

# Has Flex Work Gone Too Far?



We have all read the benefits of flex work and telework, but is there a point of diminishing returns?

As an HR professional and a mother of two young children I fully understand and agree with many of the benefits of flexible work arrangements such as employee retention, work life balance, cost savings and in certain circumstances improved productivity but it has a dark side as well. How about when a Fortune 500 CEO makes a business decision to change their policy to improve business performance and it makes headlines in every major paper, or when employees get caught moonlighting on company time and your organization can't terminate them for cause or when you walk into a local coffee shop only to have the guy sitting next to you all set up with his hard drive, computer keyboard, mouse, 23" monitor and talking loudly on a business call?

As CEOs and managers, can we no longer make employee schedule decisions or hold our employees accountable for their time on the clock? On our time off, can we no longer go to a coffee shop for a coffee without having someone's office clearly operating out of the table next to us? (Are you sure you really want the public at large overhearing every phone call your employees make?)

Flexible business arrangements are a business decision, not a gender or family status issue and they are not an entitlement.

If your company does encourage flex work, it can be a great thing but make sure: It is on your terms, it is the right business decision at the right time for your organization and is executed as such.

- Decide in advance how you will measure business performance
- Where and when you expect the work to be done
- How you want your business represented in these arrangements

Always reserve the right to revise your policies. After all, it could hit the front page of the paper if you upset your employees.

When the automobile was first invented it was a free for all, there was no speed limit, no road signs or traffic violations but the time came to add some rules and

limits for everyone's protection. The time has arrived to do the same with flex work.

About the author: **Debby Carreau**

For the past 20 years, Debby and inspired HR have been helping teams deliver superior business results by making strategic decisions about human capital. In any industry you can't beat real-world experience, and that's what makes Debby a premier Human Capital consultant in a multitude of business sectors. She uses her experience as a senior leader in operations and Human Resource Management to provide pragmatic advice on attracting and retaining top talent, and developing programs and systems to get the most out of your team.