

IMPROVING WORK-LIFE FIT IN HOURLY JOBS:

AN UNDERUTILIZED COST-CUTTING
STRATEGY IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD

WORK LIFE LAW

UC Hastings College of the Law



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by

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The Center for WorkLife Law

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Globalization presents significant on-going challenges for U.S. companies. Faced with competition from developing countries with lower labor costs, American companies are working hard to maintain their competitive position. One common approach is cost cutting by controlling labor costs. A central message of this report is that widely accepted ways of cutting labor costs have unintended consequences that can hurt, rather than help, an organization's competitive position.

Many employers see that something is amiss, and complain of outlandishly high rates of turnover and absenteeism among hourly workers. In one department store, 80% of the sales staff were on probation due to absenteeism. (Henly, Shaefer & Waxman 2005) In some industries, turnover rates among hourly workers as high as 80% to 500% are not uncommon. (Lambert & Waxman 2009) Turnover this high is very expensive, given that replacing a single hourly employee costs 30% or more of the employee's annual salary. (Disselkamp 2009) These kinds of costs can jeopardize an employer's attempt to control labor costs—and give first-line supervisors nothing but headaches.

High attrition and absenteeism stem from outdated assumptions, the most basic of which is that any responsible and committed employee is always available for work. This was a reasonable assumption in the 1960s economy of breadwinners married to homemakers. Today it is sorely outdated for three reasons:

- In the 1960s only 20% of mothers were employed; today, in 70% of American families with children, all adults are in the labor force. (McClanahan 2004; Kornbluh 2003) Many families are led by single mothers who would quite literally risk arrest for child neglect if they left their children alone in order to report

to work. Many other families tag team (where mom works one shift, dad works a different one, and each parent cares for the kids while the other is at work)—which means that, if either parent is ordered to work mandatory overtime at short notice, the family has to choose between mom's job and dad's job in a context where the family needs both to pay the mortgage.

- To focus only on adults caring for young children is to miss the full dimensions of the mismatch between the 21st century workforce and 20th century assumptions. Many Americans have elder as well as child care responsibilities. Nearly a third of hourly workers in one study had elder care responsibilities; 57% of adults caring for elders had taken time off work to do so, according to another study. (Berg & Kossek n.d. a; Gibson 2003)
- Last but not least, advances in medicine mean that many people who would not have survived in past eras now live much longer—but need on-going care. Soaring medical costs leave hospitals sending patients home “quicker and sicker,” relying on family members for care that used to be given by nurses.

When today's jobs are designed for yesterday's workforce, the uncontrolled turnover and absenteeism that result are costs of poor schedule design.

Employers can control costs by replacing their traditional reliance on first-line supervisors with a more scientific scheduling process. “Scheduling... is having a huge effect on the bottom line,” notes workforce management expert Lisa Disselkamp.

“The more primitive the methods, the greater the likelihood that...[that impact] will not be positive.” (Disselkamp 2009, p. 157; Houde 2010a)

This report provides employers with the tools they need to gain a competitive edge by improving what workforce experts call *schedule effectiveness*. One key to schedule effectiveness is to gain an understanding of the constraints that need to be programmed in to develop an effective schedule—including the constraints employees face as they fulfill their family responsibilities. This report offers a better understanding of those constraints by providing vivid, capsule descriptions of how work and family fit together for low-wage and higher-wage hourly workers. Knowing your workforce is a vital first step.

The report also provides concrete tools to allow employers to improve schedule effectiveness in hourly jobs. These tools address two quite different kinds of issues.

One set of tools allows employers to improve the schedule effectiveness of just-in-time scheduling. This type of schedule, common in retail and elsewhere, attempts to control labor costs by keeping a tight fit between labor supply and labor demand. While this appears to be a step towards scientific scheduling, too often just-in-time scheduling is implemented in ways that reflect outdated assumptions. This report provides crucial tools that will enable employers to design just-in-time schedules to *both* provide a close match between labor supply and demand *and* avoid excessive turnover and absenteeism.

Whereas the key problem with many just-in-time scheduling systems is excessive schedule instability, a different problem is that schedules in most hourly jobs are too rigid. Hourly workers typically cannot decide when to take breaks, typically cannot vary their hours even by a few minutes, and must be on call to work mandatory overtime. This report offers tools that will allow employers to offer more workplace flexibility. Unlike most reports, which compile a broad range of policies to “make work work” for employees at all levels, this report focuses

on scheduling of hourly workers. An important additional resource is the excellent database compiled by the Families and Work Institute, <http://boldideas.whenworkworks.org>.

The central message of the report is that *even employers who consider it infeasible to enhance work-life fit by offering additional benefits can gain their bottom lines by enhancing schedule effectiveness*.

OVERVIEW

An underexplored strategy to control labor costs in a globalized world

As U.S. companies face ever-increasing cost pressures due to globalization, a common strategy is to cut labor costs to compete with companies in low-wage environments both in the U.S. and in the developing world. Yet this strategy has a significant, unintended consequence: it drives turnover sky high. One study of call centers found the rate of employee turnover as low as 10% in the telecommunications industry, where unionization has kept wages and benefits level, but as high as 400% among nonunionized lower-paid financial services call centers. (Appelbaum, Bernhardt & Murnane 2003; Batt, Hunter & Wilk 2003) A study of low-wage hospital employees who worked in food service, housekeeping, and as nursing assistants found turnover rates in some hospitals approaching 100%; 50% was common. Cost controls imposed by the health financing system made raising wages an impractical solution. (Applebaum, Berg, Frost & Preuss 2003)

Labor economists often assume that, to keep employees, the only available alternative to raising compensation is to improve “job quality” by offering “enhanced jobs” that are more interesting and less routinized. (Applebaum, Berg, Frost & Preuss 2003, p. 111 Appendix 3.1) Raising compensation and benefits, and offering hourly workers more interesting and rewarding jobs, remain important strategies. Yet this report explores a third avenue for cutting labor costs: improving the work-life fit of hourly jobs.

Improving work-life fit is an underexplored way to control costs in a globalized world. When today’s jobs are designed for yesterday’s workforce, hourly workers often see only one path available when

family needs conflict with work responsibilities: to quit. The result is the pattern of serial quitting that plagues many American employers. Employers often complain bitterly about high turnover, which has equally terrible consequences for employees. They find themselves on a treadmill of entry-level jobs from which they have to resign, over and over, when their childcare breaks down, an elder is released from the hospital, or a spouse has a serious accident and needs round-the-clock at-home care. There has to be a better way: what is commonly called “workplace flexibility.”

Workplace flexibility, work-life fit, and schedule effectiveness

Jobs and career paths come prepackaged in ways that presume workers are without family responsibilities.

— Phyllis Moen & Yan Yu
(Moen & Yu 2000, p. 296)

Traditional “workplace flexibility” programs offer individually negotiated flexible work arrangements (FWAs) to professional and managerial employees. FWAs typically include telecommuting and reduced hours in jobs where “full time” is defined as 50 hours or more per week. Advocates rely on the “business case for workplace flexibility,” which focuses on the high cost of replacing highly trained workers.

This is not a model that is particularly relevant for the 60% of Americans in hourly jobs. (Lambert, Haley-Lock & Henly 2010) Even the name does not fit: in hourly jobs, “workplace flexibility” typically refers to *employers’* ability to achieve a tighter fit between supply of, and demand for, labor through “just-in-time-scheduling.” The result is unstable schedules, where employees’ shifts are set with little advance notice, and managers sometimes

send workers home or cancel shifts in order to “stay within hours” (i.e., to stay under a limit of labor hours that can be scheduled while maintaining a

“I told my manager that if he keeps letting me work from home, I’m not going anywhere.”

ratio between staff and customers set from above). These kinds of “workplace flexibility” make it more, rather than less, difficult for workers to arrange care for children, elders, and ill or disabled family members. The result is a pattern of serial quitting, as employees leave their jobs when child care breaks down, their mother gets sick, or a teenager goes through a rough spot. This pattern is costly for employers, and consigns low-wage workers to permanent poverty.

This report reframes the “givens” of the workplace flexibility literature to address the needs of hourly workers. That shift in focus yields a shift in terminology, away from “workplace flexibility,” to “work-life fit.” The current mismatch between the workplace and the workforce reflects that many employers still define the “ideal worker” as someone who starts to work in early adulthood and works, full time and overtime as needed, for forty years straight, taking no time off for childbearing, childrearing, or anything else. (Williams 2000) This model made sense in the 1960s society of breadwinners married to housewives. It does not fit the lives of most Americans today, given that all adults in 70% of American families with children are in the labor force. (Kornbluh 2003) Americans also live much longer than they did in the 1960s, and hospitals release patients quicker and sicker, relying on relatives to nurse ill or elderly family members back to health, or to care for them in fragile old age.

The report also reframes the issue of work-life fit, through the lens of “schedule effectiveness.” Employers can help their bottom line by replacing the traditional reliance on first-line supervisors with a more scientific scheduling process, according to workforce management experts such as Lisa Disselkamp and André Houde. (Disselkamp 2007 & 2009; Houde 2010a) “Scheduling is having a huge effect on the bottom line,” notes Disselkamp. “The more primitive the methods, the greater the likelihood that...[that impact] will not be positive.” (Disselkamp, 2009, p. 157) Schedule effectiveness begins by identifying the work to be accomplished; it then identifies the employees needed to do the work; and finally, it identifies the constraints within which scheduling needs to occur—constraints that include everything from labor laws to family caregiving. Once all of this information is obtained, the employer is in a position to design a schedule. “The payback is about lower absenteeism,” notes Houde:

Someone’s asking for the day off for Saturday because their sister is getting married...And you say...“I can’t”....And so they say “okay.” Then they end up on a shift on Saturday. What do you think is going to happen on Saturday? That person’s not going to go in. They’ll go to the wedding and they’ll call in saying “I’m sick.” (Houde 2010a)

Turnover is another expense caused by ineffective scheduling. Turnover leads to both productivity losses and to direct expenses incident to rehiring. If a company has to replace 300 employees who earn an average of \$20,000 per year, the cost is about \$1.8 million, notes Disselkamp. “That is a lot of money, for which the employer gets absolutely nothing but headaches.” (Disselkamp 2009)¹

This report differs from most reports on workplace flexibility not only in its framing, but also in its research base. With the help and guidance of the Kellogg Working Group on Work-Life Fit in Low-Wage Jobs (See Appendix A), the report brings together the literature describing how hourly

employees' family and work lives fit together with a review of the kinds of policies that could enhance work-life fit. The report also offers concrete tools

“If you don’t allow flexibility, you’re going to get a workforce that you may not want. Because...folks will find a company that will really work with them.”

to help employers improve schedule fit, including worksheets to calculate an individual company’s turnover rate and to identify hidden schedule stability in just-in-time jobs.

The report is divided into three parts. Part one discusses the relationship between low-wage jobs and the larger universe of hourly jobs. Part two provides a snapshot of today’s workforce, providing a clear picture of how employees’ job duties fit (or fail to do so) with their family responsibilities. Part three presents a comprehensive list of effective practices that have been used by employers to improve schedule effectiveness in hourly jobs.

I. HOW DO LOW-WAGE JOBS FIT INTO THE LARGER UNIVERSE OF HOURLY JOBS?

WorkLife Law's mandate from the Kellogg Foundation was to examine workplace flexibility in low-wage jobs. After a review of the relevant literatures, it became clear that to do so effectively required expanding the report to include work-life fit in all hourly jobs. The reason is that workplace flexibility for low-wage workers is impeded by two separate types of problems that affect most hourly workers regardless of their wage levels: schedule rigidity and schedule instability.

Low-wage jobs share with most hourly jobs one type of problem: that of schedule rigidity. Hourly jobs are rigid and highly supervised, and most lack the kinds of flexibility professionals take for granted. Unlike professionals, who often have considerable flexibility in their starting and stopping times, and the ability to leave work when family needs arise, hourly workers typically punch in and out. Being a few minutes late, or having to leave abruptly due to a family crisis, can lead to discipline or discharge.

Quite a different type of problem arises in low-wage jobs in what this report calls the "just-in-time sector." Jobs in this sector have extremely unstable schedules that change from day to day and/or week to week. Workers in these types of jobs not only have great difficulty planning for regular child and/or elder care needs, but also have trouble getting enough hours to support their families.

No reliable estimates exist of how large the just-in-time sector is because existing data collection methods tend to underestimate the instability in hours worked. (Lambert 2008) Yet existing data suggest that not all low-wage workers have just-in-time jobs. Depending on the way questions about work schedules are worded, estimates range from roughly two-thirds (62%) of low-wage jobs having

regular daytime hours (and 25% with schedules that are rotating, split shift, variable on-call, or other (Swanberg 2008)) to fully two-fifths of all American workers working the majority of their hours outside of daytime, weekday hours. (Presser 2003) Evidence suggests that the use of just-in-time scheduling practices is likely to vary by job and industry. While just-in-time scheduling is extremely common in retail and certain other industries, a study of hospital workers found that more than 90% of food service workers and 60% of nursing assistants had full-time schedules; even so, the timing of their hours may vary from week to week. (Applebaum, Berg, Frost & Preuss 2003)

To improve work-life fit in low-wage jobs requires *both* effective practices to address problems presented by just-in-time scheduling *and* a quite different set of practices to address the workplace rigidity faced by hourly workers more generally. Only by combining effective practices designed to increase schedule stability in the just-in-time sector, with effective practice designed to increase flexibility in hourly jobs more generally, can the mismatch between today's workplace and today's workforce be remedied.

Who holds low-wage jobs?

Between one-quarter and one-third of Americans hold low-wage jobs, depending on how low-wage is defined. (Swanberg 2009) According to one study, 43% of hourly jobs pay low wages. (Swanberg 2008) Low-wage workers are more likely to be employed by small businesses, and more likely to work in service industries, than are other workers. (Acs & Nichols 2007) Retail sales, janitorial and cleaning, care provision, and restaurant work are the chief low-wage occupations. (Boushey, Fremstad,

Gragg & Waller 2007) The top five industries for low-wage workers are retail (31% of all low-wage workers), manufacturing (11%), medical services

Variation in hours has increased by 23% since the 1970s.

(10%), construction (7%) and business/service (7%). Wages for low-wage workers in these industries range from \$7.05 to \$7.82 per hour. For non-low-wage hourly jobs, the top five industries are manufacturing (18%), medical services (14%), retail (12%), transport/utility/communication (12%), and construction (11%). Hourly wages in these industries range from \$19.56 to \$26.43. (Swanberg 2008)

Among hourly workers who work full time, often by piecing together multiple part-time jobs, total hours at all jobs average 45.54 per week for low-wage, and 47.94 hours for higher-wage workers. The equivalent figures for part-timers are 27.81 hours and 30.20 hours per week, respectively. (Swanberg 2008) Low-wage workers tend to fall into two groups: life-cycle and permanent. Life-cycle low-wage workers tend to be younger men and women, many of them single. Permanent low-wage workers tend to be somewhat older women with children who are often single parents. (Corporate Voices & WFD Consulting 2006)

Lack of stability, especially in the just-in-time sector

The analysis of the just-in-time sector presented in this report rests on the path-breaking work of University of Chicago Professor Susan Lambert and her colleagues Julia Henly and Anna Haley-Lock. As U.S. firms control labor costs by maintaining a tight fit between labor supply and variations in consumer demand, variation in work hours has increased sharply, by 23% since the 1970s. (S. Lambert, personal communication at Working Group Meeting, July 27, 2010; Lambert 2008)

Just-in-time schedules typically change from week to week, and workers are sent home if demand is lower than expected. For example, airline catering workers are sent home if a flight is canceled, and are expected to work overtime on busy weeks. (Lambert 2008; Lambert, Haley-Lock & Henly 2010) A study of restaurant employees found that, in one establishment, waiters were sent home if the ratio of labor costs to sales staff exceeded 29% by 3 p.m., or if that ratio seemed unlikely to drop below 21% by the end of the business day. (Haley-Lock in press; Lambert, Haley-Lock & Henly 2010) Nurses' assistants may find their shifts canceled if a hospital has fewer patients than expected. Check processors may be required to stay until the last check is processed, so that their shifts can last anywhere from six to ten hours. (Lambert 2008) Hotels may expect housekeepers to work six days a week, ten hours a day in the summer, with few, if any, hours in the winter. (Henly & Lambert 2005) Hospitality workers' schedules depend on the "census," which is based on prior years' traffic, advance reservations, banquets, and conferences scheduled. (Lambert 2008)

The goal of "just-in-time scheduling" is to maintain a pre-determined ratio between the number of hours that employees work and store sales or traffic. (Lambert 2008) Schedules often are posted with little advance notice because managers are reluctant to post before they are certain of the number of hours they have to give out, given that workers, many of whom fervently want more hours so they can support their families, may get upset if their hours are cut. Hotels commonly post schedules on Thursday or Friday for the week to begin on Sunday; retail establishments typically post a day earlier, on Wednesday or Thursday. Of the 17 firms in one study, only three posted schedules more than a week in advance. (Lambert 2008)

In addition to the instability posed by just-in-time scheduling generally, several common practices add to the chaos. First, just-in-time scheduling often includes last-minute and real-time adjustments—that is, sending workers home after they reported for a scheduled shift, or calling them into work

when they were not scheduled to work. One study found adjustments “rampant”—see, for example, the schedule in Figure A, replete with handwritten changes. A second aspect of just-in-time scheduling is “full time flex,” in which “full time” ranges from 26 to 40 hours a week in some firms, and from 32 to 40 hours a week in others; (workers maintain benefits). (Lambert 2008) Another common practice is assigning workers too few or no hours. Managers typically keep a lot of people on the rolls in an attempt to ensure that they have enough staff to cover all shifts in a context where absenteeism and turnover are constant. This can result in what is known as “workloading”—replacing layoffs with the practice of giving workers very few, or no, hours.

Not surprisingly, just-in-time scheduling creates acute problems for workers who need to arrange for child or other family care, as well as for students who need to attend classes at specific times. This report will devote considerable attention to exploring how to improve work-life fit in the “just-in-time” sector while still allowing employers to maintain a tight fit between labor supply and labor demand.

One mother bemoaned that if her preschool daughter got sick again, she would be fired, and wondered out loud how she would make it through the flu season.

Yet even for low-wage workers who do not work in the just-in-time sector, schedule instability remains an important factor. About 55% of men and 73% of women work the regular day shift in families earning less than \$25,000. (Corporate Voices 2006, p. 32 Table 2) In these jobs, schedule instability typically arises through the design of overtime, which rose 25% in the decade before 2002. Average overtime escalated in manufacturing in the 1990s. (Golden & Jorgensen 2002) A study of unionized employees in six chiefly blue-collar industries found that about one-third had worked compelled overtime in

the previous month. (Golden & Jorgensen 2002) Mandatory overtime also is a major issue in some low-wage jobs, notably among hotel housekeepers and health care workers. (Lambert 2008)

Excessive rigidity in low-wage, hourly jobs

Schedule effectiveness in both just-in-time jobs and in the larger universe of hourly jobs is also impeded by excessive and unnecessary rigidity. Most hourly workers lack the autonomy afforded to professionals to choose when to take breaks or to shift their working time to accommodate a babysitter, take an elder to a medical appointment, or attend a teacher’s conference. Hourly workers typically “punch in and out” and are unable to leave except during lunch and designated breaks.

Rigid schedules are often combined with “no fault” progressive discipline systems, which give workers points for lateness or absenteeism regardless of the cause. A worker who garners a given number of points is first disciplined and then fired, with no consideration of the reasons for the absences in question. This can create problems for workers with caregiving responsibilities: in a flagship department store, 80% of the associates in one sales department were on probation because they had taken three or more days off. One mother bemoaned to researchers that if her preschool-age daughter got sick again, she would be fired, and wondered out loud how she would make it through the flu season. (Henly, Shaefer & Waxman 2005)

Job rigidity is widespread in hourly jobs. Only 18% of Americans with less than a high school education and 23% of those with high school but no college have access to flexible schedules. (Heymann 2010)

To discuss the full range of work-life issues among low-wage workers, this report analyzes both the just-in-time sector as well as more traditionally structured hourly jobs, and addresses the schedule instability and workplace rigidity that undermine work-life fit.

FIGURE A

Monday, April 1, 2007

Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4	Unit 5
Supervisor (RN)	Supervisor (RN)	Supervisor (RN)	Supervisor (RN)	Supervisor (RN)
Nurse 1 Nurse 2	Nurse 1 Nurse 2	Nurse 1 SK Nurse 2 Nurse 3 (agency)	Nurse 1 Nurse 2	Nurse 1 Nurse 2
CNA 1 CNA 2 CNA 3 CNA 4 CNA 5 SK CNA 5	CNA 1 CNA 2 VAC CNA 3 CNA 4 CNA 5 CNA 6	CNA 1 CNA 2 CNA 3 CNA 4 CNA 7	CNA 1 VAC CNA 2 CNA 3 SK CNA 4 CNA 5 CNA 6 CNA 7 float to Unit 3	CNA 1 SWAP CNA 2 CNA 3 CNA 4 CNA 5 float to Unit 1 CNA 6 CNA 7 SWAP
Evening Shift Supervisor: RN Name				
Nurse 1 Nurse 2 HOL	Nurse 1 Nurse 2	Nurse 1 Nurse 2	Nurse 1 Nurse 2 SK Nurse 3 (agency)	Nurse 1 Nurse 2
CNA 1 CNA 2 CNA 3 CNA 4 CNA 5	CNA 1 CNA 2 CNA 3 CNA 4 HOL CNA 5	CNA 1 CNA 2 CNA 3 SK CNA 4 CNA 5	CNA 1 CNA 2 CNA 3 CNA 4 CNA 5	CNA 1 VAC CNA 2 CNA 3 SWAP CNA 4 CNA 5 SWAP
Night Shift Supervisor: RN Name				
Nurse 1	Nurse 1	Nurse 1	Nurse 1	Nurse 1
CNA 1 CNA 3	CNA 1 SK CNA 2 CNA 3	CNA 1 CNA 2 CNA 3 float to unit 1	CNA 1 CNA 2 SK CNA 3 CNA 4	CNA 1 CNA 2

Source: Gerstel, N. (2010c, July). *Routes to flexibility: The power of gender and class*. PowerPoint presentation at meeting of WorkLife Law's Working Group on Work-Life Fit in Low-Wage Jobs, San Francisco, CA; Gerstel, N., Clawson, D., & Crocker, J. (2009, March). *Class and flexibility in jobs and families*. Paper presented at annual meeting of the Eastern Sociological Society, Mini-Conference on Work and Family, Baltimore, MD.

II. KNOW YOUR WORKFORCE: A KEY TO SCHEDULE EFFECTIVENESS

Schedule effectiveness offers employers a way to control labor costs by decreasing high rates of absenteeism and turnover that often are assumed to be inevitable costs of doing business—but in fact are by-products of ineffective scheduling procedures. On average, labor costs account for 36% of companies' revenues, but only 16% of companies say they have a good command of the return on investment ("ROI") of their human capital expenditures. "Employee scheduling is a skill that is rarely taught but one that directly impacts the operational efficiency and bottom line of any organization," notes workforce management expert Lisa Disselkamp. (Disselkamp 2009, p. 155)

A crucial step in designing a cost-effective schedule is to understand scheduling constraints. This report is designed to help employers do so by piecing together a portrait of hourly workers' realities, based on the findings of scores of sociological studies that document their lives.

As these studies highlight, today's jobs are designed for yesterday's workforce. Most U.S. employers still assume that an employee who is committed to the job will take no time off for childbearing, childrearing, or other family caregiving. (Williams 2000) This workplace ideal worked well in the breadwinner-housewife society of the 1960s, when only 20% of mothers were in the labor force, and fathers typically had full-time jobs with predictable schedules, vacation and/or sick leave, annual raises, health insurance, and pensions. (McClanahan 2004; Bernhardt, Boushey, Dresser & Tilly 2008)

Today the landscape has changed but workplace ideals have not. The result is astronomical levels of work-family conflict, as Americans with child care and other responsibilities try frantically to live up to outdated breadwinner-homemaker ideals. The resulting mismatch between work and family not only presents a problem for working mothers, 43%

of whom report work-family conflict. It presents an even bigger problem for American fathers, who now report higher levels of work-family conflict than mothers do: 59% of fathers report conflicts between work and home responsibilities. (Galinsky, Aumann & Bond 2009)

"I don't have no problem [staying late] but after 2, 3 hours go past... that's too much because I have a child to go home to, and so does everybody else."

This section is designed to help employers understand the daily lives of their hourly workforce. It begins by describing the working poor. Because the best practices described in Part III cover all hourly workers, not just low-wage ones, it then describes Americans in the middle—those who are neither rich nor poor.

The working poor: Fragile patchworks of care clash with just-in-time jobs

Once my husband's sister changed her mind. Then my husband's grandmother changed her mind. Then I hired a girl who was stealing out of my house. Then I had [the kids]...in [a day care]...where I couldn't afford it. It was \$800 a month. Then I hired a girl but she got a job. Oh, and my ex-husband's mother kept them for a while, about three weeks.

— Mother in Los Angeles County
(Henly & Lyons 2000, p. 700)

Work-family conflict represents a big problem for American mothers, but an even bigger one for American fathers.

Women without high school degrees report higher levels of work-family conflict than college graduates. (Williams & Boushey 2010) Three elements create a widespread lack of work-life fit. First, low-wage families have higher loads of family care. Second, they lack the financial resources to purchase stable, reliable child- and elder-care. Third, their just-in-time jobs just don't fit the day-to-day realities of their lives.

A higher load of family care

Two-thirds of low-income families have no children under 18 living at home. Many of these are “life-cycle poor”: students or others whose incomes will rise later in life.

Of the remaining third of poor families (those who have children), two-thirds are single parents. (Williams & Boushey 2010) Forty percent of managers in one study reported having employees with children not yet in elementary school; 55.4% had workers with elementary-school-age children; 57.6% had at least one child in middle school. (Lambert & Henly 2010b)

The one-third of poor families who are married typically “tag-team”: one parent works one shift, the other parent works a different shift, and each cares for the kids while the other is at work. Poor couples have the highest level of tag-teaming in the country. (Williams & Boushey 2010)

Poor families are also much more likely to be caring for an ill family member: roughly half of the managers in one study reported having one or more employees caring for family members *other than* their own children. (Lambert & Henly 2010b) Poor families have more, and more serious, health problems than more affluent families. Nearly one-

third (32%) of welfare-to-work families are caring for children with chronic illnesses. More than two-thirds of the parents interviewed for one study were caring for a child with either a chronic illness or a learning disability. (Dodson, Manuel & Bravo 2002) A study of call center workers found that nearly a third were providing care for a disabled or elderly relative. (Wharton, Chivers & Blair-Loy 2008) A nurses' assistant explained, “[M]y daughter has a seizure disorder. The baby has real bad asthma. So there's times where I have to stay home or whatever because she can't breathe. She's having seizures. I think that if we come in with a doctor's note it should be considered an excused absence—it's not.” (Gerstel 2010b)

Poor families have more, and more serious, health problems than more affluent families do.

In addition to high loads of child care and care for ill family members, low-income families also are more likely to be caring for elders, and to be providing more hours of elder care. Families living below the official poverty line are more than twice as likely to provide more than 30 hours of unpaid care a week to parents or parents-in-law. (Heymann 2005) Of 50- to 64-year-olds needing support for their health and emotional needs, fully 84% rely on informal networks of family and friends. (Gibson 2003) Nearly 60% of working caregivers say that they have had to go to work late, leave early, or take time off during the day to provide care. (Gibson 2003) In one case, a phone customer service representative was fired when she failed to meet her sales quota because of the stress caused by caring for her dying mother, who had died by the time the worker reached arbitration to contest her firing. (*Sprint/Central Telephone Co. of Texas*, 2002).

Fragile patchworks of care

The Los Angeles County mother quoted above had gone through seven child care providers in 15 months. (Henley & Lyons 2000, p. 700) A

supervisor of low-wage workers described what he sees day to day:

It's like everything is shaky....The car doesn't work in the winter; the buses are late. The kids are sick, first one, then the other....It becomes a real problem for us. (Dodson & Bravo 2005, p. 9)

Parents often face discipline or discharge if their children get sick. A Milwaukee school teacher said she hesitates to call some parents when their children come to school sick, because she knows their mothers might lose their jobs if they have to pick their child up, and “then the child may be in worse shape.” “But if a child is acting out and distracting the other children...or the kid is wheezing and his eyes are bulging, I call,” she said. (Dodson & Bravo 2005, p. 12) “Every time it happens [my daughter gets sick and I have to take off], I'm really scared that my hours are going to get cut....,” said a waitress. (Weigt 2008, p. 637)

Even when children stay well, child care is a challenge. Paying for child care is a big financial hit: of the roughly 40% of low-income mothers who do pay, nearly a third spend half or more of their total income on child care. (Matthews 2006) And poor families tend to distrust day care. Often—for what they can pay—there's a lot to distrust. Said one mother,

There's times that my dad would actually pick him up from day care and he would have vomit down his clothes....He had diaper rashes so bad that, oh my God, it looked like somebody actually stabbed him...That's how deep and disgusting them blisters were on my son. (Basta 2007, p. 431)

Childcare vouchers for welfare-to-work mothers average only \$2 an hour. (Williams & Boushey 2010) “What my son has been through,” said Sheila, the African-American mother of a five-year-old, “I would never put my son in day care.... My

dad's the only person I can trust with my kids. My dad and my mom, because of the conditions of day care.” (Basta 2007, p. 431)

This leaves parents with unpredictable just-in-time schedules turning to relatives with equally unpredictable schedules for child care, creating arrangements as “complex and contingent as Rube Goldberg machines.” (Thorne 2004, p. 168) Low-income parents often describe no two weekdays as having the same child care routine, and many families struggle with gaps in child care. “The kids....come back and say, ‘I left my book here or there. And that can be five different places,’” said a fifth-grade teacher in Boston. (Dodson & Bravo 2005, p. 131)

Take Emily, a divorced single mother of two. On Mondays, a neighbor walked Flora, aged 9, and Teddy, aged 7, home when she picked up her own children from the afterschool program at 5 p.m.. Flora, who has a key to their apartment, was in charge until Emily returned home between 6:30 and 7:30 p.m. On Tuesday, Emily's sister gets out of work early, and takes the bus home with her niece and nephew. On Wednesday, a second-grade teacher walks them to a bus stop two blocks from school; a friendly bus driver keeps an eye on them if he works that shift, and makes sure they get off

Not only parents, but also many grandparents, have child care responsibilities.

at their grandmother's house. Yet the grandmother has ulcerations on her feet, so she cannot descend the stairs to let the kids in. One day the kids stood outside shouting until a passerby finally helped them get in. On Thursday, no one is available to help, so the kids stay in the school gym as long as they can, and then wait in the playground, rain or shine. On Friday, Emily has an early day, and picks them up from school. (Dodson 2009)

An important point for employers is that many grandparents also have child care responsibilities. One study found that fully 40% of grandparents had been absent from, or late to, work because of childcare responsibilities. In some inner cities, grandparents are the primary guardians of 30% to 50% of children under 18. (Pruchno 1999) In addition, nearly 20% of working mothers with young children turn to the children's grandparents for childcare; single mothers are particularly likely to do so. (Guzman 1999) Because the average age at which Americans become grandparents for the first time is now 47, three-fourths of grandmothers and almost nine out of ten grandfathers are in the labor force. (Heymann 2000, p. 97)

And grandparents are not the only non-parents with child care responsibilities. Said a nursing assistant,

Well, I'm a single parent. That is my aunt [pointing to a co-worker], so I stay with her....Usually if both of us have to work that same day, that guy you just saw in here, that's my cousin, and that's his girlfriend. So if we all have to work. I'll stay here til 8:00 and bring the kids to their house, which is the next block over. Right, we all kind of work together to make it happen. (Gerstel 2010a, p. 12)

“Without flexibility, I wouldn't be able to work here. If they needed me to be here until six, I couldn't because I'm a single mother.”

Low-income families rely on other relatives in addition to grandparents: one-third of low-income families rely on relatives for child care. (Williams & Boushey 2010) The nursing assistant, above, depended on her aunt and her cousin (and his girlfriend). Not only do relatives provide child care; they also need care. Another nurse's assistant commented, “I take my mother to doctors'

appointments....We own one car, my husband and myself, but all of his sisters and brothers, nobody owns a car. But they all medically need rides here, need rides there, doctors' appointments every day, you know. So I sleep as long as I can, which usually is 3-4 hours.” (Gerstel 2010a, p. 12)

Single mothers also often turn to older children to care for younger ones. About half of welfare-to-work mothers rely on older siblings for child care. “She has to make me do it because she hasn't got anyone else,” one teenager reported matter-of-factly. (Dodson & Dickert 2004) And middle-school age children often are left alone: an Arizona study of welfare-to-work mothers found 65% of six- to twelve-year olds in self care. (Dodson & Bravo 2005) Another study found that 7.5% of children aged five to eight, and almost 14% of children nine to eleven are home alone. (U.S. Census Bureau 2006) That affects employers, too: “Nothing gets done around here between 3 and 3:30,” one manager told researchers, “when all the moms are calling up to check and see that their kids got home safely from school.” (Dodson, Manuel & Bravo 2002, p. 10) During the summer, one in ten children aged six through twelve is home alone or with a sibling under 13. (Firestein 2005, p. 15)

Informal care is less dependable than center care—so much so that one study found *30% of low-income workers disrupted their work schedules in order to meet family responsibilities in a single study week*. Nearly one-quarter of men and over one-third of women took time off. (Heymann 2000) Four out of 10 low-income parents are forced to miss work because of problems with child care arrangements; nearly three-fourths lose pay for the same reason. (Heymann 2000)

Fragile patchworks of childcare lead to high levels of absenteeism, according to the Work Scheduling Study by Susan Lambert and Julia Henly of the University of Chicago. Two-thirds of the managers interviewed reported that at least one employee had called off during the past year because of transportation issues; 59% because of a sick child;

41.7% in order to care for an elder; and about one-third (31.7%) of the managers had an employee who called off to care for a sick partner or spouse. Over half (56.8%) of the managers had experienced a “no show,” where the sales associate did not show up for work and did not call to say why. (Lambert, Haley-Lock & Henly 2010)

Why would an employee be a no-show? Reasons differ. Obviously, some people are just irresponsible: this is true among people of any income group. Others are young and inexperienced—especially in how to deal with work-family conflict. Said Maureen Perry-Jenkins, a psychologist who studies work-family conflict:

I...[had] one young mother who was working at a customer service phone job, a good job with the potential for benefits after a 6 month “trial period.” She actually loved the job and for two months had received awards for handling the most clients. Her baby got sick, she had no support network and she just missed work one day to care for her baby. She did not call in...I have no idea why. Scared, nervous, inexperienced...who knows. She went in the next day and was fired. She called me to see what she could do...she was a wreck. I only wish she had called me that day so I could have helped her problem-solve. Within a month she had moved in with a friend, within two months she and her baby were homeless. (Perry-Jenkins 2010)

Do people fail to appear for work because they don't want to work? Sometimes—but not often. Ninety-four percent of welfare-to-work mothers chose the option, “I feel I am good or productive in my work” in one survey. Said one, who both had an infant and was nursing her mother back to health after a near-fatal illness, “I wanted to get back [to work]. You know, I don't like being on welfare.” (Weigt 2006, p. 344) “I hate not working,” said another. “I'd love to work if I had day care.” (Kossek, Huber-Yoder,

Castellino & Lerner 1997, p. 85) Another mother explained, “I think that mothers who work are good role models for their kids....[M]y kids, they need to see me going to work. They need to see that I have to work for what we have. You know, it doesn't just get given to you.” (Weigt 2006, p. 346)

Yet low-income mothers, like all responsible mothers, will not put their children's safety and well-being at stake. A low-income Boston mother explained why she left a job she liked: “It was taking this toll on my son....I couldn't take one day off to go on a field trip....I wasn't there for him.” (Dodson & Bravo 2005, p. 9) Taking short periods of time off typically is not an option: low-wage workers are 50% to 100% less likely to have paid time off to care for sick children, to use flex-time daily, telecommute, or be able to decide when to take breaks. (Corporate Voices 2006) Only 17.5% of women with high school degrees can vary their schedules. (McMenamin 2007)

When today's jobs are designed for yesterday's workforce, frustration emerges on all sides. A manager in Milwaukee linked “massive absenteeism” with “irresponsibility.” He continued: “usually it's linked to other irresponsible-type behavior, even though that's not irresponsible, obviously you're being responsible to take care of your children.” (Dodson 2009, p. 33) Employers are frustrated; so are employees. “My mom had a heart attack,” said a blue-collar worker, “and she was in the hospital and I had to do the sixteen hours, nonstop, just like worried and what's goin' on, and I can't call out, 'cause I get fired.” (Gerstel 2010)

Impact of unstable jobs in the just-in-time sector

They create the attrition they then manage around.

— Susan Lambert

Just-in-time jobs simply do not fit with workers' lives. For one thing, last-minute scheduling makes it virtually impossible to arrange for child and elder care. Work schedules typically are posted with a

week's notice or less. (Henly, Shaefer & Waxman 2006) In one retail chain, corporate policy requires managers to post their schedules the Tuesday before the workweek that begins on Sunday, giving

“[U]sually it’s linked to other irresponsible-type behavior, even though that’s not irresponsible, obviously you’re being responsible to take care of your children.”

employees only five days’ notice. Nearly three-fourths of workers said their schedules were posted only one week at a time. (Lambert 2009a) Notice this short makes patching together child care nigh-impossible. One worker described trying to arrange babysitting for her son by the time she got her schedule only a few days in advance. “[U]sually they [my family] don’t want to watch him for me, so at times I have to call off because I have no one to watch him.” (Henly & Lambert 2005)

Further complicating child care arrangements is that work schedules vary from day to day. Here is an example of the workweek of one sales clerk:

One weekday, she worked 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Another, she worked from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m.

On Saturday, she worked from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

With her one-hour commute, she needed child care that started as early as 9 a.m. and ended as late as 10 p.m. She relied on her mother—her primary caregiver—and her son’s paternal grandmother, her sister, and her boyfriend to accommodate that week’s shifts. (Henly & Lambert 2005, p. 486)

Schedules also change wildly from week to week: 60% of employees interviewed in one study reported that their schedules changed “a lot” or “a fair amount” from week to week. Fully 42% reported three or more different start times, and 47% reported three or more end times, in the week before they were interviewed. (Henly, Shaefer & Waxman 2006) This also means that the total amount of child or elder care a worker

needs while he or she is at work varies widely, because the number of work hours can change wildly from week to week. Susan Lambert and Julia Henly’s study of a retail chain in Chicago found that hours in part-time positions varied from four hours to 30, while those in full-time positions ranged from 32 to 40 hours. (Lambert, Henly & Hedberg, 2010)

Last-minute notice of schedules, with hours whose number and timing vary wildly from day to day, all impede workers’ ability to arrange for the child and other family care they need in order to report to work. This leads to high levels of absenteeism, as well as to sky-high turnover, when employees give up the last-minute scramble to pull care together so they can get to work.

Forty-seven percent of workers in one study reported three or more different end times in the week before they were interviewed.

Other aspects of just-in-time scheduling, as described in the previous part, exacerbate the problem. Shifts are often canceled after child care and transportation have been scheduled and paid for. “I came all the way down here and I stay so far [away]! Then you tell me to turn around and go back home?...I don’t have money to be wasting like that!” (Henly, Shaefer & Waxman 2006, p. 622)

Many workers do not get enough hours to earn a solid living. Employees in these types of jobs typically want *more* hours in order to support their families, rather than the *fewer* hours professionals want in jobs where “full time” is 50 hours a week or more. According to national census data, about a third of workers who work less than 35 hours a week want more hours. (Lambert 2008) Even among women, only 7.3% want fewer hours; and women of color are even more likely to want more hours. (Lambert, Haley-Lock & Henly 2010) Over half of managers interviewed for one study said that they had lost at least one associate because he or she did not get enough hours. Nearly two-thirds had lost an associate to another employer

who offered a full-time job. (Lambert, Haley-Lock & Henly 2010) That is, if they can get one: more often, low-wage workers have to get a second part-time job. One study of employees in a retail firm found that 40% of them also held another job. (Lambert & Henly 2010b) Then, of course, the unstable schedule of one job interferes with the unstable schedule of the other.

All of this leads to high rates of absenteeism, which supervisors then try to control by hiring larger pools of employees and giving each few hours. This strategy, in combination with unstable schedules, leads to a pattern of serial quitting that is terrible for low-wage workers, who are consigned to permanent poverty as they quit one dead-end job after another, and can never get ahead. It is also terrible for employers, who struggle with turnover rates as high as 500%. (Lambert & Waxman 2005) Given that it typically costs 30% or more of annual salary to replace an hourly worker who leaves, this adds up to a lot of money left on the table. (Dissolkamp 2009)

The importance of high turnover—often recognized with professional-managerial employees, but overlooked with lower-wage hourly employees—can hardly be exaggerated when it comes to hourly workers. Half of the 88 jobs in a Chicago study had turnover rates in excess of 80%. (Lambert & Waxman 2005) Turnover was 200% among newly hired workers, who were most likely to be sent home or called into work when they were not expecting to work. (Lambert 2008) Consequently, low-wage

Half of the 88 jobs in a study of retail stores had turnover over 80%.

Americans have sharply lower rates of job tenure than do more affluent workers: among those who earn less than \$25,000, over three-fourths of the men and nearly half of the women have been at their jobs for two years or less. (Corporate Voices 2006) Indeed, employers are always hiring for some jobs, which

means they are always advertising, interviewing, training—and then losing that employee, only to start the process all over again.

Also exacerbating the problem is that people are not forthcoming about their schedule limitations, because those who are typically get scheduled for fewer hours. (Lambert 2009a) Fully 94% of store managers in the Work Scheduling Study reported that they try to hire workers with “open availability”—that is, a willingness to work anytime the store is open. “The sales associates have to be flexible. They signed on for ‘whatever’—they agreed to this when they were hired,” said one manager. Seventy-nine percent of managers said they give more hours to associates with open availability. (Lambert 2008; Lambert, Haley-Lock & Henly 2010; Lambert & Henly 2010a) For half (49%) of all jobs that do not require a college education, workers’ willingness to work odd hours or to be available whenever the employer needs staff weighs heavily in the hiring decision. (Acs & Loprest 2008) This encourages workers with child care and other family challenges not to be forthcoming about their needs. Instead they hang on as long as they can. Then they simply stop showing up. (Henly & Lambert 2005) “Don’t too many people get fired a lot,” said Kenya, a retail worker. Basically...most of ‘em leave because the schedule doesn’t work around their schedule.” (Henly, Shaefer & Waxman 2006, p. 623)

The way schedules are designed in just-in-time jobs is not working, either for employers or for employees. There has to be a better way. Part three begins the process of finding one. But the excessive “flexibility” required of workers in the just-in-time sector is not the only problem faced by low-wage workers. It is matched, ironically, by workplace rigidity, both in the just-in-time sector and in the larger realm of low-wage jobs.

Impact of excessive workplace rigidity

Just-in-time schedules tend to be concentrated in certain industries. Yet low-wage jobs outside the just-in-time sector share with those within it a different problem: excessive workplace rigidity. Only about half of low-income families report that they have the workplace flexibility they need. (Corporate Voices 2006, p. 32 Table 3)

Rigid schedules are very common for low-wage and hourly workers. Only 17.5% of workers without a high school degree can vary their schedules, less than half the rate (39.1%) among college graduates. (McMenamin 2007) Only one in three (33%) low-wage workers has access to traditional flextime, while only 12% can change their work hours on a daily basis. Only one in three can decide when to take breaks. (Bond & Galinsky 2006) Another study found that one-third of lower-wage workers cannot decide when to take breaks, nearly 60% cannot choose starting or quitting times, and 53% cannot take time off for sick children. Low-wage workers also are more likely than more affluent workers to report that using workplace flexibility programs will negatively affect job advancement. (Workforce Flexibility & Urban Institute 2008)

Low-wage workers also often have little (or no) sick, vacation, or leave time. Only about half of noncollege jobs (53%) offer sick leave that can be used to care for family members who are ill, according to employers; among entry-level jobs, this drops to less than one-third (31%). (Acs & Loprest 2008) Nearly 70% of lower-wage workers have two weeks or less of vacation and sick leave combined. (Heymann 2000, note 2, at 15 fig. 6.1) They also are less likely to be covered by the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), which provides twelve weeks of unpaid leave in connection with a birth or new child, or the serious medical condition of an employee or the employee's child, parent, or spouse. (Workforce Flexibility & Urban Institute 2008)

Expected mandatory overtime also exists in some low-wage jobs: a study of hourly jobs in Chicago found it commonplace among hotel housekeepers.

(Lambert 2008) Work hours expanded as managers called workers to come in from home, or asked them to stay on after their shifts ended, if demand proved stronger than expected. (Henly, Shaefer & Waxman 2006) "At nights...we'd have to stay late and clean up the store and they schedule you to 11:00....I don't have no problem with [staying late] but after 2, 3 hours go past...that, I think, is too much because I have a child to go home to, and so does everybody else," said one woman. (Henly, Shaefer & Waxman 2006, p. 622)

An overtime system that assumes that workers have someone else on tap to care for their children can lead to particularly harsh consequences for single mothers. For example, one mental health aide, who had worked for her employer for nine years, was fired when she refused to work mandatory overtime because she could not find someone to provide child care. (*State of New York, Rochester Psychiatric Center* 1986) Due to understaffing and the need for around the clock care, aides at her center were expected to work mandatory overtime on a regular basis. If an employee refused overtime, she remained at the top of the list until she took it. Thus, she had refused overtime but was ordered five days later to work overtime again—an additional eight hours after her regular shift ended at 11:20 p.m. Her babysitter could not stay because of a day job. The aide asked her supervisor if the supervisor knew anyone who could watch the aide's children at such short notice. The supervisor, while sympathetic, did not. The aide then said she could stay if she could bring her children in so they could sleep at the center while she worked, but that she could not leave her children alone: "If I have to stay, my kids have to stay here." The aide left, and was fired. (*State of New York, Rochester Psychiatric Center* 1986)

The arbitrator in the aide's case overturned her discharge. He felt the situation was

shocking to one's sense of fairness.... The [worker] may not be a woman of means, but she is a woman of substance...She does not hold a high-paying job. She

would probably be better off financially if she chose to stay home, watch her kids, and go on the dole. However, instead of becoming a public charge, she has chosen to make a public contribution.... Her recent performance evaluation indicates “she can function well on any ward she is assigned.” As the parties are aware, I take a very dim view of time and attendance infractions and insubordination.... However, [she] deserves every conceivable “break”.... Her children were well-groomed, neatly dressed, and well-behaved. It is her efforts to be a good parent that have created her problems at work. (*State of New York, Rochester Psychiatric Center* 1986, p. 727)

Not only does the aide’s story show the inefficiency of the employer’s mandatory overtime policy. The arbitrator’s opinion highlights the potential for negative publicity when an employer penalizes an employee for doing what any responsible parent would be expected to do.

Americans in the middle: Tag-team families with rigid jobs

When I was a young bus driver and my children were very small (ages 4, 2, and 1), I worked the late shift and my wife went to school during the day. We couldn’t afford child care, and this way one of us was always home. One day in the middle of winter, I was scheduled to work at 4 pm. The babysitter didn’t show up or call to say she wasn’t coming. I had to bundle up the kids and take them to work. They had to ride my bus with me. After about two hours I was lucky enough to see my wife studying in a coffee shop, so I stopped the bus and ran in and handed her the kids.

— John Goldstein, Past President,
Milwaukee Labor Council
(Firestein 2005, p. 7)

Low-wage workers share overlapping issues of work-life fit with hourly workers who are neither rich nor poor. Both groups face workplace rigidity; both may face unstable hours (although this problem is not universal among middle-income workers, as it is in the just-in-time sector). The solutions to remedy excessive rigidity are equally relevant to both low- and middle-income employees. To implement these solutions effectively, therefore, employers must understand not only the work-life issues faced by low-wage workers, but also those faced by middle-income workers. A study of union members in health care occupations highlights these workers’ high level of concern about work-life fit: early estimates in a study by Dan Clawson, Naomi Gerstel and Jillian Crocker found that 40% of the provisions in contracts of unions whose members were mostly women, and 30% of the provisions in contracts of unions whose members were mostly men, concern hours and scheduling. (Clawson, Gerstel & Crocker 2008)

Tag-team families

The middle 53% of American families typically are high school graduates with at least a few years of college. They include the man who comes to fix your cable TV and the woman who does the front office work for the vet. They sell auto parts or make them, are police, medical technicians, receptionists, or work in accounts billable or customer service. They have blue- or pink-collar jobs, or do lower-level white-collar work. A few, like nurses and teachers, have advanced degrees but work in relatively low-paying professions.

These families are much less likely than poorer ones to be headed by never-married mothers. Married mothers are much less likely to be out of the labor force: 23% are, as compared with 60% of poor mothers. (Williams & Boushey, 2010, p. 7 Figure 2) But families in the middle are much more likely to be divorced than affluent ones. Whereas affluent Americans’ divorce rates fell sharply (to 17%) by the late 1980s, for couples without a college degree, about one in three (32%) divorce. (Cahn & Carbone 2010)

Whether married or divorced, these families often tag team; the line between tag teaming and kincare is often blurred, as parents tag team with grandparents and other relatives in addition to each other.² (Williams & Boushey 2010) A study of blue-collar parents found that 20% handled child care by tag teaming, 47% used relative care, 19% used family day care, and 13% had multiple arrangements. Fewer than 1% used day care centers. Reluctance to use day care centers probably is influenced by the low quality of center-based care available to a group that has neither the subsidies available to the poor nor the cash available to richer Americans to pay for high-quality center care. One study found that the most uniformly poor quality child care was in centers that serve families that make \$10,000 to \$40,000. (Perry-Jenkins, Bourne & Meteyer 2007b) One working class woman explained to a researcher that her babies, both under three, went to her mother two days a week. But she worked the rest of the time, so the other days “we take them to this other woman’s house. It’s the best we can afford, but it’s not great because she keeps too many kids and I know they don’t get good attention. Especially the little one....She’s so clingy when I bring her home; she can’t let go of me, like nobody’s paid her any mind all day.” (Rubin 1994, p. 93)

A carpenter won a grievance after he left work to pick up his children.

Impact of rigid, highly supervised jobs

Middle-income Americans have been studied far less than low-income ones. This section relies chiefly on the arbitration database of the Center for WorkLife Law, which gathers arbitrations that arise in unionized workplaces after workers are disciplined or discharged due to work-family conflicts.³ The database provides a powerful snapshot of how employees’ family care responsibilities often conflict with excessively rigid schedules.

Many arbitrations show how rigid, inflexible schedules wreck havoc on families who survive by tag teaming. A factory worker explained his absence by saying that his regular babysitter was sick and his wife had to go to work. (*U.S. Steel Corp.* 1990) An arbitrator reduced a father’s discharge to a one-month suspension for refusing to take an assignment because he had to pick up his daughter. (*Jefferson Partners* 1997) A carpenter won a grievance after he left work to pick up his children. (*Ashland Oil, Inc.* 1988)

Other workers got into trouble when their child care broke down, leaving them unable to go to work. A male bus driver failed to come to work because his mother, who had agreed to watch his four children, never showed up. (*Chicago Transit Authority* 2001) A teacher requested a personal leave day when her normal day care provider got sick. Her husband was out of town, and her mother-in-law was scheduled to work. (*Princeton City School District Board of Education* 1993) A contact representative was treated as absent without leave when she did not report to work because her regular babysitter had car problems and her backup babysitter’s husband was hospitalized with a heart attack. (*Social Security Administration, Westminster Teleservice Center* 1990)

Still other arbitrations describe workers who are one sick child away from being fired. Perhaps the most vivid story is of a single mother transit worker who was fired for tardiness stemming chiefly from her son’s Crohn’s disease. Each morning she had to unhook her son from his IV, bandage him, administer medication, get him off to school, take two buses to take her toddler to his babysitter, and then take a third bus to get to work. When she was late, she often worked through her lunch hour to make up the time. The Transit Authority allowed her to come 30 minutes late, but given the lack of suitable child care and other social supports, she ultimately lost her job. (*Chicago Transit Authority* 1997) And the examples go on and on. A bus driver was fired when she arrived three minutes late because her severely asthmatic son had had an asthma attack. (*Chicago Transit Authority* 1999) A bus operator whose daughter needed a ventilator to breathe had been absent from work due to child care problems that arose when his daughter’s mother had

to work, attend school, and get emergency surgery; his daughter was ill when confusion arose about an extra work assignment.

Other examples include the father of a severely disabled son, (*Boise Cascade Corp., Insulite Div. International* 1981) the stepfather of a young man paralyzed as the result of a gunshot wound (*State of NY, Dept. of Correctional Services* 1987), a male train operator with a diabetic son (*Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority* 2001), a male rental car shuttle driver whose son had a “serious heart condition” (*Budget Rent-A-Car Systems* 2001), a child who needed a ventilator in order to breathe (*Chicago Transit Authority* 2001b), and a child with special needs. (*Massachusetts Bay Authority* 2000b) Again routine childhood illnesses take a toll. Families with infants with special needs visit the doctor an average of 11 times a year; other infants visit the doctor an average of four to six times a year. For children ages two to four, the number of doctor’s visits falls to seven for kids with special needs, and four for others. (Heymann 2000, p.73) One arbitration involved a worker whose child had chickenpox. (*Naval Air Rework Facility* 1986)

A flood of arbitrations show how workplace rigidity rarely flexes for middle-income hourly workers, even for one-time emergencies or family crises. A packer was fired when she left work in response to a call that her four-year-old daughter was in the emergency room with a head injury. (*Knauf Fiber Glass* 1983)⁴ A bus driver was suspended for five days when she missed a day of work because, as she described it, her 17-year-old daughter, who was using drugs and had threatened suicide, was discovered in the bathtub in a fetal position and refused to speak. (*Transit Management of Decatur* 1998; Schwartz, Markus & Snibbe 2006, p. 14-15) Another arbitration involved more than 30 phone company workers fired for tapping into telephone lines, often as a means to deal with overwhelming family responsibilities by checking on children and other family members. One reported that her mentally unstable son had threatened to kill her, her family, and himself. Three different workers had children whom they said threatened and/or attempted suicide. Another had a step-daughter who was physically threatening her daughter. Another became worried

and called her house 52 times in a single day; when she broke in to monitor the line, she heard her son acknowledging taking drugs. Two workers monitored the phones of parents; one had a mother who was “suffering from confusion”; the other’s father was ill and, according to the worker, had been threatened with harm from other tenants in her building. (*U.S. West Communications* 1999) In another case, a 25-year veteran employee was fired for monitoring her phone to check up on her young children, one of whom was asthmatic. (*Ameritech* 2001) Finally, in still another, a 14-year employee was fired when he failed to report to work because his pregnant wife, who subsequently died of a brain hemorrhage, broke the phone in a fit of rage, and he decided he could not leave his children alone with her. (*Chicago Transit Authority* 1997)

As with low-wage workers, middle-income hourly workers are sandwiched between child and elder care. A press operator at the *Chicago Tribune*, who

“[Flexibility] has benefitted five generations of my family. I began [working from home] to help my mother get my grandparents to medical appointments. So that helped my grandparents and my parents. And [I helped] my sister’s children with emergency daycare because I was at home, and then my husband and our children. We have grandchildren now that, because of this program, we’re able to help with after-school care. Literally, it’s helped five generations.”

was the primary caregiver for her mother, came to work late because she said she was up until midnight monitoring her mother’s blood pressure, which was dangerously out of control. She returned home to find that her one-year-old was having trouble sleeping, and fell asleep while rocking the child in a rocking chair. The next morning she

overslept, called in to report she would be late, but was fired when she arrived 20 minutes late. (*Chicago Tribune Co.* 2003)

Another common scenario is when an employer changes a worker's starting and stopping times, with a detrimental impact on the arrangements the worker has pieced together to provide child or elder care. A warehouse worker grieved his employer's order to change his work hours from 7-to-3 to 9-to-5. The worker needed his 7-to-3 shift so he could pick up his daughter from pre-school at 3:00 p.m.; his wife brought the child to preschool in the mornings. (*Central Beverage* 1998) A secretary sued when she was ordered to start work one hour and a half earlier, making it impossible for her to care for her elderly and ailing father before she arrived at work. (*Simpson v. District of Columbia Office of Human Rights* 1991)

Other arbitrations depict the stresses produced by divorce in the face of schedule rigidity. One involved a divorcing mother who lost her factory job due to a shift change, which meant she felt that she would lose custody of her children. (*ITT Industries, Night Vision Roanoke Plant* 2003) Another involved a 22-year employee, most recently an extruder operator in vinyl extrusion, who explained that his stay-at-home wife left him, leaving him to care for their four-year-old son. He was notified that social services authorities were investigating him for child neglect. They found none, and subsequently tried to help him find day care for his son, but all he could find during the summer were high school babysitters who were inconsistent and unreliable. After two months, he finally found an approved day care provider, but not until he had been fired for excessive absenteeism under the employer's no fault attendance policy. (*Suprenant Cable Corp.* 1995) A third involved a material handler who was fired (but reinstated by the arbitrator) when he was not allowed to produce documentation that, as the divorced father of an asthmatic son, he needed to stay home because his son was ill. (*Interlake Conveyors Inc.* 2000)

Again, we see that child and other family care responsibilities are not limited to families with young children. Several arbitrations involve adolescents, including several involving suicidal daughters (e.g., *Transit Management of Decatur* 1998), a son injured in a gang beating (*Chicago Transit Authority* 2001), a step-son confined to a wheelchair by a shooting (*State of NY, Dept. of Correctional Services* 1987), a father fired for absences caused by family illnesses and "delinquent children" (*Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority* 1996), a father fired due to absenteeism caused (among other things) by the drug overdoses of his daughter (*Regional Transit Authority* 1983), and a mother who had to take her son for a high school placement test (*Chicago Transit Authority* 1999).

A warehouse worker needed his 7-to-3 shift so he could pick up his daughter from preschool at 3.

Again, we also see grandparents who lost their jobs, or were disciplined, due to child care responsibilities. A grandfather was fired when he refused to work overtime; he needed to get home because he was tag teaming with his son to care for his grandson. (*Tractor Supply Co.* 2001) A school isolation monitor was suspended from work when she took more leave than had been authorized to care for her pregnant daughter and granddaughter. (*Board of Education of the Margaretta Local School District* 2000) Another employee was fired when she left work without authorization because her pregnant teenage daughter went into labor. (*Employer and Union* 2000) Still another involved a steel plant worker who was fired when she stayed home to care for her adult daughter, who had been injured in a car accident. (*Federal Mogul Corporation* 2003)

In short, middle- as well as low-income workers are disadvantaged by rigid schedules reflecting the assumption that any responsible and committed worker has a wife at home caring for children and other nonwork responsibilities. Once again this

outdated image produces significant costs not only for the employees and their families, but also for their employers: lack of work-life fit produces costly absenteeism and attrition that could be avoided by increasing schedule effectiveness. Moreover, lack of fit can also produce arbitrations (or lawsuits) and strife among the employer's workforce. In each of the situations described above, an employee was disciplined or discharged as the result of work-family conflict, and the worker's union took the grievance to arbitration. Worth noting is that a significant number of the employers' decisions were overturned by an arbitrator, who reinstated or reduced the discipline of the grieving worker. (Williams 2006b)

A grandfather was fired for refusing to work overtime; he needed to get home because he was tag teaming with his son to care for his grandson.

Mandatory overtime at short notice

Schedule instability in hourly jobs outside the just-in-time sector typically comes in the form of overtime. About 11% of noncollege jobs have frequent overtime, and nearly a third (32%) sometimes require overtime. (Acs & Loprest 2008) Nearly a quarter (23%) of men in middle-income families work 50 or more hours a week, a schedule that is exceedingly rare in low-wage jobs (9%). (Williams & Boushey 2010, p. 8 Table 3)

A striking example involves a single-parent telephone installer who was fired when she left work rather than working overtime. The company had instituted a new policy that employees had to stay until every customer who had called before 3 p.m. had been served. Her supervisor had a policy that only one person per shift could avoid overtime; if more than one person requested to leave without working overtime, all workers requesting to do so had to come to an agreement as to who could leave and who would stay—or else everyone had to stay.

When she left to pick up her infant after she was ordered to stay, she was fired for insubordination. The arbitrator overturned her dismissal based on safety concerns; there was no one else to pick up her baby. (*GTE California, Inc.* 1992) In another case, a flight attendant who was ordered to work an additional flight refused, saying that her husband needed to get to work. (*Piedmont Airlines, Inc.* 1994) Researchers find much the same thing. "They have a forced overtime policy so every few weeks one of us has to work late...which makes it hard to take care of the babies in the morning," a 34-year-old machine operator told one researcher. (Perry-Jenkins, Bourne & Meteyer 2007b)

Men as well as women find themselves caught between a rock and a hard place when ordered to work unexpected overtime. Said the former General Counsel of the Amalgamated Transit Union:

Our members were being fired because they refused to stay for mandatory drug and alcohol tests, which last up to 3 hours. They had no problem taking the tests; the problem was that tests were triggered at or near the end of their shifts. And with little or no advance notice they could not stay even as paid overtime, because they had to get home to take care of their kids. While certain limits can be negotiated, these are not common in transit industry contracts and the problem persists. (Williams 2006a)

In another case, a plant worker refused a Saturday callback because his wife, who had cancer, was severely depressed, and his water was out. He told his employer he needed to get to the store to buy a new pump, and refused to leave "a severely sick woman without water, in case of a fire." He was so concerned about his wife's cancer and depression that he had previously sacrificed thousands of dollars to avoid overtime that would have left her home alone. Said the arbitrator, "[h]is wife had stood by him in sickness and tragedy, and he was trying to return it. He owed it to her." (*Allied Paper* 1983, p. 448)

In a number of arbitrations, divorced fathers were disciplined for refusing mandatory overtime that conflicted with the hours they were scheduled to care for their children. An African-American construction lineman who was the single father

“His wife had stood by him in sickness and tragedy, and he was trying to return it. He owed it to her.”

of two minor children was fired for refusing overtime. This arbitration was reported in a court case; the court noted the lineman’s claim that child care difficulties of white workers had been accommodated, but his had not. (*Bryant v. Bell Atlantic Maryland* 2002) In another particularly vivid example, a factory worker was suspended for insubordination when he left after eight hours of a 12-hour overtime shift. He was, according to the arbitrator, “an excellent employee who consistently worked overtime when asked to do so.... He was never absent. He accepted overtime whenever the Company needed him. Indeed, his dedication to his work placed him in a situation that may have jeopardized his family responsibilities.” When first asked to work overtime, he said he could not because he was “tired and worn out”—his wife had recently left him, and he had been so upset he had been feeling ill. Later that afternoon, he said he would help out the company, but that he could only stay for eight hours because he had to get home to care for his two children. He stayed after the eight hours was up, but became “distraught” after receiving a call from his wife, and left after 8 hours and 20 minutes. (*Marion Composites* 2001)

It stands to reason that an employer that understands its workforce will be able to manage it more efficiently and effectively. Yet employers who hire hourly workers typically do not talk with researchers who study work-family conflict. As this Part has demonstrated, it is essential to bridge that communication gap—for employers and their employees. The bottom line is very simple: hourly workers, particularly low-wage ones, need *both* schedule stability *and* flexibility. As research shows, to force good employees, even those at the bottom of an organization, to constantly juggle ever-changing schedules on short notice, and to deny good employees even a small amount of flexibility in emergencies just doesn’t make good business sense.

III. EFFECTIVE SCHEDULING PRACTICES

With a greater understanding of how traditional scheduling practices clash with the reality of low-wage, hourly workers' lives, the next step is to identify effective and efficient business practices to remedy these problems. This Part is designed to provide a comprehensive survey of the literature on workplace flexibility and identify the wide array of such practices already succeeding for businesses nationwide. It begins with a step-by-step process designed to help employers ensure to their just-in-time scheduling is as efficient and cost-effective as possible. It then describes the broad array of existing practices currently in use to address the dual problems of workplace rigidity and scheduling instability, including mandatory overtime.

A. Ensuring the Effectiveness of Just-In-Time Scheduling

Now this we can do something about.

— Employer comment at presentation by Susan Lambert (Lambert 2009a, p. 18)

Employers of low-wage workers often assume that their employees' lives are chaotic and that the employees have a lack of work readiness, making high absenteeism and turnover rates inevitable. No doubt this is true of a portion of the low-wage workforce. Yet much of the problem lies *not in the workers* but in the *lack of fit between the workplace and the workforce*.

A key research finding is that “[r]etention analyses reveal that the majority of the workforce stays the same month-in and month-out. A minority of employees turns over rapidly, however, and this results in a high cumulative turnover rate as jobs are restaffed throughout the year.” (Lambert &

Henly 2010b, p. 7) The challenge for employers is to increase the loyalty and size of the stable sector of their workforce, while reducing the proportion that turns over rapidly. As identified previously, one way to accomplish this is to raise wages and provide benefits such as health insurance and paid leave. Another, in today's competitive environment, is to increase schedule effectiveness. Notes Lisa Disselkamp, “Scheduling is a form of compensation. It is a very tangible benefit to employees, but the costs are hidden and don't appear as a line item on any budget.” (Disselkamp 2009, p. 156)

Managers rated the goal of “staying within hours” as even more challenging than meeting sales quotas. (Lambert & Henly 2010b) Given the important role that metrics around work hours are playing in driving behavior at the frontlines of the firm, employers would be well advised to take a step back and assess whether just-in-time scheduling, as they are implementing it, is saving—or costing—them money. To the extent that current practices are driving extremely high levels of absenteeism and turnover, businesses that improve schedule effectiveness will have a significant business advantage.

A simple three-part process defines scheduling effectiveness:

1. Identify the work to be accomplished.
2. Identify the employees needed to do the work.
3. Identify the constraints within which scheduling needs to occur.

Employers can engage in a number of tasks to improve effectiveness depending on their business operations and needs, as described below.

Survey your employees

A key early step in designing a schedule is to survey employees to ascertain the relevant scheduling constraints. The most effective method typically is a formal on-line or paper-and-pencil survey to ascertain the number of hours workers would like to work each week, times when workers prefer to work, when they are not available, and when they prefer not to work but could do so if necessary. In the just-in-time sector, managers will need to rethink their insistence on 24/7 availability if that is unrealistic given their workforce—as most often it will be. To expect total availability, and to ask employees to claim they have it, does an employer no favors when workers later have to call off after the schedule is set.

The problem may lie not in the workers but in the lack of fit between the workplace and workforce.

Surveys are important because today's hourly workforce is increasingly diverse—which means that workers' responsibilities, constraints, and preferences are, too. A workforce composed of parents with children under 18 will require a measure of schedule stability, and established ways to handle absences related to childcare breakdowns and illnesses. A workforce composed chiefly of workers with elder care responsibilities will require an effective mechanism for coverage in the event that a worker needs to leave abruptly, given that elder care often requires work absences at short notice. A formal survey may well find that some workers (e.g., mothers) prefer daytime hours before 3 p.m., while others (e.g., students) prefer evening hours, or other patterns that provide the basis for crafting a schedule that works well for different groups of workers—and, therefore, for the employer.

Find the hidden schedule stability

The next step is to identify hidden schedule stability that already exists in an employer's operations. A striking and unexpected research finding when scholars studied just-in-time schedules in the retail sector was that for nearly two-thirds of participating stores, 80% or more of the hours stayed the same, week in, week out. (Lambert & Henly 2010b) This finding surprised many store managers. (S. Lambert, personal communication at Working Group Meeting, July 27, 2010) The Hidden Scheduling Stability Worksheet in Appendix B provides a methodology for identifying schedule stability. Researcher Susan Lambert found that hours often varied by only three hours from week to week, yet managers held up the schedule until the last minute, waiting for the final information about those last three hours. (Lambert 2010d) An alternative is to post the schedule much further in advance, and work with employees to develop a procedure about how to distribute the hours that later have to be cut (or added). (See **Practices to effectively handle changes after the schedule is set**, on page 39 below.)

When scholars studied just-in-time schedules in the retail sector, for nearly two-thirds of participating stores, 80% or more of the hours stayed the same, week in, week out.

Lengthen the time period within which supervisors can “stay within hours”

Another task, for many employers, will be to lengthen the time period within which supervisors are required to meet their supply-to-demand ratios. In some workplaces, a study of hourly jobs in Chicago found, managers call supervisors several times a day to inform them of the ratio required for the next few hours. (Lambert 2008). In other workplaces, managers had to adjust the desired ratio between customers and staff on an hourly basis,

based on the number of customers in the store at a given time in the previous week. When managers were allowed to attain the target ratios *by the end of a given week*, they could offer their employees far greater schedule predictability; if there were fewer customers than expected, managers could decrease the number of staffing hours they used by not replacing a worker who called in sick or had a child care emergency. Of course, this requires giving managers more leeway—and some may not be up to the challenge. But if a manager consistently fails to “stay within hours,” that’s simply a performance problem. The risk of extra labor costs may well be more than compensated for by reduced attrition and absenteeism; this is an empirical question employers need to investigate.

Determine the optimum number of employees

Another important issue is workforce size. The Work Scheduling Study found that over two-thirds (67%) of managers reported that they liked to keep headcount high “so that I have several associates I can tap to work when needed” over having a smaller staff in order to give workers more hours. (Lambert 2009a; Lambert & Henly 2010b) Managers tended to keep headcount large so that they could schedule workers for shifts during peak business hours and to help compensate for the high level of turnover and absenteeism that typically accompanies just-in-time scheduling. Knowing who will show up for work, said a manager in an airline catering business, is “like flipping a coin.” (Lambert 2008) Moreover, sky-high turnover means that some employers are *always hiring* for certain jobs. (Lambert 2009a) Surely it is worth the effort to pause to assess whether this is the best business model. Lambert and her colleagues found that supervisors who hired fewer workers, and gave each more hours, were rewarded with 5% higher retention on average than supervisors who hired a large pool of workers and gave them few hours. (Lambert & Henly 2010b) This only makes sense. As discussed above, when employees do not receive enough hours to support themselves and their families, attrition tends to be high.

Determine the optimum mix of full- and part-time employees

The next challenge is to assess what is the optimum mix of full- and part-time employees. Managers who prefer to keep their staffs large, and give them fewer hours, have a higher proportion of part-timers, to whom they typically give an average of 10 to 15 hours a week. The Work Scheduling Study found that the cumulative annual turnover rate was much higher among part- than full-timers. Roughly 40% of stores surveyed had cumulative turnover rates of 120% among part-timers; a quarter had turnover rates over 150%. (Lambert & Henly 2010b) Across companies in four industries, the turnover rate among workers with little seniority, who are most likely to be given part-time work and unstable schedules, was as much as 200% higher than the rate among workers with more seniority. (Lambert 2009a) Contrary to the accepted wisdom that employers use part-timers to save on wage and benefit costs, a study by Houseman (2001) of a nationally representative survey of 550 U.S. firms indicated that among the 72% of firms that used part-time workers, only 21% reported that they used part-time arrangements to save on benefit and wage costs. Instead, 62% did so to provide assistance during peak business hours and 49% during hours not usually worked by employees in full-time jobs (e.g., evenings in retail stores). Employers that can achieve schedule effectiveness may be able to materially enhance their competitive position.

Over two-thirds of managers liked to keep headcount high (and hours low).

Determine the optimum advance notice of employees' schedules

The next step is to experiment with giving workers greater advance notice of their schedules. Posting work schedules a few days in advance of the workweek has become the norm in many industries, a way of business that is rarely questioned (Lambert 2008). It may be possible, however, for many businesses to post schedules further in advance. For example, in the retail firm participating in the Work Scheduling Study, schedules were typically posted a few days before the workweek that begins on Sunday, a common practice throughout the retail sector. Yet store managers received their staffing hour allotments for a month at a time, making it feasible for them to post schedules for the full month—something few (6%) managers did. (Lambert 2009a) Obviously, there are limits to how far in advance schedules can and should be posted: business conditions change, as do employees' circumstances. Yet it may be feasible—and beneficial—for many businesses to post schedules a few weeks or even a month in advance, which could dramatically reduce unplanned absenteeism. Susan Lambert and Julia Henly are currently running a study to document the effects of posting schedules a month in advance.

“Many managers we spoke with were shocked. They have never thought about the fact that, if associates' hours only vary by three hours from week to week, it makes sense to post the bulk of the hours in advance, and deal later with scheduling the three variable hours of out of, perhaps, 200 hours.”

Adopt a formal system for handling scheduling changes

A majority (53%) of managers in the Work Scheduling Study reported that schedule changes were common. Those requested by management typically reflected managers' need to stay within hours. Those requested by employees typically asked to switch shifts or to cover for a colleague. An informal system for handling scheduling changes is both costly in terms of managers' time, and limited in the amount of information that can be processed. The Work Scheduling Study found that, after schedules are posted “[m]any workers call in to find out their hours or stop by to obtain a new schedule so that they can arrange or rearrange child care and other family activities for the coming week.” Virtually all managers report that they try hard to accommodate associates' scheduling requests, regardless of the reason for the request, yet informal systems make it hard for supervisors to “keep on top of requests and preferences.” (Lambert & Henly 2010b; Lambert 2009a) The obvious answer is to shift to a more formal system for keeping track of, and responding to, change requests, either on-line or on paper. On-line systems are described below, as are shift-swapping and hiring floaters, both of which are tried-and-true methods for handling schedule changes. (See **On-line scheduling**, on page 37 below) Once systems are computerized, which increasingly is quite affordable, managers allow employees to enter not only their underlying scheduling needs and preferences but also when they are not available to work because of a specific engagement on a given week (doctor's appointment, parent-teacher conference). As will be discussed below, new “cloud” systems can be as inexpensive as \$1.25 per employee.

The goal: Scheduling equilibrium

The ultimate goal is to identify the *scheduling equilibrium*: the point at which the savings that can be attained by increasing schedule stability equals the additional costs incurred due to initiatives to

increase schedule stability. This equilibrium point will vary from industry to industry, and from workplace to workplace, but it should be easy to calculate. Employers already track absenteeism, turnover and attrition; the Turnover Worksheet in Appendix C provides a methodology for calculating turnover rate.

Two-thirds of managers felt their companies did not reward them for being responsive to employees' scheduling needs.

Employers also can readily measure the costs associated with programs to decrease schedule instability, for example by giving a smaller group of employees more hours, rather than a larger group of employees fewer hours each, or by implementing a system that allows managers to balance supply and demand at the end of the week rather than on a daily or hourly basis, or by hiring floaters to fill in for workers who cannot come to work because of family responsibilities. Employers need to develop a methodology by which they can weigh these costs, and compare them with the savings produced by reducing turnover and the other costs caused by scheduling instability.

Once the scheduling equilibrium has been identified, the next step is to build managers' success in effective schedule management into the metrics used to evaluate the managers' performance, given that "we treasure what we measure." In the Work Scheduling Study, most managers reported that their companies encourage them to be responsive to employees' scheduling needs, yet nearly two-thirds (66.2%) felt that their company does not reward them for being responsive. (Lambert & Henly 2010b)

No doubt, given that employers currently using just-in-time scheduling today encounter turnover rates of up to 500%, businesses that increase scheduling effectiveness can gain a competitive edge.

B. Effective Practices to Improve Work-Life Fit in Hourly Jobs More Generally

The conventional wisdom is that workplace flexibility is not suitable for hourly jobs. This assertion is far less true than is ordinarily assumed. Workplace flexibility is one element of schedule effectiveness. In the hourly context, its utility is to ease the excessive rigidity typical of hourly jobs, which is counterproductive for employees and employers alike.

The standard "request-for-proposal" model, which enables employees to approach the employer to request any type of flexibility for which the business case can be made, has, in fact, been used for hourly employees with great success. One example is the Detroit Chamber of Commerce, which has 88 employees. The CFO works from Japan; 10-15% of the employees work flexible schedules; others telecommute a day or two a week; one grandmother works part-time in order to spend more time with her grandchildren. An important message for employers is that when they offer employees flexibility, they should include hourly as well as salaried workers. (Giglio n.d.)

Another example is Turck, an industrial automation manufacturer, which offers flexibility throughout its organization, including the 80% who work in manufacturing. Turck's E-Workplace Program provides on-site training for both managers and employees. Turck provides proposal and agreement forms that employees and their managers can use to "open up a discussion between the employee and manager about this employee's request for flexible scheduling based on whatever. It may be...wanting to work from home a couple of days a week, or starting later than the typical 8:00 start time, or doing a compressed workweek like I do," noted Michelle Potratz, HR/Benefits Partner. (Geiger & Potratz 2010) Under this program, Turck managers have allowed a production employee to shift to a 9-to-5 schedule (shifts typically are 6 a.m. to 2:45

p.m., and 2:45 to 11 p.m.) Managers in production, configuration management and shipping/receiving have allowed employees to leave early or shift their hours in other ways. In an interview, Turck personnel discussed a line supervisor who works one-on-one with production line employees “to help the employee with their family needs.” (Geiger & Potratz 2010) Recently, when a need arose in the reception area, Turck began by identifying the best people for the job, and asking them what their ideal schedules would be. The result was job sharing among four people. As Accounting went to a Results-Only Work Environment, the company provided laptops, and stopped requiring any particular schedule. An employee worked in a call center, open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., but “it was really important to her to be able to take her son to kindergarten, which doesn’t start until...9 a.m., and then to be able to pick him up at 3:00...” So her work load was shifted, and she works part of the time at home doing a rebate function; everyone else in her department was offered a similar option. Yet another, a single mother with an autistic son, shifted from a receptionist into a buyer function so she could be there in the morning to care for her son. Voluntary turnover is lower than for similar companies, ranging from less than 1% to 5%, according to Lora Geiger, Director of Human Resources. (Geiger & Potratz 2010)

While these examples are instructive, the focus here is on formal policies that improve work-life fit in hourly jobs, by decreasing workplace rigidity, savvy handling of overtime, and redesigning benefits. (Adding new benefits, although often vital for improving work-life fit, is beyond the scope of this report.) The following, WorkLife Law believes, is the most comprehensive palette of policies currently available for hourly jobs. (Note that the quality of some of the available lists of practices varies. One listed as a best practice allowing workers to take time off for dialysis, which is legally mandated by the Family and Medical Leave Act. (29 U.S.C. 2601, *et seq.*) Mere compliance with the law should not be considered a best practice.)

Unlike other lists of this sort, this Part is organized not by employer, but by type of policy. This format is designed to enable employers who are considered offering flexibility to hourly workers to view the full range of available programs at a glance, and to look down the list and see whether a similar company already uses a given type of program. Some of the examples below are drawn

Turnover fell from 160% to 60% when one employer offered flexible options.

directly from employers; others are from union contracts. (Note that information is accurate as of the date of the cited source; some policies may have since been altered.)

Bottom-line benefits of workplace flexibility are particularly dramatic when organizations adopt a full range of flexible work options. The literature documenting the business case for workplace flexibility is extensive: a good place to start is *Business Impacts of Flexibility: An Imperative for Expansion* (Corporate Voices 2005) Because workplace flexibility programs improve the fit between the workplace and the workforce, they tend to decrease absenteeism, turnover, and attrition, and to enhance productivity, job commitment and recruitment of talented staff. For example, when a Marriott call center adopted paid time off, floaters, flex-time coupons, unpaid time off, a program where associates could take paid time off when demand was lower than expected, part-time with benefits, an overtime system that depends chiefly on voluntary overtime, and remote working options, its turnover fell from 160% to 60%, largely due to the flexible work options. (Corporate Voices n.d.) When PNC Financial Services Group adopted an array of flexible practices such as flex-time, compressed workweeks, telework, and part-time positions, it saw sharp reductions in overtime costs, as hours formerly worked as overtime were covered

by employees' regular schedules. Call-offs also were dramatically reduced. (Corporate Voices n.d.)

Workplace flexibility programs are one way of accomplishing schedule effectiveness. As noted above, the first step is to identify the work to be accomplished. The next is to identify the skill sets and employees needed to do the work. The next is to identify the constraints within which scheduling needs to occur. Asking those affected what they need is the most direct approach. Said a manager at Marriott, "One of the best things we did is we asked them what they wanted. They told us and we figured out how to do it." (Corporate Voices n.d., p. 42) Other employers echo this message. (Johnson & Tubaya 2010; Geiger & Potratz 2010)

Different types of flexibility tend to appeal to different age and gender groups, as illustrated in Table 1. A study of five companies that offer workplace flexibility found that women are more likely than men to use flex-time, compressed workweeks, and telework. Women also were more likely to adjust their shifts for family or personal reasons, to swap shifts for family or personal reasons, to use sick leave in hourly or partial-day increments, while men were more likely than women to take off unpaid extra time beyond paid time off. (Corporate Voices n.d.)

TABLE 1

	Women	Men
Flex-time	32%	25%
Compressed workweeks	25%	17%
Telework	11%	4%
Adjust shifts for family	60%	44%
Swap shifts	30%	26%
Use sick leave in small increments	26%	15%
Take unpaid time off	31%	41%

Source: Berg, P., & Kossek, E. E. (n.d.). *The use of work-life flexibility policies and practices by middle-class, unionized workers* (Sustainable Workforce Issue Brief). East Lansing, MI: Sustainable Workforce, MSU School of Human Resources and Labor Relations. Retrieved December 20, 2010, from <http://www.thesustainableworkforce.org/index.php/research-outputs/issue-briefs>

The same study found that workers under 34 were more likely than others to trade shifts, use sick time in small increments, and use paid sick time to care for sick children. Workers aged 35 to 44 were more likely to telework and use paid sick time to care for sick children. Workers between 45 and 54 were more likely to use compressed workweeks. Workers 55 and above were more likely to use telework, flex-time and to take vacation in partial increments.

Because this section is designed as a reference for employers considering various policies rather than to be read from start to finish, information introducing each employer is repeated under each policy. Readers should keep in mind, however, that flexible work options often are most effective when combined. For example, PNC Financial Services Group hires part-time telework employees to respond to customer inquiries by email. Half of the team teleworks at all times; the other half uses a combination of flexible starting and stopping times, telework and compressed workweeks. This combination of policies makes weekend coverage easier, and produced sharp productivity gains (of 50%). (Corporate Voices n.d.)

Redesigning work schedules

Compressed workweeks

Compressed workweeks are full-time schedules compressed into fewer days per week. Among low-wage workers, 42% are allowed to compress their work hours; among other hourly workers, this percentage climbs to 46%. (Swanberg 2008) A survey of five companies that offer workplace flexibility found that 23% of hourly workers used compressed workweeks. (Corporate Voices n.d.) A study of eight unionized companies found that 31% of employees with elder care, 37% of those with child care responsibilities, and 32% of employees overall worked compressed workweeks. The highest usage was among police (88%), followed by blue-collar (45%). (Berg & Kossek n.d. a) An Oregon cocktail waitress earning \$7/hour plus tips explained

Business benefits of flexwork: Johnson Storage & Moving Co.

“Denver had a booming economy here in the early 90s, where it was exceptionally difficult to find quality people we could afford to pay...Cheyenne was a struggling labor market...so we found just some fine talent up there that was very well priced. Some people can’t quite get their minds around a move coordinator who isn’t there with them. But...the advantage of being virtual [is that it] disciplines everyone. In person, we get casual about hand-offs in our business...then people forget things. When you’re moving that information around over the Internet, it has to be well documented and well communicated, which is really good for our business...One of the benefits of being virtual is that we really have multi-state job sharing. If one of them is going to be out on vacation or at a child’s school activity, they just choose someone else in the group and say, “Can you cover for me?” They they’ll let the customer know, “During this period of time I’m going to be out. If you have any problems or issues, Sheila’s going to handle this for you.” And when we went into severe cuts, we had this great pool of tenured talent, so we virtualized. We used to have a move coordinator connected to each branch, or more than one. But we said, “That’s kind of silly. Let’s just look at the load. And we may have a move coordinator who’s at a branch that’s suffered severely in the downturn who we don’t want to lay off because of tenure. So let’s give a portion of that person to another office. The person in New Orleans wasn’t really justified as an FTE, but she had been with us for 30 years, and had just won a national award. How foolish of us, as a company, to lay her off and then hopefully to get her back or find equivalent talent. So it’s really, really beneficial to the company.”

— Jim Johnson, President, Johnson Storage & Moving Co.

why she worked compressed workweeks:

Well, because (exhale), I can work, I can do three tens, get my days over and done with, and then I have four days off with my kids....Because otherwise, if I worked days, I would hardly, I mean, the only time I would see them is at night....I’d only have two days off with them. (Weigt 2006, p. 333)

Examples of compressed workweeks include both public and private employers in a broad range of industries and regions:

- The Kentucky Orthopedic Rehab Team, a physical therapy management company that owns and operates 43 outpatient clinics and over 250 employees, offers a full-time schedule spread over 4 ½ days, with one afternoon off each week. (Swanberg, Loeffler & Werner 2007)
- W. Rogers Company, a construction company, offers a four-day workweek, which is particularly important because construction workers often have to travel several hours and stay away from home to reach their job site. (Swanberg, Loeffler & Werner 2007)

- Kodak, with 62,000 employees in the U.S. offers compressed workweeks; all employees are eligible to apply. (McGuire & Brashler n.d.)
- Thomas Industries, a Minnesota company that manufactures steel components, offers compressed workweeks consisting of three 12-hour days. (Labor Project for Working Families 2001)
- Bright Horizons, which manages more than 600 child care centers and has more than 18,000 employees, offers compressed workweeks. (Corporate Voices n.d.)
- The U.S. Food and Drug Administration offers compressed workweeks of four 10-hour days or “nine-day fortnight” (i.e., nine 9-hour days in a two-week period, with every 10th day off). (Labor Project for Working Families n.d.)
- One department of PNC Financial Services Group, a bank with 2,500 branches and 59,000 employees, offers a nine-day fortnight, in which they work 8.5 hours a day in week one and 10.5 hours a day in week two, with a half hour for lunch. Schedules can be changed twice a year. (Corporate Voices n.d.)
- Wachovia Corporation offers compressed workweeks. (Litchfield, Swanberg & Sigworth 2004)
- The Redwoods Community College District in California offers four 10-hour days, four 9-hour days and one 4-hour day, and other schedules, by agreement of the employees and their supervisors. (Labor Project for Working Families n.d.)
- The MITRE Corporation, a government contractor with 7,000 employees, allows workers at all levels to choose from a variety of flex options, including shortened workweek. (Giglio n.d.)

“I’ve noticed with the compressed [workweek], the attendance level is better.”

- Rosetti, an architectural, design and planning firm with 58 employees, has a Summer Hours program in which employees work a 9-hour day for nine days, and one 4-hour day. (Giglio n.d.)
- Texas Instruments allows its manufacturing employees to work a compressed workweek. (Giglio n.d.)
- AFLAC, a Fortune 500 insurance company, offers a variety of full-time workweeks, including a 4-by-10 shift and a 3-by-12 shift. (Giglio n.d.)
- ARUP Laboratories, a national reference lab, offers its technical and support sections a 7-On/7-Off schedule, in which employees work seven 10-hour days, with the following seven days off. Workers on this schedule have 26 weeks off a year, and so are not offered additional time off. (Giglio n.d.)
- KPMG LLP offers compressed workweeks. (Giglio n.d.)
- Bottom Line Systems, Inc. (BLS), provides medical services to 85 client companies, offers allows associates to work four nine-hour days, followed by one four-hour day. (Swanberg 2010)
- Timberland, which makes footwear, clothing and gear and employs 5,200 people, offers compressed schedules of four 10-hour days. (Giglio n.d.)
- PNC Financial Services Group, a bank with 2,500 branches and 59,000 employees, hires part-time telework employees to respond to customer inquiries by email.

Half of the team teleworks at all times; the other half uses a combination of flexible starting and stopping times, and compressed workweeks. (Corporate Voices n.d.)

- At Proctor & Gamble, some administrative assistants use compressed workweeks, which allows for greater flexibility in scheduling meetings or meeting customer needs. The result has been a decrease in overtime costs. (Corporate Voices n.d.)

Flex-time

Flex-time schedules allow workers flexibility in when they start and stop work. Only 37% of low-wage workers, and 39% of other hourly workers, can choose their own starting and stopping times. (Swanberg 2008) A survey of five companies that offer workplace flexibility found that 13% of hourly workers surveyed used flex-time that could be changed on a daily

“[Flexibility] saves us money by reducing turnover. The majority of the work-from-home folks have been with the company for longer than 20 years. I would guess that if we had to replace any of our work-from-home people, it would cost, in turnover, retraining, all of it, a minimum of \$60,000 in the first 12 months.”

basis, and 30% used flex-time on a set schedule. (Corporate Voices n.d.) A study of eight unionized companies found that 65% of employees with eldercare responsibilities, 58% of employees with children under 18, and 54% of employers overall used flex-time; usage rates were higher among white-, pink- and blue-collar workers. (Berg & Kossek n.d. a) Flex-time is something professionals often take for granted; it is a highly prized benefit for hourly workers who can use it, for example, to match their work hours with their partner’s work hours when tag teaming, or to enable them to care for an elder before coming to work.

“Let’s try this for a month, everybody having the opportunity to start a half hour earlier, but you understand that we’re doing this as a month trial....’ And they found that it worked, and just gradually it evolved into a little bit more, but everything was done on a one-month trial.”

- Kodak, with 62,000 employees in the U.S. offers flex-time. (McGuire & Brashler n.d.)
- At Autoliv Australia, which manufactures seat belts for cars, factory workers can start at 6, 7, 8 or 9 a.m. (Heymann 2010)
- Bottom Line Systems, Inc. (BLS), provides medical services to 85 client companies, offers 30-minute Flex, which allows associates to start work 30 minutes before or after their designated starting time, and leave work 30 minutes before or after their designed ending time. (Swanberg 2010)
- San Clara County in California offers flex-time, with starting and stopping times anytime between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m.. (Labor Project for Working Families, n.d.)
- The Library of Congress allows employees to flex their time by taking off between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., with prior supervisor approval, and makes up the time during the morning or evening, or requests leave for time spent not working. (Labor Project for Working Families database, n.d.)
- The Immigration and Naturalization Service allows employees flex-time, consistent with service requirements (Labor Project for Working Families database n.d.)
- The MITRE Corporation, a government contractor with 7000 employees, allows employees at all levels to choose from a

variety of flex options, including flexible hours. (Giglio n.d.)

- Rosetti, an architectural and planning firm, allows employees to begin work anytime between 7 and 9 a.m. and to end work anytime between 4 and 6 p.m. (Giglio n.d.)
- KPMG LLP offers flex-time. (Giglio n.d.)
- Wachovia Corporation offer flex-time. (Litchfield, Swanberg & Sigworth 2004)
- Thompson Associates, a Kentucky largest employee-benefits firm with 65-plus employees, offers “Summer Hours,” which allows employees to compress their workweek into 4 ½ days during the summer when children are out of school. (Swanberg, Loeffler & Werner 2007)
- Bright Horizons, which manages more than 600 child care centers and has more than 18,000 employees, offers varying starting and stopping times. (Corporate Voices n.d.)
- At PNC Financial Services Group, a bank with 2,500 branches and 59,000 employees, teams that perform a variety of CD, checking and ATM functions offer flexible start and end times from 6-9 a.m. until 2:30-5:30 p.m., depending on work demands. Cross training allows for coverage when an employee with specific knowledge is out. Management level employees (managers, supervisors, and team leaders) coordinate their schedules so that at least one member is present at all times. (Corporate Voices n.d.)
- PNC Financial Services Group, a bank with 2,500 branches and 59,000 employees, hires part-time telework employees to respond to customer inquiries by email. Half the team teleworks at all times; the other half uses a combination of flexible starting and stopping times, telework, and compressed workweeks. (Corporate Voices n.d.)

“The fact that I do have people coming in earlier...is a benefit since the system is now up on a normal basis very early.”

Reduced hours and job sharing

Job sharing is when two employees split one job; typically they work different days, with some overlap to aid coordination. Retention part-time jobs are jobs with benefits where the occupants have chosen to reduce their hours. A survey of five companies that offer workplace flexibility found that 11% of hourly workers surveyed worked part-time, while 1% used job sharing. (Corporate Voices n.d.)

- Employee Resources Group, LLC, which operates hotels and has 3100 low-wage employees, allows employees with school-age children to work during school hours (typically a 9-2 schedule). (Swanberg 2010)
- Bottom Line Systems, Inc. (BLS), provides medical services to 85 client companies, offers 30-minute Flex, which allows associates to start work 30 minutes before or after their designated starting time, and leave work 30 minutes before or after their designed ending time. (Swanberg 2010)
- The Central Baptist Hospital, which employs 2,400 people in Lexington, Kentucky, offered experienced nurses through job-sharing of a 12-hour shift. (Swanberg, Loeffler & Werner 2007)
- Kraft Foods’ “Fast Adapts” offers job sharing for hourly workers who work in round-the-clock manufacturing facilities. (McGuire & Brashler n.d.)
- First Tennessee Bank, which employs 8,000 people, permits any employee who has been with the bank a year or more to request a part time schedule of 20 or more

hours a week, with benefits. (McGuire & Brashler n.d.)

- Kodak offers job sharing and part-time work; all employees are eligible to apply. Kodak, with 62,000 employees in the U.S. offers compressed workweeks; all employees are eligible to apply. (McGuire & Brashler n.d.)
- Wachovia Corporation allows reduced hours and job sharing. (Litchfield, Swanberg & Sigworth 2004)

Employees can request a 1% to 20% temporary reduction in working time, lasting up to six months.

- Wayne State University offers reduced hours with benefits. (Labor Project for Working Families n.d.)
- The State of Oregon allows eligible employees to job share. (Labor Project for Working Families 2001)
- The Immigration and Naturalization Service allows employees to job share or work part-time, consistent with service requirements. (Labor Project for Working Families database n.d.)
- Bright Horizons, which manages more than 600 child care centers and has more than 18,000 employees, offers part-time work. (Corporate Voices n.d.)
- Bottom Line Systems, Inc. (BLS), provides medical services to 85 client companies, allows associates to work part time, and provides proportional benefits provided they work at least 20 hours/week. (Swanberg 2010)
- KPMG LLP offers a job sharing program, available to any employee. (Giglio n.d.)
- The Kentucky Orthopedic Rehab Team, a physical therapy management company that owns and operates 43 outpatient clinics and has over 250 employees, offers a 32-hour workweek with full benefits. (Swanberg, Loeffler & Werner 2007)
- The City and Country of San Francisco allow employees, with permission, to work a reduced schedule for a limited period with no negative career consequences. (Labor Project for Working Families n.d.)
- Santa Clara County allows employees to request a 1% to 20% reduction in working time for a period lasting up to six months. (Labor Project for Working Families n.d.)
- Marriott's Global Reservation Sales and Customer Care Center, a 24/7 call center with 200 sales agents in Salt Lake City, offers 20-hour/week part-time schedules (16 hour/week schedules for students). Students, employees with a second job, and long-tenured associates can request set-hours schedules. Most students work nights, which works well because fewer associates want to work then. (Corporate Voices n.d.)
- The collection department of PNC Financial Services Group, a bank with 59,000 employees, uses a combination of flexible schedules and telework to cover Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. and weekends. A typical daytime schedule, in place for over a decade, is four days from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. with a shorter fifth day, allowing employees weekday time to schedule appointments not available on weekends. Some employees work 11:30 a.m. through 9 p.m., again allowing mornings for family or other needs. (Corporate Voices n.d.)

Gradual return to work

This policy allows someone returning from childbirth or other health-related leave to start part-time and gradually increase to a full-time schedule. A study of eight unionized organizations found that 32% of employees with children under age 18, 27% of employees with elder care responsibilities, and 23% of employees overall used gradual-return-to-work policies. Service workers had the highest usage rate: 31%, or nearly a third, used the policy. The next highest usage was among administrative support staff: 26%, more than a quarter of employees in these jobs, took a gradual return to work. (Berg & Kossek n.d. a)

- Wachovia Corporation allows employees to return part time, and gradually work back up to full time, after a leave. (Litchfield, Swanberg & Sigworth 2004)
- US West offers members of Communications Workers of American Local 7777 six months of part-time work following a Care of Newborn leave of absence, upon mutual agreement of the worker and immediate supervisor, renewable for one additional six-month period. (Labor Project for Working Families n.d.)
- The University of Connecticut allows parents to work half time for up to six months following the birth or adoption of a child; a six-month extension is subject to supervisor approval. (Labor Project for Working Families n.d.)

Comp time

Comp time programs allow employees to take time off instead of receiving pay when they work extra hours. Employers need to be mindful of relevant state and federal labor laws when setting up these programs; in a handful of states (including Alaska, California, Nevada, and Puerto Rico), state law requires an overtime premium for work in excess of 8 or 10 hours a day, in addition to the federal law requirement for work in excess of 40 hours per week. (U.S. Department of Labor 2010) A study of eight

Service workers used the gradual-return-to-work policy the most, followed by administrative staff.

unionized companies found that 42% of employees with elder care responsibilities, 46% of employees with children under 18, and 40% of employees overall used comp time. The highest usage level was among police (51%), followed by administrative support (40%) (Berg & Kossek n.d. a)

- Bottom Line Systems, Inc. (BLS), provides medical services to 85 client companies, offers Variable Flex, which allows associates to alter their schedule on an as-needed, infrequent basis to attend a school function, doctor's appointment or the like. (Swanberg 2010)

Part-year work

Among low-wage workers, 32% are allowed to work part year; among other hourly workers, this percentage falls to 21%. (Swanberg 2008) A study of eight unionized companies found that 42% of employees with eldercare responsibilities, 13% of employees with children under 18, and 12% of employees overall used policies that allow part-year work. Usage was highest among police (29%); 11% of blue-collar workers used the policy. (Berg & Kossek n.d. a)

- RSM McGladrey, which has 4,500 employees and sells business services to mid-sized firms, offers “flex-year,” a program that allows employees to submit a proposal to vary their work hours over the course of a year. A typical arrangement would be full-time work during the company’s busiest January to April period, with summers off, and full- or part-time hours for the rest of the year. Salaries and PTO are pro-rated, and flex-year workers are eligible for promotions and pay incentives. Benefits are offered to employees who work at least half time. (Giglio n.d.) Bright Horizons, which manages more than 600 child care centers and has more than 18,000 employees, allows part-year work; typically, teachers want to cut back on work during the summer months. (Corporate Voices n.d.)

On-line scheduling

On-line scheduling is the wave of the future. Employers can use on-line scheduling services at a cost between \$1.25 and \$5 a month per employee. (Disselkamp 2010; Dike 2010; Durmick 2010; Higbee 2010) This means that, for the first

“Without the technology, it would be a nightmare to manage.”

time, even small employers can shift to on-line scheduling. The programs thus far featured in best-practice studies are from large or medium-sized employers.

- JCPenney’s On-Line Schedule Changes and Availability Requests, or OSCAR, enabled associates to customize their work hours, add or drop shifts, or make last-minute schedule changes to meet their family or other needs. OSCAR also allows associates to identify others willing to consider a shift swap, and allows such swaps without a manager’s intervention. As of 2003, JCPenney retail units placed Associate Kiosks on-site so that employees could enter their “general” and “preferred” availability times themselves. Changes can be made anytime, with a manager’s approval. (Kim, Lopez, & Bond, J. T. 2003)
- Alpine Access, a customer service call center for a national financial institution that employs 1,200 people, has an on-line site that allows employees to specify what hours they want to work, what hours they normally would not work but could in an emergency. This computer system gives it the capability to ask employees to schedule the number of hours they are interested in working. (Giglio n.d.)
- Marriott’s Global Reservation Sales and Customer Care Center, a 24/7 call center with 200 sales agents in Salt Lake City, created a web-based system that handles their broad array of flexible work options described below, which can be accessed through an on-site Web station. “Without the technology, it would be a nightmare to manage,” said one manager. (Corporate Voices n.d., p. 43)
- At PNC Financial Services Group, a bank with 2,500 branches and 59,000 employees, one department posts its schedule on-line. Staff finds their own work-life solutions by shift swapping, working half-shifts on two days instead of one, considering other workers’ needs when scheduling vacation, and so on. No employee can be out on any given day. (Corporate Voices n.d.)

Redesigning overtime systems

In many workplaces, one group of workers passionately wants overtime (typically men whose wives have primary childcare responsibilities), while for another group (mothers and tag-teamers), an order to work overtime at short notice can mean losing their jobs. Employers can improve morale and decrease costs by taking the trouble to design overtime systems to achieve work-life fit for both

The first step is to rely on volunteers. The next is to use a coupon system or set aside one week each month when an employee may be called for overtime.

groups. A poorly designed overtime system will result in attrition for single mothers and tag-team parents: in tag-team families, when one parent is ordered to work overtime at short notice, the family may well have to choose between mom's job and dad's job, in a context where the family needs both jobs to pay the mortgage. The study of five companies that support workplace flexibility found that only about half (54%) of those surveyed rarely or never were required to work overtime with little or no advance notice; 20% were required to do so at least several times a month. Men (40%) were more likely to do so than women (24%). (Corporate Voices n.d.)

The first step is to rely on volunteers to the extent possible. Two alternative ways exist of handling mandatory overtime when it is unavoidable. One is to give coupons that workers can use to buy out of overtime or to claim additional work hours. The second is to divide employees into four groups, and have one group on call for possible overtime during the first week of every month, the second on call during the second week, and so on. This enables workers to arrange for back-up child care during the week they are on call.

- A father in one study was part of a work team, consisting of line workers from the factory floor, HR personnel, and company administrators, whose goal was to improve work-life fit. They asked to have specific weeks where they were on call for mandatory overtime. (Perry-Jenkins, Bourne & Meteyer 2007b) The importance of this solution cannot be overstated where mandatory overtime at short notice is unavoidable; otherwise, such a system will fuel attrition among single mothers and tag-team families. (The name of the company cannot be revealed due to the Human Subjects Protocol of the study.)
- A company that participated in one study gave housekeepers points they could use to buy out of overtime or claim additional hours of work. (Lambert 2008)
- Alto-Shaam, Inc., a Wisconsin company that produces food service equipment, staffs overtime by first asking for volunteers. (Labor Project for Working Families n.d.)
- The Bureau of National Affairs turns first to volunteers to satisfy overtime needs. (Labor Project for Working Families n.d.)
- Marriott's Global Reservation Sales and Customer Care Center, a 24/7 call center with 200 sales agents in Salt Lake City, posts overtime on its Web station; then associates can request overtime, consistent with local labor laws. Using this system means that mandatory overtime is required only if there is particularly heavy call volume. (Corporate Voices n.d.)
- The Amalgamated Transit Union negotiated a contract that provided for drug tests to be scheduled during normal working hours, because tag team fathers

were getting fired for refusing to take drug tests scheduled at the end of their shifts, because they needed to get home so that their wives could get to work. (Williams 2006a)

Practices to effectively handle changes after the schedule is set

Shift-swapping

Shift-swapping is a key way hourly workers can shift their working hours so as to respond to family responsibilities, particularly unexpected ones. A survey of five companies that offer workplace flexibility found that 35% of hourly workers surveyed

“If they didn’t have shift trade then a lot of people would probably have a lot more absenteeism.”

swapped shifts with colleagues. (Corporate Voices n.d.) A study of eight unionized companies found that 38% of employees with children under 18, 30% of employees with eldercare responsibilities, and 37% of employees overall used shift-swapping programs. (Berg & Kossek 2009)

In some workplaces, such as restaurants, shift swaps are made more difficult because some shifts yield a lot of tips, while others yield relatively few. (Lambert, Haley-Lock & Henly 2010) In all workplaces in which workers want more hours, workers may find it far easier to find someone to take over their shift than to persuade the taker to give up her shift in return. Cross training can greatly facilitate shift-swapping because it qualifies a broader range of employees to perform a given job. (Cross training also has many other benefits, such as enabling easier coverage during vacations.) In the Work Scheduling Study, more than one-third of

managers reported that associates switched shifts, or found someone to take over their shift, on a weekly basis or a few times a month. (Lambert & Henly

“You can sign up on the computer and say, ‘This is my shift—I need the day off.’ Someone can go in and say, ‘Oh, I can work those hours’ and they pick up your shift.”

2010b) Obviously, an employer that uses on-line scheduling sets up a much more efficient system for shift-swapping.

- Kraft Foods’ “Fast Adapts” offers hourly employees who work in round-the-clock manufacturing facilities shift swapping and single-day vacations. (McGuire & Brashler n.d.)
- The Alameda-Contra Costa County Transit District offers bus drivers to exchange bus runs, with permission of a supervisor. (Labor Project for Working Families n.d.)
- St. Luke’s Hospital in Newburgh, New York allows employees to swap shifts, with approval of the relevant supervisor. (Labor Project for Working Families 2001.)
- Longview Fibre Company (Longview Mill) allows employees to swap shifts within the same day or days off within the same week, with supervisor consent. (Labor Project for Working Families n.d.)
- Bright Horizons, which manages more than 600 child care centers and has more than 18,000 employees, allows employees to swap shifts. (Corporate Voices n.d.)

- At a large manufacturing plant of a consumer goods manufacturing company, employees can swap shifts within the same department to trade one to four days a week, or trade up to six weeks a year in a calendar year. Employees must find someone with similar qualifications and training who wants to trade. (Corporate Voices n.d.)
- At Marriott's Global Reservation Sales and Customer Care Center, a 24/7 call center with 200 sales agents in Salt Lake City, workers can swap shifts the on-line scheduling. (Corporate Voices n.d.)

Shifting work hours

At a large manufacturing plant of a consumer goods manufacturing company, employees, with their approval of their work teams, can work up to two hours at the end of the shift directly before they are scheduled to work, or at the beginning of the shift directly after they are scheduled to work. Other members of their team cover the two hours not covered by the employee who is shifting his or her

A relief pool is a group of employees trained on all jobs to cover staff shortages due to time off. The ROI during the first year of the relief pool was 130-135%.

working time. (Corporate Voices n.d.) Only 12% of hourly workers can choose starting and stopping times daily. (Bond & Galinsky 2006)

Floater

A floater's job is to cover shifts for employees who are unable to work. The additional costs may well be defrayed by the amounts saved by preserving

efficiency without having to keep on employees after the end of their scheduled work day. The most efficient floaters have been cross-trained so that they can fill a number of roles.

- Kraft Foods' "Fast Adapts" uses retirees to cover for leaves, vacation and extended illnesses etc., of hourly employees in round-the-clock manufacturing facilities. (McGuire & Brashler n.d.)
- A large plant of a consumer manufacturing company cross trains a "relief pool": a group of employees who are trained on all jobs within a team to cover staff shortage due to vacations and other time off. The ROI during the first year of the relief pool was 130-135% due to decreases in overtime, despite the extra training and increased staffing. (Corporate Voices n.d.)
- In the same plant, in several of the continuous run departments, teams have built in up to two extra people each shift, which means that two people have the opportunity to take the day off without pay, depending on vacations, sick time, workload, and so on. Teams have different systems for deciding who can take time off. Some teams rotate; others use the system to spread overtime hours. Weekend hours are rotated so that no one will be forced to work every weekend, regardless of seniority. (Corporate Voices n.d.)
- Marriott's Global Reservation Sales and Customer Care Center, a 24/7 call center with 200 sales agents in Salt Lake City, designates a few associates as floaters, whose job is to pick up shifts to ensure coverage and allow greater flexibility for other associates. (Corporate Voices n.d.)

Team scheduling

At the same plant, two teams who worked in continuous (24/7) operations were allowed to design their own schedules. Their solutions diverged substantially, although both abandoned seniority-based scheduling. One developed an annual schedule that set members' workdays and days off far in advance. The other adopted a "just-in-time" time off system: each day is staffed with enough personnel so that two members can be given time off. When a team member reaches the top of the list, s/he has the choice of taking the day off without pay or working the extra day. (Corporate Voices n.d.)

Allow staff to vary their schedules at will as long as production goals are met

PNC Financial Services Group, a bank with 2,500 branches and 59,000 employees, allows part-time telework employees to vary their schedules daily provided they communicate their schedules to their manager, and the team can meet its 24-hour turnaround service level goal. (Corporate Voices n.d.)

Time off work

Programs to enhance paid leave are encouraged best practices, but a full discussion of paid leave is beyond the scope of this report. Here the focus is on revenue-neutral policies that can ensure that conscientious workers are not forced to quit their jobs simply because they need small amounts of time off for limited periods.

"Nothing gets done around here between 3 and 3:30 when all the moms are calling up to check and see that their kids got home safely from school."

Allow employees to contact children, elders, or caregivers during work hours

Only 33% of low-wage workers choose their break times. (Bond & Galinsky 2006) Parents need to be able to contact latchkey children, and to call caregivers when a problem arises.

- The Immigration and Naturalization Service, by policy, states its recognition that employees may have to contact child or elder care providers during work hours. (Labor Project for Working Families n.d.)
- A father in one study was part of a work team, consisting of line workers from the factory floor, HR personnel, and company administrators, whose goal was to improve work-life fit. They asked to shift break time in the afternoon from 2:45 to 3:15 to allow parents to check that their children had arrive home safely from school. (Due to the Human Subjects protocol of the study, the name of the company is unavailable.) (Perry-Jenkins, Bourne & Meteyer 2007b)

Attendance at children's activities

A national study found that nearly three-fourths of working parents could not consistently attend school conferences with teachers and learning specialists. (McGuire, Kenney & Brasher 2006) California, by state law, requires employers of 25 or more to allow employees up to 40 hours of unpaid time off each year for parents, guardians, or custodial grandparents to participate in school or licensed day care center activities, with reasonable notice to their employer. (Cal. Labor Code § 230.8). Some employers offer similar programs to address related issues:

- PRO Group, which develops marketing programs and has 33 employees, gives full-time hourly employees up to 16 hours per year to participate in school-

related activities that take place during work hours. Part-time employees who typically work 30+ hours receive 12 hours of school leave each year. Absences must be taken in segments of at least two hours and must be approved by a supervisor. Employees who are not parents, who make up about 50% of program participants, can participate in educational activities such as being a career-day speaker or a classroom volunteer. (Giglio n.d.)

“It was taking this toll on my son....I couldn’t take one day off to go on a field trip....I wasn’t there for him.”

- The State of Vermont gives employees a maximum of four hours in any 30-day period, not to exceed 24 hours in any 12-month period, to participate in preschool or school activities directly related to the academic educational advancement (such as a parent-teacher conference) of the worker’s child, stepchild, foster child, or ward who lives with the worker. (Labor Project for Working Families n.d.)
- The Social Security Administration offers employees up to 24 hours a year off, unpaid, to participate in parent-teacher conferences, school volunteer work, elder care or family medical appointments. (Blades & Fondas 2010)
- The State of California allows employees to use accrued leave to attend school or nonschool family-related activities, such as sports events, in which the employee’s child is participating. (Labor Project for Working Families n.d.)

Sick leave that can be used for care of dependents

The federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) requires covered employers to give eligible employees up to twelve weeks of unpaid leave to care for a child, parent, or spouse with a serious medical condition. (29 U.S.C. 2601, *et seq.*) However, as noted above, employees often face the need to care for children and other dependents who are ill, but not sick enough to amount to a “serious health condition” covered by the FMLA. Only 24% of low-wage and low-income workers can take a few days off to care for a sick child without losing pay or using vacation days. (Bond & Galinsky 2006) Much of the cost of a policy allowing employees to use their sick leave to care for sick children or dependents already is incurred as employees call in sick when, in fact, it is their children who are sick.

Another key issue is notice: a study of welfare-to-work moms found that, although half received paid vacation and one-third received paid sick leave, typically paid time off required several weeks’ notice, which made it hard to use for family emergencies. (Weigt 2006) Among low-wage workers, only 34% of full-timers and 25% of part-timers are allowed days off to care for a sick child without using their paid vacation days. (Swanberg 2008) A survey of five companies that offer workplace flexibility found that 14% of hourly workers surveyed used paid sick time to care for a sick child; 11% used paid sick time to care for sick family member other than a child. (Corporate Voices n.d.)

- H. E Butt Grocery Company, a supermarket chain with more than 315 stores in Texas and northern Mexico, allows sick leave to be used for care of dependents. (Giglio n.d.)
- Northern California Council for the Community allows union members to use up to five days of sick leave per calendar year to care for a sick or injured family member, provided that employees’ remaining sick leave must remain at no

less than 10 days. (Labor Project for Working Families n.d.)

- The State of Ohio allows an employee's sick leave to be used for care of his/her immediate family. (Labor Project for Working Families n.d.)
- The Office of Thrift Supervision allows employees to use sick leave for periods of incapacitation due to pregnancy when the employee's request for modification of duties, supported by acceptable medical evidence, cannot be accommodated. (Labor Project for Working Families n.d.)

Allow employees to purchase additional vacation

A survey of five companies that offer workplace flexibility found that 35% of hourly workers surveyed take additional time off without pay beyond vacation and personal days. (Corporate Voices n.d.)

- The Fifth Third Bank, which operates 1,300 locations in the South and Mid-West, allows employees to purchase up to five extra vacation days each year. (Swanberg, Loeffler & Werner 2007)
- The 50/52 plan at Autoliv Australia, which manufactures seat belts for cars, allows employees to get paid 96.12% of their salary for 52 weeks of the year, and to take an extra two weeks off. (Heymann 2010) The company also allows employees to take 80% of their pay for four years, or to spread five years' salary over six years, in exchange for one year off. (Heymann 2010)

Allow employees to leave work during downtime

Marriott's Global Reservation Sales and Customer Care Center, a 24/7 call center with 200 sales agents in Salt Lake City, posts on its Web station when demand is lower than expected. Associates can take time off on a first-come, first-served basis. (Corporate Voices n.d.)

Personal time that can be used small increments

Among low-wage workers, only 56% can decide when to take breaks; this percentage climbs to 69% among other hourly employees. (Swanberg 2008) A survey of five companies that offer workplace flexibility found that over half (52%) of hourly workers surveyed use vacation time, and about a quarter (23%) use sick time, in hourly or partial-day increments. (Corporate Voices n.d.)

- Pacific Gas & Electric allows employees to take vacation hours, up to 16 per year, in increments of one hour or more. (Labor Project for Working Families 2007)
- A large plant of a consumer good manufacturer, with 24 hours notice, allows vacation to be taken in half-day increments, up to eight half-days a year. The time is typically used to attend children's sports events, medical appointments, or other personal needs. (Corporate Voices n.d.)
- Marriott's Global Reservation Sales and Customer Care Center, a 24/7 call center with 200 sales agents in Salt Lake City, provides employees with 15 flex-time coupons per year (after training) that can be used in one-hour increments for up to three hours per day. (Corporate Voices n.d.)

- Marriott's Global Reservation Sales and Customer Care Center provides employees with 16 time-off coupons that can be used in one-day or half-day increments. Associates can earn more coupons, which can be used based on business needs. They go use the on-line Web Station to check availability and request time off. Associates can also phone the manager on duty at short notice and ask if they can take time off without using vacation or coupons, for example to care for a sick child; the manager will give the time off if slots are available for their shift. (Corporate Voices n.d.)
- Turck, an industrial automation manufacturer, has a Work-Life Pursuit Policy that allows workers to take unpaid time off or to work part-time for one to three months off work. (Gieger & Potratz 2010)
- CitiSales offers job security and continued benefits for workers who need to take an unpaid leave of over one week. "In this market we have a lot of individuals that are from foreign countries. One of the things we experience every year is that they like to take a month off and go back home because it is very expensive to buy tickets and they have family members they haven't see in years." (Swanberg n.d.a) (CitiSales is a pseudonym; due to Human Subjects restrictions, the actual company name cannot be disclosed.)

Leave banks

Leave banks allow employees to donate unused leave to a colleague, and are often used in situations where a worker, or a worker's relative, is seriously ill. Leave banks also enable colleagues to help a woman who has recently borne a child. One study of blue-collar parents found that only 10% of the mothers had paid parental leave when their baby was born. This meant that they tended to use up all their sick and vacation time, and to return to work with no safety net. (Perry-Jenkins, Bourne & Meteyer 2007b)

- The Immigration and Naturalization Services agreed to grant emergency annual leave requests and to consider emergency requests for leave without pay when employees have unexpected needs due to child or elder care. (Labor Project for Working Families n.d.)

Extended unpaid leave

Some employers allow employees to take extended time off without pay. This is particularly important for workers with family in other countries, to enable them to return home for an extended visit without quitting their jobs. The program also is helpful when a worker has to nurse an ill family member through an extended recovery period, or for a variety of other uses.

Update no fault attendance policies

A survey by World at Work found that 40% of respondents had an absence control policy. (CLASP 2010) These policies are an excellent source of information for determining whether flexible work arrangements need to be introduced. For example, when 80% of the associates are on probation, as occurred in one flagship department store, the time is ripe to consider changing the scheduling format

“Every day, [she] comes in late five minutes, and the manager speaks to her. She's said, 'I know, but it's my bus.' The manager says, 'As opposed to me taking you down the path of corrective action, let's adjust your schedule.'”

to improve work-life fit for employees. (Henley & Waxman 2005) Another study found that one worker out of three had received points or other

sanctions due to attendance problems. (Henly, Shaefer & Waxman 2006) Said one manager at PNC Financial Services Group after adoption of various flexible policies, “Instead of having six people call off...we’d rather have you work a schedule that wouldn’t have us taking corrective action [because of absenteeism]. Most people want to do the right thing.” (Corporate Voices n.d.)

Another issue that arises with no-fault systems is when employers give employees sick leave—but then penalize them for using it. “In one nursing home we studied, nursing assistants received six sick days a year, but they were penalized anytime they used a sick day.” (N. Gerstel, personal communication to J. Williams, July 27, 2010) This seems particularly troubling in a health-care context, because it means that nurses’ assistants who are sick are forced to report to work and to expose patients to their illnesses.

Turck, an industrial automation manufacturer, provides a useful model. It excludes from its no-fault policy: 1) absences accompanied by a medical provider statement, 2) absences taken for family medical leave, and 3) absences that have been approved by the employee’s supervisor. (Geiger & Potratz 2010) Note that giving points or other

Employees can handle 50% more cases per day when teleworking due to the lack of distractions and interruptions when working from home.

discipline to an employee covered by the Family and Medical Leave Act who has taken time off in connection with a serious medical condition is a violation of federal law. (29 U.S.C. 2601, *et seq.*)

Telework

A common assumption is that hourly jobs are place-bound jobs. (Haley-Lock in press) Some are, but many are not. In fact, much routine white-collar work can be remote. Estimates of telework among hourly workers vary widely. One study found that only 3% of low-wage, and 6% of other hourly workers, ever work regular hours at home. (Swanberg 2008) A study of eight unionized companies found much higher levels: 55% of employees with children under 18, 30% of employees with eldercare, and 38% of employees overall used telecommuting programs. Usage was higher among professionals, but 36% of administrative support personnel and 17% of blue-collar workers telecommuted. (Berg & Kossek 2009)

- Johnson Storing & Moving Co., a Denver moving company with 400 employees in five states, was a pioneer in telework for hourly workers. For the past decade, it has offered telework to any employee who seeks it; today 35-40% of its employees work from home. Many customer services, billing and collection associates work from home some or all the time (although others do not). (Johnson & Tubaya 2010)
- Marriott’s Global Reservation Sales and Customer Care Center, a 24/7 call center with 200 sales agents in Salt Lake City, ran a highly successful pilot to hire 90 customer service reps in rural areas. Training and team meetings are held virtually. (Corporate Voices n.d.)
- PNC Financial Services Group, a bank with 2,500 branches and 59,000 employees, hires part-time telework employees to respond to customer inquiries by email. Half the team teleworks at all times; the other half uses a combination of flexible starting and stopping times, telework and compressed workweeks. (Corporate Voices n.d.)

- The Kentucky Orthopedic Rehab Team, a physical therapy management company that owns and operates 43 outpatient clinics and over 250 employees in Kentucky and Indiana, offers telecommuting to its marketing department employees. (Swanberg, Loeffler & Werner 2007)
- The MITRE Corporation, a government contractor with 7,000 employees, allows workers at all levels to choose from a variety of flex options, including telecommuting. (Giglio n.d.)
- Cisco Systems offers telework; more than 90% of employees use the residential broadband services, allowing them to telework at least part of the time. (Giglio n.d.)
- At Alpine Access, a customer service call center for a national financial institution, all staff work from home. (Giglio n.d.)
- At PNC Financial Services Group, telework in the collections department began as a pilot due to lack of office space, and in response to requests from employees with long commutes. Teleworkers work at the office once a month to meet with their supervisor. (Corporate Voices n.d.)
- At Proctor & Gamble, most consumer relations representatives remotely after four to six months, using technology provided by the company. Managers monitor the quality and volume of calls, emails and letters answered. Teleworkers usually come to the Proctor & Gamble offices once or twice a month, using shared hotelling spaces. (Corporate Voices n.d.)
- At Proctor & Gamble, administrative assistants telework. Generally, policy limits telework to 50% of the employee's schedule, but entire organizations (e.g., Consumer Relations) and remote or field-based situations allow for increased use of

telework. Admins who are part of a team coordinate so that at least one person is in the P & G office on any given day. Everyone comes in for team meetings. (Corporate Voices n.d.)

- Kodak offers job telework; all employees are eligible to apply. (McGuire & Brashler n.d.)

“Currently there is room at the Proctor and Gamble office for [only] about 60% of the consumer relations representatives.”

Hold a summit for employers to explore the business drivers of work-life fit and share effective practices

Local groups of employers, human resource professionals, or NGOs can hold a summit at which employers learn about today's workforce, best practices and, most important, can informally compare their rates of turnover and attrition with those attained by their competitors. Employers with sky-high turnover rates often now believe those rates are unavoidable—whereas often just down the road, another employer has a sharply lower turnover rate due to scheduling practices that better match its workforce. Researchers at the University of Chicago worked with Leadership Greater Chicago, a nonprofit organization committed to civic leadership, to host a working group on Lower-Level Jobs. The Puget Sound Share the Success initiative included attention to improving work-life fit for grocery workers by giving them more advance notice of schedules: www.sharethesuccess.org. (Lambert 2009a) Appendix D provides a handout that can be used at the summit.

Eliminate the flexibility stigma

Only 28% of low-wage workers strongly believe they could use flexible work arrangements without jeopardizing advancement. (Bond & Galinsky 2006) A study of call center employees found that hourly workers were more likely than salaried ones to use formal work-family policies, but that workers with the best performance ratings had not used them.

“I absolutely would say that the biggest impediment to [flexibility] is management’s attitude...cultural change in thinking that they don’t have to be sitting next to you for them to be supervised....[It’s] the old story of the Indians that attacked the Northeastern village, and they killed everyone who had their door locked. The family who had their door open they left alone. It’s just kind of a trust. So I think when you trust them, they reciprocate that trust. It builds huge loyalty.”

(Wharton, Chivers & Blair-Loy 2008) This may mean that high-performing employees were better able to negotiate informal accommodations, or that employees who formally request flexibility face the “flexibility stigma,” which can negatively affect those who use workplace flex. (Williams, Blair-Loy & Berdahl 2010)

The first step in eliminating the flexibility stigma is to ensure that relevant scheduling information is widely available. “Information isn’t openly available, and it’s hard to get a flexible schedule,” said one woman in an hourly job, even in a company that

strongly supports flexibility. (Corporate Voices n.d., p. 80) Yet the five companies surveyed, all leaders in the field of workplace flexibility, clearly had made substantial inroads towards eliminating the flexibility stigma. Fully 70% of those surveyed reported that their manager was supportive of flexibility, and 68% said their peers were supportive. One key to eliminating the flexibility stigma is to ensure that offering flexibility to some workers is not achieved by dumping unwanted extra work on others. Again, these best-practice companies have avoided this common problem: 66% of those surveyed said that their peers do not have a heavier workload because they used flexibility. (Corporate Voices n.d.)

A key issue for hourly workers is the tradition of close supervision, which may lead to stigma if managers resist flexibility for hourly workers because they are apprehensive about the lack of control. In one heated session in a workplace that was adopting the Results Only Work Environment (ROWE), in which employees’ comings and goings are not monitored as long as they get their work done, a woman in an hourly administrative position asked, “Can you, as a salaried person, trust us?” Her senior manager said that “hourly workers need to be here to support us”—to which she shot back, “but you’re not going to be here anyway [under ROWE]!” No one said anything for several seconds. (Kelly, Ammons, Chermack & Moen 2010, p. 294) Two departments withdrew from ROWE because high-status professionals opposed it. One exempt worker stated her view that these managers would not “let their nonexempt [employees] utilize ROWE. They want or need them here 8 to 5.” (Kelly, Ammons, Chermack & Moen 2010, p. 297) Training is needed to help managers of hourly workers to rethink these assumptions.

Train supervisors and managers

Many studies document the importance of supervisor support in helping employees balance work and family. (Hammer, Kossek, Yragui, Bodner & Hanson 2009) The sociological literature shows

“My managers are going to call me or send me an email or instant message me. Why do I need to be in the office? It doesn’t matter if I’m here or at home.”

that employers can engender tremendous loyalty when employees feel their supervisor is supportive of their need to balance family responsibilities with work responsibilities. Kim, a cocktail waitress and mother of two young children, described why she stayed at a job with no benefits that paid just \$7/hour plus tips, because of her supervisor:

I couldn’t ask for anybody better as far as, I mean, that’s why I’m still there. I have no medical benefits, I have no paid vacations, I have no sick days or anything like that. But there’s not too many jobs out there that are so lenient, either...I could call him up and say, “John, I’m just exhausted, I’m tired. I didn’t sleep very well last night. I’m going to be an hour late.” “OK, well just don’t crash on your way here”...he’s great. And he’s done the kid thing you know, and he’s older. I mean, he understands. (Weigt 2008, p. 636)

Another woman, Maria, described how grateful she was to a supervisor who let her switch her hours to daytime from evenings, so she could pick up her son from day care at 5:30 p.m.: “My manager, she’s real cool about everything. You know, you just have to tell her what you need and whatever...she respects a lot of us, you know?... But she’s always like, ‘You

know your family comes first. You have to take care of them first.’” (Henly, Shaefer & Waxman 2006, p. 626). A supervisor explained her employees were flexible with her because she was flexible with them. “They are the best. They would do anything I ask within reason. They’ve proven it, people need time off for family matters and they can get it, no questions,” said a 33-year-old shop supervisor. (Perry-Jenkins, Bourne & Meteyer 2007b)

In this context, it is surprising that only 36% of employers offer work-life training to managers of hourly workers, according to one study. (Litchfield, Swanberg & Sigworth 2004) More recent work has identified the specific types of supervisor behaviors that help the most. *Creative work-family management* is pro-active, and involves redesigning jobs to improve work-life fit. *Instrumental support* is reactive, and concerns a supervisor’s routine reactions in handling employees’ day-to-day work-family conflicts. *Emotional support* involves having supervisors make sure their reports feel comfortable talking to them about work-family conflicts, taking the time to find out their reports’ family and personal commitments, talking with one’s reports, and responding with sympathy and understanding when work-family conflicts arise. (Hammer, Yragui, Bodner & Hanson 2008; Hammer, Kossek, Yragui, Bodner & Hanson 2009)

Leslie Hammer and Ellen Kossek developed a supervisor training based on this model, and ran small sessions in grocery stores on how to plan coverage and cope with employees’ scheduling conflicts. (Hammer 2010) One study found that employees of the trained supervisors were less likely to state their intention to seek a job elsewhere, and were more willing to comply with safety programs. (Kossek & Hammer 2008)⁵ Employees with high levels of work-family conflict felt less stress and had better physical health. (Hammer, Kossek, Anger, Bodner & Zimmerman in press)

The training program offered that produced these results consisted of a one-time self-paced 30 to 40-minute computer training followed by a 75-minute

face-to-face training; the researchers met with the store director, assistant director, and department heads all together and trained them on the four dimensions of supervisor support, informed them of existing company work-life policies, and had them role play situations where they could provide more behavioral support to employees to enable them to better manage work and family. (L. Hammer,

“An express mail delivery worker, Donna, planned to return to her job on the 6 a.m. to 2 p.m. shift, and had organized child care using the child’s grandmothers, a grandfather and a cousin all providing care on different days. Then two days before she was scheduled to return to work, her supervisor called her to tell her that her new shift was from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., starting the next day. ‘Well, you can imagine,’ she said, ‘I burst into tears, it was hard enough going back in the first place, but 11 to 7, how was I going to manage that?...’ Donna did not feel her supervisor was targeting her. She felt that he hadn’t a clue about child care issues because he had a stay-at-home-wife.”

personal communication to J. Williams, December 27, 2010) Leslie Hammer currently is working with the Portland, Oregon Water Bureau to develop a lower-cost version of this training program with a less extensive face-to-face training component. (Hammer 2010)

C. Two Streams Converge

This section combines two separate literatures. Research by Susan Lambert and her colleagues of just-in-time scheduling opened up a new arena for study; this section explores the cash value of Lambert’s innovative analysis. Meanwhile, work-life advocates have worked with companies to think through how to apply workplace flexibility principles to hourly workers. In this arena, Jennifer Swanberg, Associate Professor and Executive Director Institute for Workplace Innovation at the University of Kentucky, has played a leadership role. This section brings together these two streams of research to enable employers to see at a glance what tools exist—and how the competition is using them.

CONCLUSION

Absenteeism is the scourge of the industrial workplace.

— Roger Abrams, Labor Arbitrator
(Williams 2005, p. 22)

Uncontrolled turnover, combined with high rates of absenteeism, plague employers who often assume that these problems simply are facts of life. They are not. Often they are symptoms of a failure to match today's jobs to the workforce of the 21st century. Gone are the stay-at-home wives who freed workers up to work their shifts and overtime at short notice with the confidence that their children, parents, and ill family members were receiving the kind of care and attention all Americans believe they owe their families.

Schedules that worked well in a workforce of breadwinners married to housewives do not work well today. Informal paper-and-pencil scheduling techniques, performed by frontline managers, today signal a lost business opportunity.

Very recently, on-line scheduling has become so inexpensive that it is accessible even to small employers for a fee of only a few dollars a month per employee. Employers that use this technology effectively will have a powerful competitive edge in the coming decade.

And yet, as always, technology is only part of the picture. Businesses are organizations of people. What really matters is whether employers understand their employees' lives well enough to design schedules that do not place workers in the position of having to choose between their employers' needs and a family member's immediate and pressing need for care. Employers who place workers in that position are bound to be disappointed time and again, as employees put family first. (Williams 2010) The logical solution is to increase schedule effectiveness by designing today's schedules for today's workforce. This report is designed to help.

ENDNOTES

[1] Replacing a worker costs 30% or more of his or her annual salary. So $\$20,000 \times 30\% = \$6,000$ x 300 employees = \$1.8 million. (Disselkamp 2009, p. 141).

[2] Statistics show that children in middle-income families are a little less likely (19.5%) than less affluent families (26.4%) to be in parental care. But middle-income children in parental care are much less likely to have stay-at-home mothers, and are much more likely to be in married-couple families. Thus middle-income children in parental care are much more likely than are lower-income children to be in tag team families. (Williams & Boushey 2010)

[3] Prior reports on WorkLife Law's arbitration database include Joan C. Williams, *One Sick Child Away From Being Fired: When "Opting Out" Is Not an Option* (2006), available at <http://www.worklifelaw.org/pubs/onesickchild.pdf>, and Martin H. Malin, Maureen K. Milligan, Mary C. Still, and Joan C. Williams, *Work/Family Conflict, Union Style: Labor Arbitrations Involving Family Care* (2004), available at <http://www.worklifelaw.org/pubs/conflictunionstyle.pdf>.

[4] The arbitrator reinstated the grievant without back pay and put her on probation, concluding: "[The grievant] felt deeply about her personal obligations and responsibilities as the unwed mother of three children. While understandably her son and daughters may be of paramount importance to her, her employer can insist that she meet reasonable attendance requirements. The grievant can meet those requirements, keep her job and support her children. If she cannot meet those requirements now and in the future, she will lose her job and her children will suffer as a result. It will require great effort on her part to meet her dual responsibilities, but it certainly is worth the effort."

[5] Another study found positive effects for employees with high work-family conflict, but negative effects for employees with low work-family conflict. (Hammer, Kossek, Anger, Bodner & Zimmerman in press) This may be because supervisors gave employees with family responsibilities flexibility at the expense of those without family responsibilities. Effective training can eliminate this counterproductive short-cut.

APPENDIX A

KELLOGG WORKING GROUP ON WORK-LIFE FIT IN LOW-WAGE JOBS

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* * *

The Kellogg Working Group on Work-Life Fit in Low-Wage Jobs was extremely generous in sharing its research and insights with WorkLife Law. Working Group members were not asked to endorse either the analysis or the conclusions of this report. Both reflect the opinions only of the report's author.

APPENDIX B

HIDDEN SCHEDULING STABILITY WORKSHEET

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Demand for your company's service or products may well fluctuate day to day and even hour to hour, resulting in fluctuations in the demand for labor and schedule instability. Yet researchers have found far more stability than many frontline managers recognize. This worksheet provides a methodology to enable supervisor to identify schedule stability that may not be readily apparent.

Identifying sources of schedule stability offers significant business benefits, because instability fuels high rates of absenteeism and turnover, both of which are expensive. (Replacing an hourly work typically costs 150% of annual salary.)

The first step in capitalizing on hidden stability is to recognize it. If you can find sources of hidden stability, and pass it on—by posting schedules further in advance and/or by ensuring that employees are scheduled to work the majority of their hours at the same time or days of the week—you can deliver bottom-line benefits. Here's how:

Step 1: Calculate annual variation in labor demands

- a. What is the maximum number of **weekly** hours for which employees in your department (or area) have been paid over the past year?

Be sure to include any overtime hours or any hours worked by on-call or temporary employees so that you know what your maximum demand for labor has been over the year.

- b. What is the minimum number of **weekly** hours for which employees in your department (or area) have been paid over the past year?

Be sure to include any overtime hours or any hours worked by on-call or temporary employees so that you don't underestimate your demand for labor.

Now, **subtract b from a. $(a-b) = c$** , which is the difference between your peak season and low season

Finally, **divide c by a. $c/a = d$**

"d" is the MAXIMUM amount that overall labor demands vary in your department during the course of a year. For example, if d is .4, this means that labor demands in your department vary at most 40% over the course of a year. If d is .6, this means that labor demands in your department vary at most 60% over the course of a year.

If "d" is less than .5 it means that there is more stability in labor demands for your department than there is instability.

Step 2: Now repeat Step 1 by month(s) or by quarter

Even if "d" (maximum annual variation) is fairly high over the course of a year, there may be a lot of stability in labor demands month to month. Calculate "d" for a set of months (or by quarter). This information should provide you with a better idea of *how much* labor demand peaks and dips during the year.

Again, if “d” is less than .5, it means that there is more stability in your labor demands than there is instability – for the period of time you’re analyzing.

Step 3: Search for additional sources of stability

Below is a set of questions that may help you identify possible sources of stability in labor demands for your department. The idea is to begin to look for stability rather than instability in labor requirements.

1. Does your company have minimum staffing requirements that affect people in your department, e.g., two people in the store at all times, two employees on the press?

For example, in retail settings, someone has to be there to open the doors everyday and to close the register at night. A minimum number of employees are often needed to cover machinery, to answer the phone, or to reduce theft and ensure workplace safety. Are you at least passing this minimum level of stability onto your employees?

2. Are there employees you can put on the schedule who can work where needed, e.g., cashier, stock, customer service or housekeeping, food prep, bar-back?

If so, then you might be able to schedule these particular employees for a certain number of hours every week even though you may need to wait to determine exactly where (in what job) they’ll work each day. If you don’t have employees who can work where needed, you might want to begin cross-training your employees so that you have the flexibility to move employees around and they get the number of hours they want.

Summary

Once you have identified schedule stability, the next step to consider ways to pass this on to those you supervise, by setting more stable schedules, and giving your reports the notice they need to line up child care and care for elders or ill family members. The result will be less absenteeism and turnover, so more of your time can be spent directly serving customers, or helping build the business ways you do not now have time to do as well as you might like.

APPENDIX C

TURNOVER WORKSHEET

Begin by selecting a particular job for analysis. It is also useful to calculate turnover and retention rates separately for specific subgroups of workers such as newly hired workers, workers in part-time and full-time jobs, and higher and lower performing employees.

Can be fiscal or annual year			Monthly Turnover Rate	Cumulative Turnover Rate
MONTH	Number of employees ("EEs") who left during the month	Number of EEs at beginning of month	C/D (number of EEs who left divided by number of EEs at beginning of month)	Sum of monthly turnover
month 1	6	30	20%	20%
month 2	3	24	13%	33%
month 3	4	28	14%	47%
month 4	2	32	6%	53%
month 5	4	31	13%	66%
month 6	4	30	13%	79%
month 7	5	28	18%	97%
month 8	2	26	8%	105%
month 9	1	24	4%	109%
month 10	3	27	11%	120%
month 11	3	32	9%	130%
month 12	6	35	17%	147%
				Annual Cumulative Turnover Rate

			Monthly Retention Rate
MONTH *	EEs in job in Month 1	Number of EEs in job in Month 1 still working in Month 'X'	Number of EEs from Month 1 still working at Month 'X' divided by Number of EEs in Month 1
month 1	200	200	100%
month 2	200	198	99%
month 3	200	186	93%
month 4	200	174	87%
month 5	200	167	84%
month 6	200	165	83%
month 7	200	154	77%
month 8	200	142	71%
month 9	200	135	68%
month 10	200	134	67%
month 11	200	122	61%
month 12	200	118	59%
			Annual Cumulative Retention Rate **

* Can start at any month in year. Useful to calculate retention rates using several different starting months.

** You do not need to calculate monthly retention rates to get the Annual Cumulative Retention Rate. All you need is the Month 12 retention rate.

TURNOVER WORKSHEET—EXPLANATION

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Drawn from S.J. Lambert & J.R. Henly (2010). Retail managers' strategies for balancing business requirements with employee needs: Manager survey results. Report of the University of Chicago Work Scheduling Study.

Monthly Turnover = Number of employees who exit the company during a month divided by the number of jobs

Annual Cumulative Turnover Rate = Sum of monthly turnover rates across the year (fiscal or annual)

Turnover is an exit rate. It is the number of employees who exit the company divided by the number of jobs. One begins by calculating turnover month by month.

EX: If there are 10 employees and 2 leave in January, the turnover rate for January is 20 percent. If 4 employees are hired by the beginning of February and 6 leave that month, the turnover rate for February would be 50 percent (10-2= 8 jobs at end of January, hired 4 employees by beginning of February so 12 jobs. 6 employees left/12 jobs = 50%). At end of February, the

Cumulative Turnover Rate is 70%. If turnover rates continue to be in the range of 20 to 50 percent for the remainder of the year, the turnover in this job would well exceed 100 percent.

Monthly Retention = Proportion of employees in Month 1 who remained with company in Month 2

Annual Retention = Proportion of employees in Month 1 who are still with company in Month 12

Retention is a survival rate. It is the proportion of workers who remain the same month to month.

On the face of it, one might think that if the annual turnover rate is 100 percent or more, none of the employees who were employed in January would be with the company the following December. This would be the case were turnover evenly distributed across the workforce, but in many workplaces, a core group of employees with longer seniority works alongside another group that tends to turn over rapidly, leading to high cumulative turnover rates across the year (Lambert, 2008; Lambert & Waxman, 2005). It is thus possible for a job to have a high rate of turnover as well as a relatively high rate of retention.

Tips for Analyzing Turnover and retention

Who goes? This is the key to costing out turnover. Is it your high performing or low performing employees? Is the problem with turnover concentrated in part-time jobs? Among workers with childcare responsibilities? Among newly-hired workers? You can calculate rates separately for low performing and high performing workers, part-time and full-time workers, and for those hired within the last year. Subgroup analyses are necessary in identifying the costs of turnover.

Who stays? High turnover rates often hide stability in your workforce. Calculating retention rates can thus reveal hidden stability in your lower-level workforce. Calculating retention rates for subgroups of workers can help you identify employees to reward for retention and among whom to target your retention efforts.

APPENDIX D

EXPLORING SCHEDULING ISSUES AMONG LOWER-LEVEL JOBS

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This was “homework” for employers participating in the Leadership Greater Chicago Working Group on Lower-level Jobs. Authors: Susan J. Lambert & Elaine Waxman, University of Chicago.

STEP 1: Start by identifying three different types of key lower-level jobs in your company.

- Think about those that are critical to delivering your products and services. They can include both jobs with lots of customer interface (waiters, cashiers) and “back of the house” jobs (stock, housekeeping).
- Does your organization track turnover by job type? If possible, include at least one job in your analysis that experiences high turnover (or, if statistics aren’t available, ask managers which positions are considered a retention challenge).
- Do you have both “standard” and “nonstandard” jobs at the lower levels? “Standard” jobs are those with typical weekday hours, while “nonstandard” require evenings, weekends or very early morning start times. Some employees might prefer a “nonstandard” schedule because of the flexibility it offers to coordinate child care with a partner, attend school, or work another job. However, nonstandard jobs often present costs to employees that those with standard hours do not – for example, there may be fewer daycare options or limitations on public

transportation. How do the scheduling requirements vary between these? How do the turnover rates vary between these? Try to include both types of jobs in your review if they are present in your company.

STEP 2: Explore the design of your focus jobs in some detail. What is it like to work these jobs?

- **Employee Control or Input into Scheduling:** In what ways can employees provide input to or exercise control over their schedule? Can they declare their availability or do they have a choice of shifts or start/end times? Can they indicate their preferences for overtime or other scheduling changes? Are they allowed to request time off or other scheduling changes in advance? Are employees penalized for last minute changes that may be unavoidable (such as illness or the need to care for a sick child?) If an employee’s availability changes over time, how is this communicated and are efforts made to accommodate changing personal circumstances? Are managers and employees ever asked by the corporate office for their input in scheduling practices and policies? For example, is there an annual employee or manager survey where this is addressed? Do exit interviews provide any insight to scheduling issues?

- **Predictability:** How far in advance do employees in these different types of jobs know their schedule? Is there a difference between “paper” policy on posting and “practice”? For example, is it customary to post three weeks in advance but do last minute changes undermine the advance notice? Is there unscheduled overtime on a frequent basis? If there are seasonal or demand-driven changes in hours, are the parameters well-known to everyone or are fluctuations hard to anticipate? Are employees told in advance that scheduling changes are coming or are they more likely to be sent home early or asked to stay late without notice?
- **Stability:** Does the schedule provide for stability of income? Do the number of hours worked vary from week to week or season to season? Are there significant periods when an employee may experience hours reductions or shift cutting? Are employee benefits predicated on working a certain number of hours in a given period and do employees ever fail to make those hours because of management decisions? Does the company employ any strategies for these jobs that buffer employees somewhat from the changing demands of the business? Are there any practices in use that can help both employees and employers with scheduling challenges – e.g., are employees cross-trained so that they can work in multiple areas?
- **Incentives:** What are the rewards to employees for tenure and reliable performance? Are these rewards accessible to all employees in a job or only those whose personal circumstances provide them with enough of a buffer to hang on during rough periods? Do new employees face scheduling hurdles that may make it

hard to establish a good work record? Are managers rewarded for being responsive to employee needs?

STEP 3: Assess where your company is on the subject of scheduling.

- How much of a concern or priority scheduling is in your company? Are a lot of resources devoted to scheduling? Does it command the attention of site managers and/or senior corporate managers? Does it present challenges or is it a source of best practices?
- How effectively and thoroughly does your company track turnover and its associated costs? Do you experience a lot of “call offs” or “no call, no shows”? Is turnover above desired levels overall or is it excessive in certain jobs/locations?
- What would happen if someone suggested that changes needed to occur in scheduling philosophy or practices? What information would be needed to generate a meaningful discussion?

STEP 4: Come prepared to share what you’ve learned!

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Sources for Quotes

Note: In certain instances, quotes that appear in pull-out boxes within the report do not appear in the report text. The sources for these quotes, identified by the page in the report on which they appear, are listed below. All quotes not listed here are cited within text of the report.

p. 4 – “I told my manager that if he keeps letting me work from home, I’m not going anywhere.” Administrative assistant (Corporate Voices n.d., p. 66)

p. 5 – “If you don’t allow flexibility, you’re going to get a workforce that you may not want. Because...folks will find a company that will really work with them.” (Corporate Voices n.d., p. 51)

- p. 13 – “Without flexibility, I wouldn’t be able to work here. If they needed me to be here until six, I couldn’t because I’m a single mother.” Teacher at a child care center (Corporate Voices n.d., p. 20)
- p. 20 – “[Flexibility] has benefitted five generations of my family. I began [working from home] to help my mother get my grandparents to medical appointments. So that helped my grandparents and my parents. And [I helped] my sister’s children with emergency daycare because I was at home, and then my husband and our children. We have grandchildren now that, because of this program, we’re able to help with after-school care. Literally, it’s helped five generations.” (Johnson & Tubaya 2010)
- p. 27 – “Many managers we spoke with were shocked. They have never thought about the fact that, if associates’ hours only vary by three hours from week to week, it makes sense to post the bulk of the hours in advance, and deal later with scheduling the three variable hours of out of, perhaps, 200.” (Lambert 2010, Nov. 1)
- p. 31 – *Business benefits of flexwork: Johnson Storage & Moving Co.* (Johnson & Tubaya 2010)
- p. 32 – “I’ve noticed with the compressed [workweek], the attendance level is better.” (Corporate Voices n.d., p. 51)
- p. 33 – “[Flexibility] saves us money by reducing turnover. The majority of the work-from-home folks have been with the company for longer than 20 years. I would guess that if we had to replace any of our work-from-home people, it would cost, in turnover, retraining, all of it, a minimum of \$60,000 in the first 12 months.” (Johnson & Tubaya 2010)
- p. 33 – “Let’s try this for a month, everybody having the opportunity to start a half hour earlier, but you understand that we’re doing this as a month trial. If it’s not working, then we’re either going to go back to the old hour or we’re going to go back to the split shift.’ And they found that it worked, and just gradually it evolved into a little bit more, but everything was done on a one-month trial.” (Corporate Voices n.d., p. 55)
- p. 34 – “The fact that I do have people coming in earlier...is a benefit since the system is now up on a normal basis very early.” (Corporate Voices n.d., p. 49)
- p. 39 – “If they didn’t have shift trade then a lot of people would probably have a lot more absenteeism.” (Corporate Voices n.d., p. 30)
- p. 39 – “You can sign up on the computer and say, ‘This is my shift—I need the day off’ Someone can go in and say, ‘Oh, I can work those hours’ and they pick up your shift.” (Corporate Voices n.d., p. 39)
- p. 41 – “Nothing gets done around here between 3 and 3:30 when all the moms are calling up to check and see that their kids got home safely from school.” (Dodson, Manuel & Bravo 2002, p. 10)
- p. 42 – “It was taking this toll on my son...I couldn’t take one day off to go on a field trip....I wasn’t there for him.” (Dodson & Bravo 2005, p. 9)
- p. 44 – “Every day, [she] comes in late five minutes, and the manager speaks to her. She’s said, ‘I know, but it’s my bus.’ The manager says, ‘As opposed to me taking you down the path of corrective action, let’s adjust your schedule.’” (Corporate Voices n.d., p. 51)
- p. 45 – “Employees can handle 50% more cases per day when teleworking, which is attributed to the lack of distractions and interruptions when working from home, as well as the increased motivation for high performance in order to continue the flexible practices.” (Corporate Voices n.d., p. 48)
- p. 46 – “Currently there is room at the Proctor and Gamble office for [only] about 60% of the consumer relations representatives.” (Corporate Voices n.d., p. 63)
- p. 47 – “I absolutely would say that the biggest impediment to [flexibility] is management’s attitude...cultural change in thinking that they don’t have to be sitting next to you for them to be supervised....[It’s] the old story of the Indians that attacked the Northeastern village, and they killed everyone who had their door locked. The family who had their door open they left alone. It’s just kind of a trust. So I think when you trust them, they reciprocate that trust. It builds huge loyalty.” (Johnson & Tubaya 2010)
- p. 48 – “My managers are going to call me or send me an email or instant message me. Why do I need to be in the office? It doesn’t matter if I’m here or at home. (Corporate Voices n.d., p. 64)
- p. 49 – “An express mail delivery worker, Donna, planned to return to her job on the 6 a.m. to 2 p.m. shift, and had organized child care using the child’s grandmothers, a grandfather and a cousin all providing care on different days. Then two days before she was scheduled to return to work, her supervisor called her to tell her that her new shift was from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., starting the next day. ‘Well, you can imagine,’ she said, ‘I burst into tears, it was hard enough going back in the first place, but 11 to 7, how was I going to manage that?...’ Donna did not feel her supervisor was targeting her. She felt that he hadn’t a clue about child care issues because he had a stay-at-home-wife.” (Perry-Jenkins, Bourne & Meteyer 2007, p. 14)

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About the Author

Joan C. Williams is a distinguished professor, the 1066 Foundation Chair, and founding director of the Center for WorkLife Law at the University of California, Hastings College of the Law. She is the author of co-author of seven books and over seventy scholarly articles, including one listed in 1996 as one of the most cited law review articles ever written. Her book *UnBending Gender: Why Family and Work Conflicts and What To Do About It* (Oxford, 2000) won the Gustavus Myers Outstanding Book Award. Her most recent book is *Reshaping the Work-Family Debate: Why Men and Class Matter*. (Harvard, 2010) Williams' reports documenting work-family conflict in nonprofessional families are *Work-Family Conflict, Union Style* (2004)(with Martin H. Malin, Mary C. Still & Maureen Milligan); *One Sick Child Away From Being Fired: When Opting Out is Not an Option* (2006); and *The Three Faces of Work-Family Conflict: The Poor, the Professionals and the Missing Middle* (2010)(with Heather Boushey of the Center for American Progress). Williams has run four working groups bringing social scientists together with lawyers. The first founded the study of "maternal wall" bias in social psychology, and led to a special issue of the *Journal of Social Issues* (2004) (edited by Monica Biernat, Faye Crosby & Joan C. Williams) that won the Distinguished Publication Award of the Association of Women in Psychology. Follow her on her Huffington Post blog. The WorkLife Law website is www.worklifelaw.org.

Penelope Huang is research sociologist at the Center for WorkLife Law, where her research focuses on gender equity, work-life issues, and family economic well-being. Much of her current work focuses on work-life challenges and strategies among in-house attorneys. Huang received her PhD from the University of Washington and has taught sociology courses in gender, family, and research methods at Mills College and Sonoma State University. She also conducts evaluation research at Applied Survey Research where her work focuses on addressing the needs of vulnerable populations.

About the Center for WorkLife Law

The Center for WorkLife Law, www.worklifelaw.org, is a research and advocacy organization that works with six sets of stakeholders—employers and their lawyers, employees and their lawyers, policymakers, and unions—to fuel social and organizational changes around work-life issues. The Center is part of the University of California, Hastings College of the Law in San Francisco.