



The Importance of Work/Life Balance

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President George W. Bush

“The family is the foundation of this society ... It's the place where we find deep human fulfillment, and where we find love. It is where character of our nation is shaped, and where values are forged. Families provide us with comfort and encouragement, compassion and hope, mutual support and unconditional love. No family is perfect, but every family is important.”





What is Work/Life?

Work/Life is defined as:

benefits/services/programs that attract, retain and assist employees in *balancing their lives* and *becoming more productive* in the face of *growing work and personal issues*.



The Issue Historically

- ◆ **Work/Life Balance** grew out of 2 very different agendas:
 - Workers and their families' well-being, and
 - Workplace health and productivity.

According to: Work-Life Balance: A Report to Ministers responsible for Labour in Canada, February, 2002



Increased Recognition

- ◆ **Costs of work/life imbalance**
 - Workplace injury rates
 - General health of workers
 - Development and well-being of children
 - Well-being of aging parents

According to: Work-Life Balance: A Report to Ministers responsible for Labour in Canada, February, 2002



Increased Recognition

- ◆ Triggered a need to understand
 - The impact of stress associated with work environments
 - The competing responsibilities of working individuals

According to: Work-Life Balance: A Report to Ministers responsible for Labour in Canada, February, 2002



Work/Life Statistics

- According to the *US Department of Labor*- 72% of absenteeism is due to child-care related issues
- Approximately 42% of workers will provide some form of elder care by 2002-*Families and Work Institute*
- 57% of the class of 1999 graduating business students in 11 countries said that attaining work/life balance is their top career goal-
PricewaterhouseCoopers survey 2000

*According to the Center for Ethical Business Cultures



Work/Life Statistics

- When asked what their number one concern was about their career in 2002, 32% of respondents said work/life balance. This was followed by job security at 22% and competitive salary at 18%- *Office Team Specialized Administrative Staffing Survey 2002*

*According to the Center for Ethical Business Cultures



Demographic Trends

➤ Women and Work

- ❖ 46% of the employed labor force
- ❖ 75% of women 25-54 years
- ❖ 62% of mothers of children < 3yrs

- ❖ 72% of women work full time



Demographic Trends

Families and work

- ❖ 73% of 2-parent families are dual earners; most often both work full time
- ❖ 18% single parent families
 - 74% of single mothers with school-age children employed
- ❖ Changing Work Patterns and Work Hours Affect Employees and Family Life



Labor Market Trends

- **Work intensification; Workload issues (Do “more with less”)**
- **Quality of Work a critical issue**
- **Employees (all ages, both men and women) desiring more work/life balance**



Labor Market Trends

- **Baby boomers approaching retirement**
- **Increasing proportion of older workers**
- **More employees with an aging parent; 15% in sandwich generation**
- **Competitive recruitment in health, government, construction, senior management**



Labor Market Trends

- Baby boomers “Live to Work”
- X’ers “Work to Live”



Demographic Trends

Population Aging

- In 2000, 12% of pop 65+ ... by 2026 more than 20%
- Increased longevity
- Continuing low fertility rates

- The Caregiving Crunch (The “Sandwich” Generation)



Increased Stress Conflict

Major studies are consistent:

- Work-life conflict has increased over the decade
- Employees' mental health has declined
- Employees' attitudes to work are deteriorating

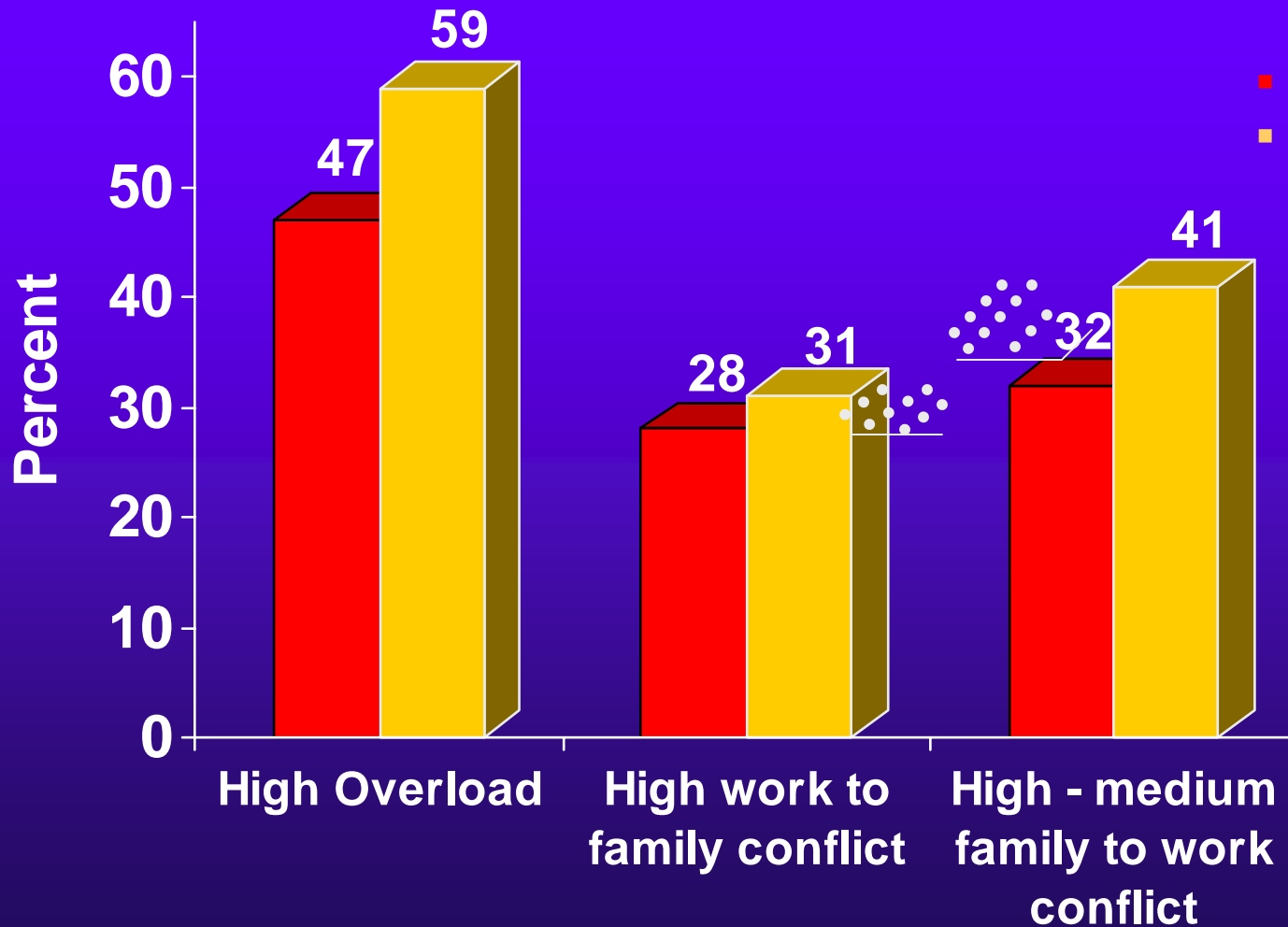


Increased Stress Conflict

Major studies are consistent:

- More job stress
- Less job satisfaction and commitment

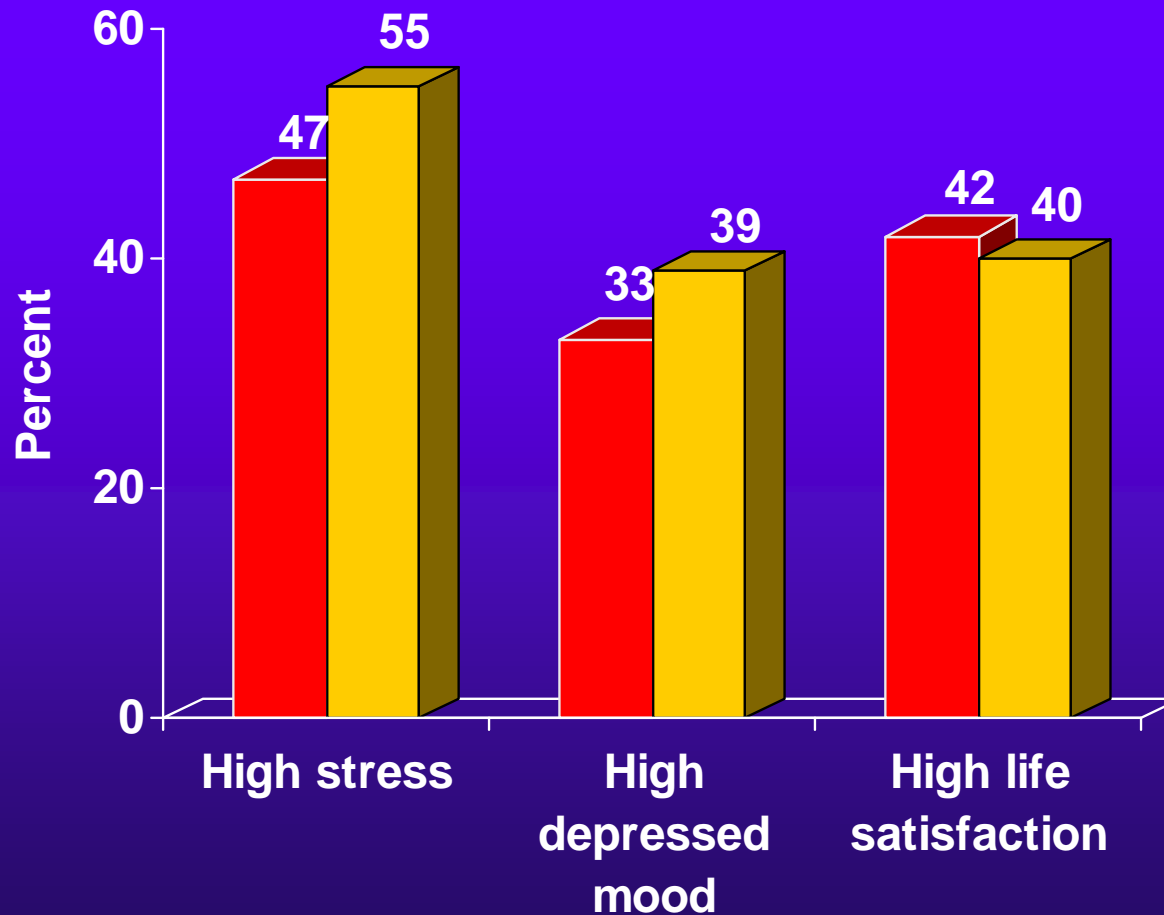
Role Overload and Conflict Between Work and Family 1991, 2001



Source: Duxbury & Higgins, 2001

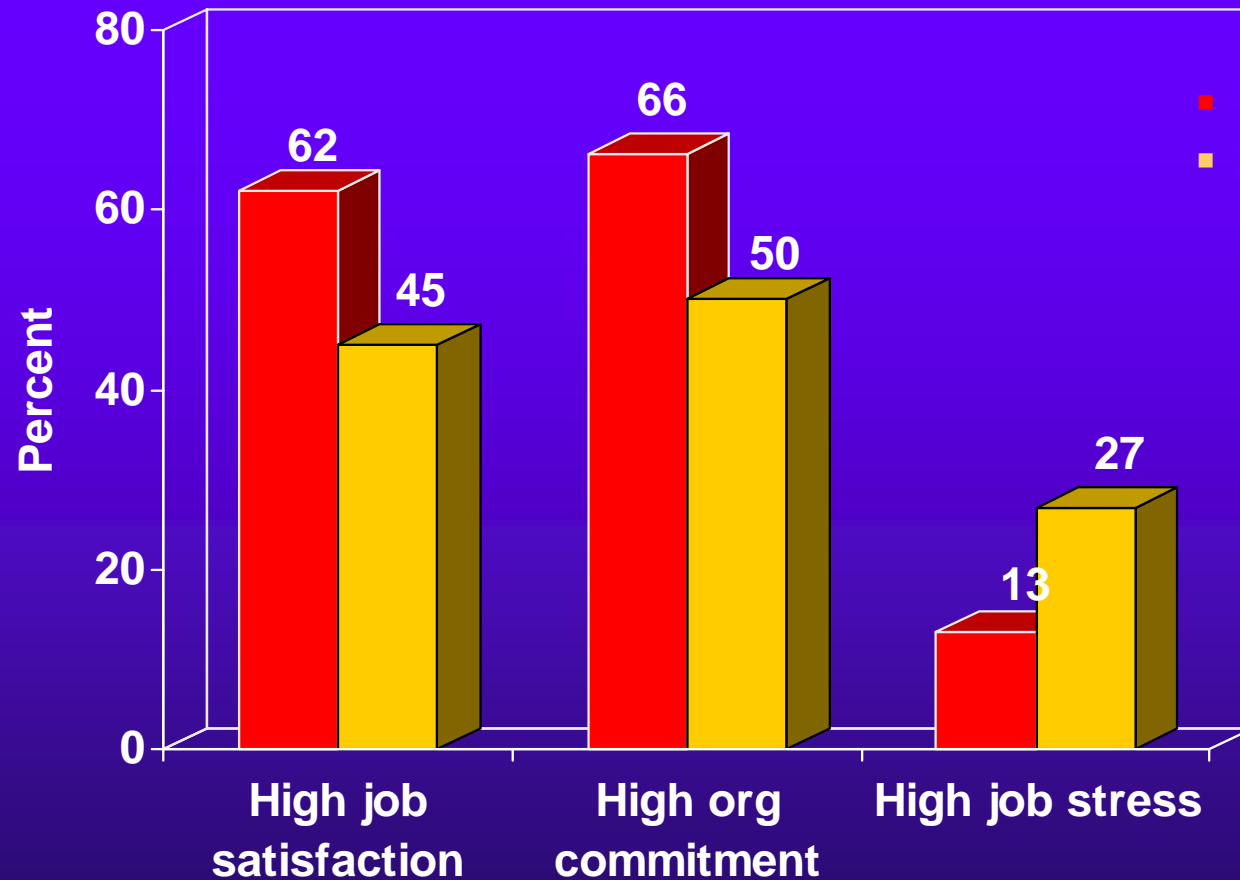


Change in Key Mental Health Outcomes Over Time 1991, 2001



Source: Duxbury & Higgins, 2001

Employee Attitudes and Outcomes: 1991, 2001



Source: Duxbury & Higgins, 2001



Evidence of the Costs of Work-Life *Imbalance*

- **Costs to employees**
 - Individually and as family members
- **Costs to employers**
 - Conflicts between home and work costs approx. \$16 billion/year due to absenteeism and disability costs, turnover, Recruitment and replacement, lost productivity
- **Costs in quality of care provided**
- **Less time in volunteering, social relationships**



The Top 2 HR issues

- Recruiting the “Best of the Best” talent
- Retaining the “Best of the Best” talent

Work/Life programs can help!



How can W/L Programs help?*

- Reduce the cost of doing business
- Attract and hold talent
- Increase productivity
- Strengthen employee commitment
- Build a positive image in the marketplace
- Improve access to a broader resource pool
- Strengthen families and society

*According to the Center for Ethical Business Cultures



Ensuring Life-Work Balance

- ◆ Work should be enjoyable, a positive experience and contribute to the overall well-being of all workers
- ◆ Workers should not be damaged by their day to day experiences in the workplace
 - Working Time
 - Work-rate demands
 - Working conditions
 - Worker contribution to consultation on processes
 - Workers' personal needs should be recognized



Ensuring Life-Work Balance

- ◆ Employers need to ensure a balance between work demands and worker capabilities
- ◆ **OUTCOME?** Goodwill and positive contributions



Ensuring Life-Work Balance

- ◆ Avoidance of the *“leave your baggage at home”* culture
- ◆ Preserve the workforce rather than rejecting it (inclusiveness)
- ◆ Fit the work to the worker not the worker to the work



Ensuring Life-Work Balance

- ◆ **Creating an acceptable framework within which the worker and the workplace/business can benefit**
 - Job-Sharing, Part-time working with no detrimental treatment
 - Flex-time
 - Working from home
 - Telecommuting



Ensuring Life-Work Balance

- ◆ **Benefits to be gained from family friendly approaches**
 - Better reputation as an employer with good equality status and recognition
 - Happier workforce with less anxiety
 - Potential to reduce absences
 - Improved productivity and shareholder benefits
 - Goodwill from the workforce



Healthy Initiatives as part of W/L

- A workplace that offers programs that support positive health decisions as a component of Work/Life Programs has much more to gain.
 - Higher levels of job satisfaction;
 - Reduced health care costs;
 - Greater loyalty to their companies; and
 - Stronger intention to remain with their companies



Family-Friendly Programs

- ◆ **Alternative Work Schedules**
 - 5/4-9
 - 4/10
- ◆ **Child Care Resources**
 - Child Care subsidy program
 - Web-based resource and information directory
 - Nursing Mother's Program
 - Adoption Options
 - Expectant Parent's Package



Family-Friendly Programs

- ◆ **Employee Assistance Program**
 - On-site Counseling
 - Comprehensive web-based resources and referrals
 - On-line self assessments
- ◆ **Telecommuting**
 - Telecenters
 - Home Office Support
- ◆ **Family Medical Leave Act**
 - Expanded Family-Friendly Benefits



Family-Friendly Programs

- ◆ **Leave Donor Programs**
 - Leave Bank
 - Leave Transfer
- ◆ **Health Units**
- ◆ **Health Club Memberships**
- ◆ **Transit Benefits**



Family-Friendly Programs

- ◆ **Health and Wellness Promotion**
 - Health Fair
 - Holiday Programs
 - Brown Bag
 - Healthy Initiatives and Programs
- ◆ **Career Resources Center**
- ◆ **Elder Care Resource Package**



Top 5 Work/Life Programs*

Top “5” Recession-Proof Work/Life Benefits:

1. Elder Care-Referrals
2. Alternative Work Arrangements-
Telework, Flextime, Job Sharing
3. Employee Assistance Programs
4. Child Care-Referrals
5. Resources and Referral Services

*According to the AWLP- Work/Life Today 2004 Survey



Other Top Issues*

- Flexible Spending Accounts
- Family Leave
- Management Training
- Adoption Assistance
- Community Outreach
- Wellness Programs

*According to Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), June 2003