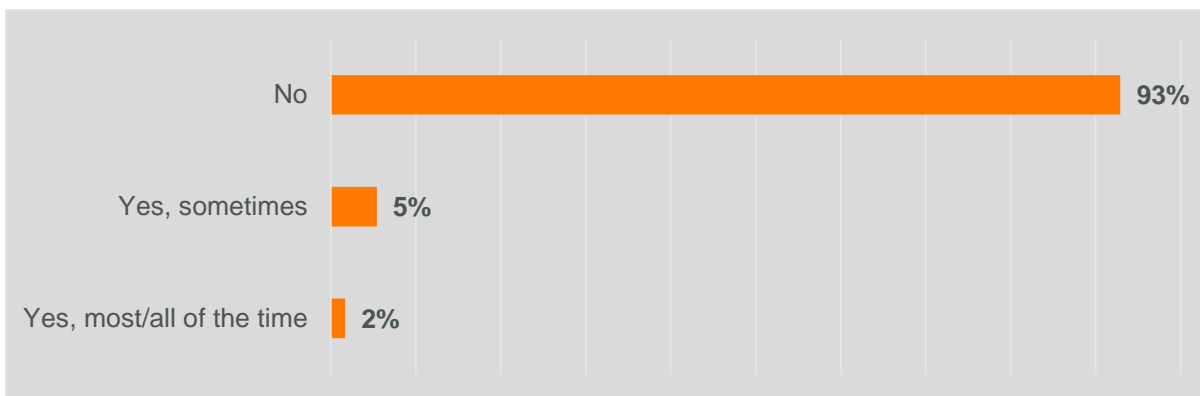|	
No	93%
Yes, sometimes	5%
Yes, most/all of the time	2%

Figure 33: "Does your organization attempt to quantify ROI of your employee flexibility programs (e.g., on productivity, customer satisfaction, product quality)?"

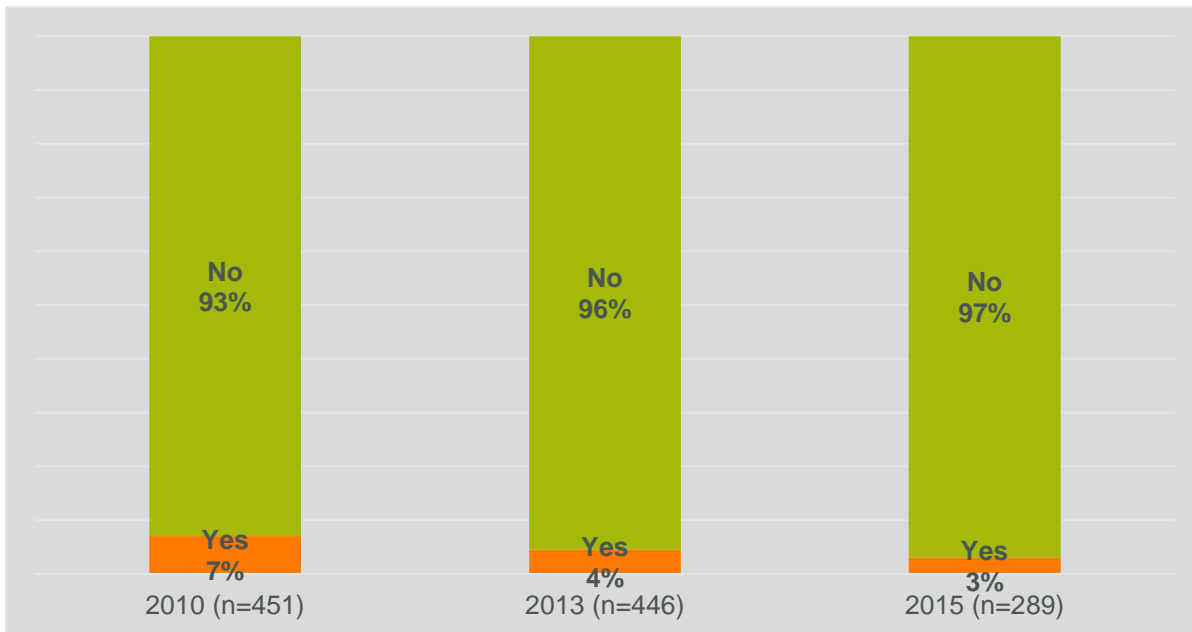**Figure 34:** "What would your workforce say is the effect of your organization's flexibility programs on:"

	Negative or Extremely Negative Effect	No Effect or Neutral	Positive or Extremely Positive Effect
Employee engagement (n=284)	12%	29%	60%
Employee motivation (n=283)	9%	35%	57%
Employee satisfaction (n=284)	9%	23%	68%

Figure 35: "What would your workforce say is the impact of the use of flexibility on career progression or development opportunities if all other things are equal?"[11]
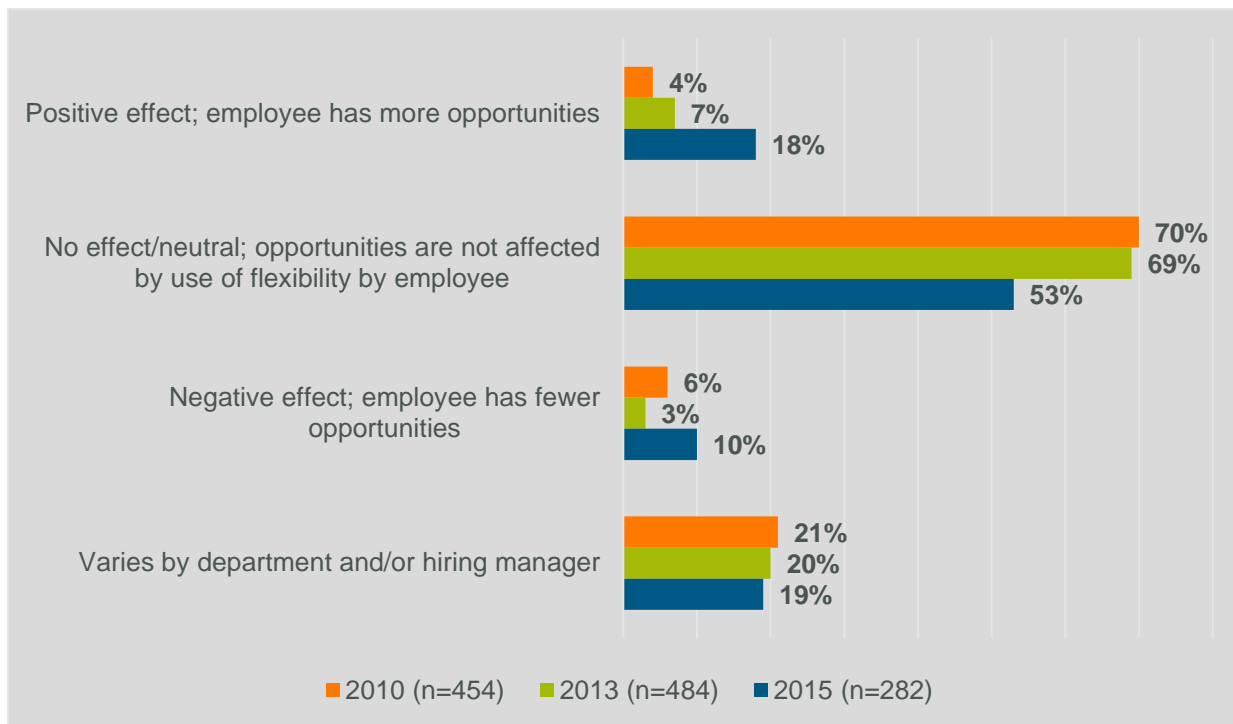

Positive effect; employee has more opportunities
- 4%
- 7%
- 18%

No effect/neutral; opportunities are not affected by use of flexibility by employee
- 70%
- 69%
- 53%

Negative effect; employee has fewer opportunities
- 6%
- 3%
- 10%

Varies by department and/or hiring manager
- 21%
- 20%
- 19%

■ 2010 (n=454)　■ 2013 (n=484)　■ 2015 (n=282)

Figure 36: "What is the likelihood that your organization will adopt one or more flexibility/flexible work arrangements in the next two years?"[12]

	Very Unlikely or Unlikely	Undecided	Very Likely or Likely
2010 (n=12)	50%	33%	17%
2013 (n=7)	86%	14%	0%
2015 (n=10)	80%	10%	10%

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[11] In 2013, the question was posed slightly differently: "Does the use of flexibility by an employee have any impact on career progression or development opportunities if all other things are equal?"

[12] The count for these groups are less than 30; data corresponding to larger sample sizes will have stronger statistical power and validity.

Additional Analysis

Figure 37: Perceived Impact of Flexibility on Engagement, Motivation and Satisfaction, by Degree of Flexibility Culture[13]

Effect on Employee Engagement	Degree of Flexibility Culture	
	Nonexistent-Inconsistent (n=184)	Strategic-Embedded) (n=100)
Extremely negative/negative	16%	4%
No effect or neutral	38%	11%
Extremely positive/positive	46%	85%

Effect on Employee Motivation	Degree of Flexibility Culture	
	Nonexistent-Inconsistent (n=183)	Strategic-Embedded (n=100)
Extremely negative/negative	13%	1%
No effect or neutral	39%	26%
Extremely positive/positive	48%	73%

Effect on Employee Satisfaction	Degree of Flexibility Culture	
	Nonexistent-Inconsistent (n=184)	Strategic-Embedded (n=100)
Extremely negative/negative	13%	1%
No effect or neutral	32%	8%
Extremely positive/positive	56%	91%

Figure 38: Degree of Flexibility Culture, by Voluntary Turnover

Legend: ■ 0% to 5% (low) ■ 6% to 10% (mid) ■ 11% and over (high)

Nonexistent-Inconsistent: 20% | 42% | 39%

Strategic-Embedded: 27% | 41% | 32%

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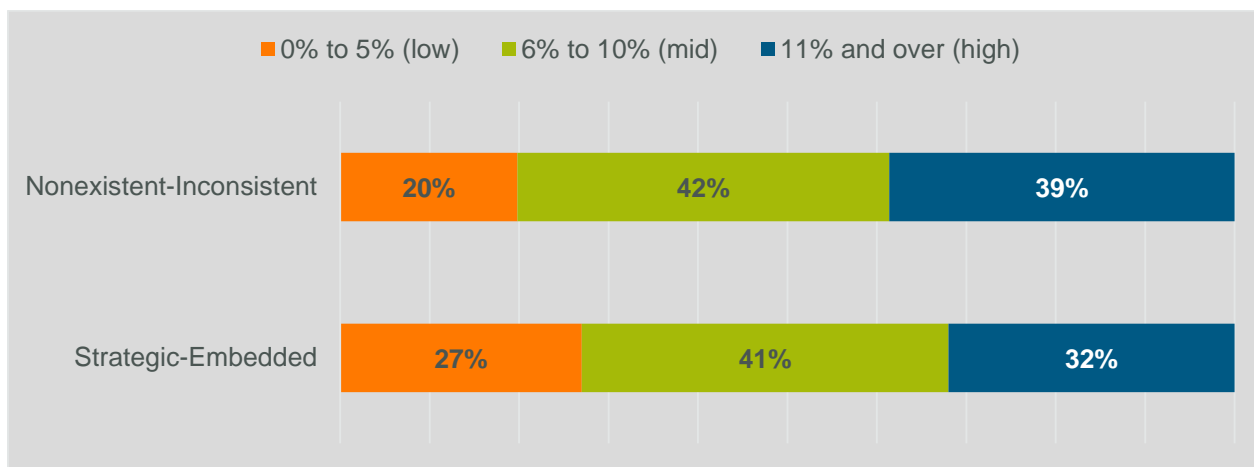
[13] See page 22 for scale.

Figure 39: **Flexible Work Arrangements, by Degree of Flexibility Culture**
Organizations in the Nonexistent-Inconsistent category offer five flexibility programs on average, while organizations in the Strategic-Embedded category offer an average of eight flexibility programs. [14]

	All respondents	Nonexistent-Inconsistent	Strategic-Embedded
n=	375	193	102
Telework on an ad-hoc basis (meet a repair person, sick child, etc.)	85%	84%	97%[15]
Flex time (flexible start/stop times)	82%	79%	96%
Part-time schedules (with or without benefits)	82%	78%	96%[15]
Phased return from leave	56%	50%	69%[15]
Telework on a regular, monthly basis (at least one day per month, but not full time)	56%	43%	79%[15]
Telework on a regular, weekly basis (at least one day per week, but not full time)	53%	42%	76%[15]
Combination of programs tailored to fit employee's needs	50%	39%	77%[15]
Compressed workweek (e.g., 4/10, 9/80)	48%	39%	64%[15]
Shift flexibility	48%	48%	50%
Telework full time (every regularly scheduled workday)	34%	20%	56%[15]
Phased retirement	30%	24%	39%
Job share	21%	16%	32%
Career on/off ramps	18%	14%	27%

[14] An independent samples t-test demonstrated a statically significant difference between the average number of programs offered between the two groups. This test was conducted excluding the "combination of programs" variable.
[15] Strategic-Embedded organizations carried this program at statistically significantly higher rates than Nonexistent-Inconsistent organizations.

Figure 40:   Flexibility Training for Employees, by Degree of Flexibility Culture
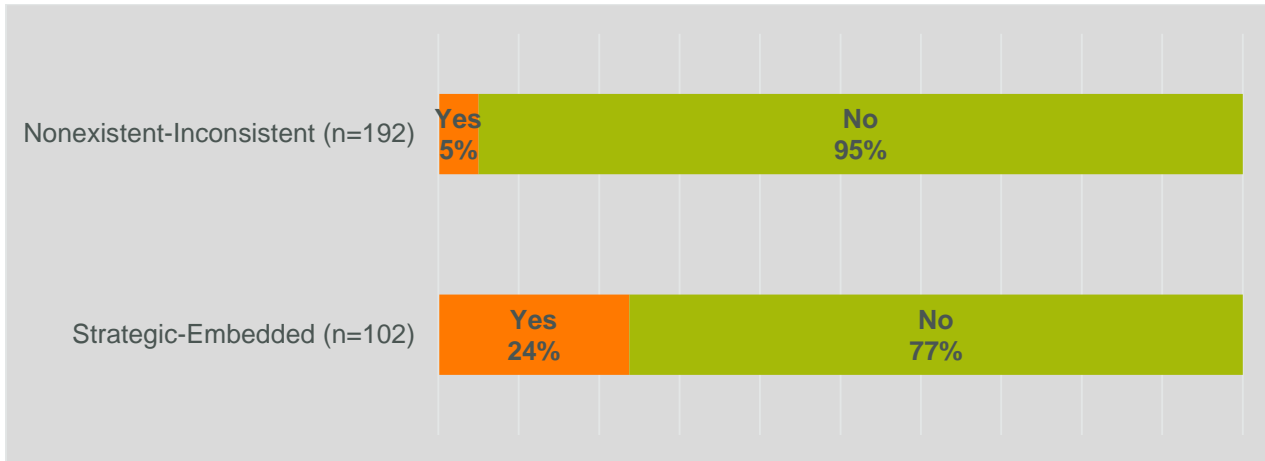
Nonexistent-Inconsistent (n=192)
- Yes 5%
- No 95%

Strategic-Embedded (n=102)
- Yes 24%
- No 77%

Figure 41:   Flexibility Training for Managers, by Degree of Flexibility Culture

Nonexistent-Inconsistent (n=193)
- Yes 7%
- No 93%

Strategic-Embedded (n=102)
- Yes 28%
- No 72%
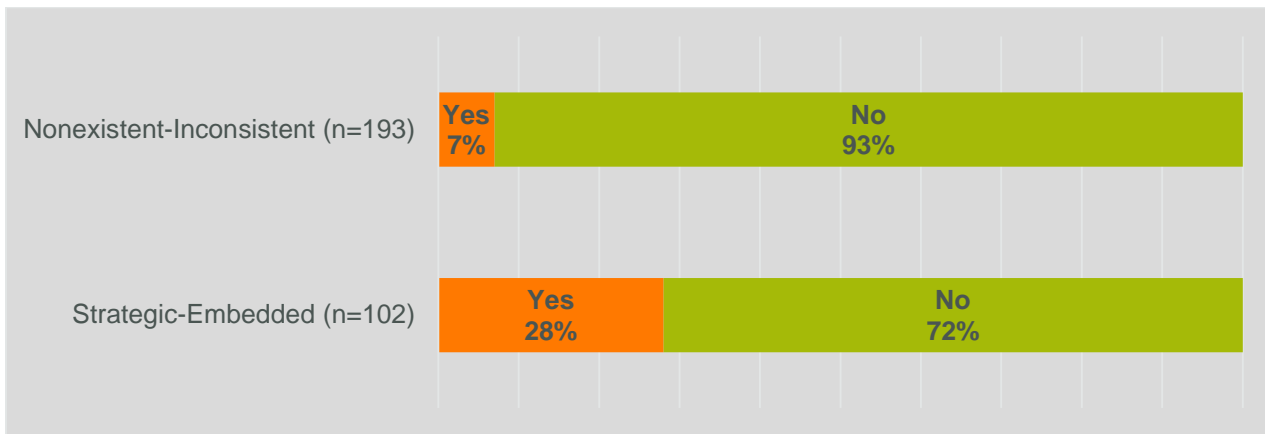
Figure 42:   Features Flexibility in Recruitment, by Degree of Flexibility Culture

Nonexistent-Inconsistent (n=191)
- Yes 7%
- No 62%
- Sometimes, but not always 31%

Strategic-Embedded (n=100)
- Yes 43%
- No 9%
- Sometimes, but not always 48%
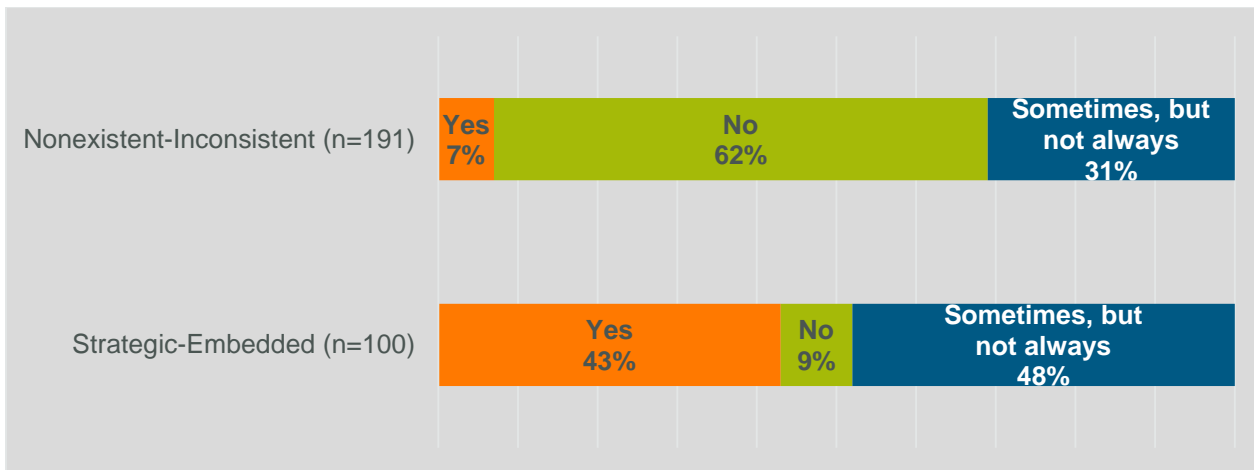
Figure 43: Access to Flexible Work Arrangements, by Degree of Flexibility Culture

Flexible work arrangements are possible in most or all workforce segments or departments
- Nonexistent-Inconsistent: 10%
- Strategic-Embedded: 54%

Flexible work arrangements are available in some workforce segments or departments, but not all
- Nonexistent-Inconsistent: 41%
- Strategic-Embedded: 40%

Flexible work arrangements are available on a limited case-by-case basis only; there is no widespread access
- Nonexistent-Inconsistent: 49%
- Strategic-Embedded: 6%

■ Nonexistent-Inconsistent (n=191)   ■ Strategic-Embedded (n=99)

Participating Organizations

2020
AAM
Abt Associates
ACS Technologies
AgStar Financial Services
Alaska Airlines
Alkermes
Alta Resources
American Family Insurance
Amplify Federal Credit Union
Anheuser-Busch Employees' Credit Union
ANSYS Inc.
Aon
Apogee Enterprises Inc.
Associated Universities Inc.
Astron Solutions
Atlantic Central
AutoNation
Avendra LLC
Barclaycard
Barry Callebaut
Baxter Corporation Canada
BBA Aviation
Big Heart Pet Brands
Bill Barrett Corp.
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona
Blue Diamond Growers
BMC Software
Bridgestone Americas
Bristow Group Inc.
BRP Inc.
Build-A-Bear Workshop
Campbell & Company LP
Canadian Pharmacists Association
Canon USA
Canon Virginia Inc.
Capital One
Cars.com
CIMA+
Citizens Property Insurance Corp.
City of Philadelphia
City of Calgary
City of Kitchener
Community Coffee Company LLC
Connecticut Children's Medical Center
Continental Automotive Systems Inc.
CoreLink Administrative Solutions
CST Brands Inc.
Dalhousie University
Delta Dental of Michigan
Employers Resource Association

Encana
Equinix
Equity Office
Ericsson
Fannie Mae
Farm Credit Services of America
Federal Deposit Insurance Corp.
Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City
Fellowes Inc.
Fike Corp.
First West Credit Union
FirstEnergy
Frank's International
FutureSense Inc.
GameStop
Gilead Sciences
Glazer's Inc.
Grande Cheese Co.
GreenStone Farm Credit Services
GROWMARK Inc.
HCC Insurance Holdings Inc.
Helmerich & Payne Inc.
Hess
Honda of South Carolina
HR Solutions Group of West Michigan
HubSpot
Hunter Douglas Inc.
Hutchinson Technology Inc.
Hyundai Capital Canada Inc.
ICW Group
Idaho National Laboratory
IMI Precision Engineering
Ingersoll Rand PLC
Institute for Defense Analyses
Intact Financial Corp.
Ironwood Pharmaceuticals
Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District
Kellogg
Kennedy Health
Kettering Health Network
Lancaster General Health
LDS Church
Level 3 Communications
LG&E
LifeWay Christian Resources
LL Global
LMI
Longnecker & Associates
LoyaltyOne
Manulife/John Hancock
Mary Kay Inc.

Maui Jim Inc.
McCormick & Company Inc.
McGladrey
MICROMO Electronics Inc.
MidCountry Financial
Missouri Department of Conservation
MVP Health Care
MWH Global
Nasdaq
National Fuel Gas
National Renewable Energy
National Security Agency
NEC Corporation of America
Nordson Corp.
NorthStar Financial Services Group LLC
Novartis
OCI Enterprises Inc.
OhioHealth
OHL
Olympus Corporation of the Americas
On Assignment Inc.
ON Semiconductor
Orora
Oshkosh Corp.
Owens Corning LLC
Peabody Energy
Pick n Pay
Piramal Enterprises Limited
Points Athabasca Contracting LP
PwC
Regency Centers
Rhode Island School of Design
Robertshaw
Ryerson University
Safety National Casualty Corp.
Salt River Project
Samsung
Santee Cooper
Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority
Savannah River Remediation
Schwan's Shared Services LLC

Shell Oil
Smith & Nephew
Snapchat Inc.
Splunk
St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation
Stage Stores Inc.
StandardAero
State of Colorado
STIHL Inc.
Stonegate Mortgage Corp.
Teacher Retirement System of Texas
Teekay Corp.
The Boeing Co.
The Croner Co.
The Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation Inc.
The Taubman Co.
The Warranty Group
Toyota Motor Sales USA Inc.
TransAlta Corp.
UFA
ULTA
Union County Local Government
United Data Technologies
United Service Organizations Inc.
University of Michigan Hospitals & Health Centers
University of Minnesota Physicians
University of Missouri
University of St. Thomas
Urban Science
Vail Valley Medical Center
Vantiv
Virbac
Vodafone
Waggener Edstrom Communications
Western National Insurance Group
Wolseley Canada
Xavier University
Xylem Inc.
Yellow Pages (Canada)
YKK Corporation of America
YMCA of Greater Rochester