

WORKING
MOTHER

The Working Mother Report

What
moms think

CAREER vs. PAYCHECK



Working Mother Media's groundbreaking new research *What Moms Think: The Working Mother Report* is the latest chapter in the Working Mother 100 Best Companies' 25-year history of championing culture change. This in-depth and insightful report challenges common-held beliefs about working mothers, their managers, their partners and their families — all with the ultimate goal of making all employers more family friendly. Learn about the Working Mother Media Research Institute at workingmother.com/bestcompanies/research

Dear Friends,

I am proud to present the results of our landmark study, *What Moms Think: The Working Mother Report*, a national survey of working moms, women, stay-at-home moms, working fathers and men that marks the 25th anniversary of the Working Mother 100 Best Companies. The study, which was designed to focus attention on work-life and the advancement of women, reveals previously unknown attitudes and ideas about how women feel about their careers, men's views of working mothers, workplace flexibility, the current state of gender roles, and what we all want to get out of work.

The survey findings were nothing short of astonishing. For instance, we learned that moms who view work as a career feel more satisfied, healthy, and fulfilled on almost every measure — on both the work and home front — than moms who say they work for primarily financial reasons... regardless of their salary level. We also learned that in some cases, male managers have a more favorable view of working mothers than the working mothers themselves.

This report would not have been possible without the support of our three sponsors: Ernst & Young, IBM and Procter & Gamble. We thank these companies for their commitment to supporting research that benefits all working mothers nationwide.

We invite you to study this Working Mother Report for an abundance of in-depth revelations regarding the attitudes, opinions, challenges, and motivations affecting working moms.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carol Evans". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "C" and a long, sweeping underline.

Carol Evans
President
Working Mother Media

Welcome!

At Ernst & Young, we are thrilled to be part of the 25th anniversary celebration of the Working Mother 100 Best Companies list. Working Mother Media's role in raising awareness of the tremendous source of talent working mothers represent cannot be overstated. It continues to shine a bright light on the kind of culture working mothers and families need in order to thrive, and to advocate for the tools and benefits leading employers leverage to attract, retain and develop the careers of working mothers. This report reflects the tremendous progress working mothers and top employers have made in growing the careers of talented women. We know that success emanates from explicit career development opportunities, great role models, the ability to work flexibly and effective teaming. We know that success also hinges on the support that comes from working mothers' colleagues. We thank Working Mother Media for its leadership role in championing the talent pool of working mothers, and for inviting Ernst & Young to take part in this insightful research.

Billie Williamson,
Americas Inclusiveness Officer
Ernst & Young

In today's business environment, employees seek jobs that not only offer financial security, but also have autonomy, meaning and the opportunity for development and advancement. *What Moms Think: The Working Mother Report* further confirms that flexibility is indeed a competitive business tool in the new culture of work. IBM is sponsoring this study because it's an important workplace issue, and we salute each company whose culture embraces flexible work.

Elizabeth J. Smith
IBM General Manager, Global Offering Management & Development
IBM Global Technology Services

Touching and improving the lives of moms is at the core of what we do at P&G. That is why we support both *Working Mother* and the *What Moms Think: The Working Mother Report*, which provides tremendous insights into the desires of working moms. By further understanding the needs of working mothers, we can create a flexible and inclusive culture that fits their lifestyles. We value our partnership with *Working Mother* and want to congratulate them on the 25th anniversary of the Working Mother 100 Best Companies.

Jeffery Smith
Associate Director, Global Diversity & Inclusion
The Procter & Gamble Company

What Moms Think: The Working Mother Report

The way women view their work lives has enormous impact on their attitudes about work and life. In honor of the 25th anniversary of the Working Mother 100 Best Companies, this special national study takes an in-depth look at the challenges still facing working moms, how moms feel about their lives — and what men *still* don't understand about working mothers.

INTRODUCTION

A quarter century ago, working mothers found their collective voice. It came by way of the first annual survey to identify the best companies for working moms. The Working Mother 100 Best Companies has since become the most widely-known arbiter of family-friendly workplaces. Companies that earn a spot on this prestigious list demonstrate deep commitment to the career success of working mothers.

In 1986, *Working Mother* magazine launched its benchmark of family-friendly companies. The annual Best Companies list steadily brought greater attention to the positive impact working mothers were having in the workforce. The list, which grew to 100 in 1992, produced increasing competition for working mothers as a talent source. Thus began a race to be the best in the eyes of working mothers.

Twenty-five years later, millions of working moms have moved from the restroom to the private lactation room. They've narrowed the wage gap. They've achieved the flexibility at work

that brings sanity and enjoyment to their home lives. More new moms get more direct support from their employers (along with more time off to be a new mom). Paid maternity leave has extended to paid paternity leave for new dads along the way. And while the glass ceiling isn't yet shattered, it certainly has a lot more cracks in it.

The policies of organizations on the Working Mother 100 Best Companies have had a profound impact on millions of workers. This initiative continues to set the bar for companies that strive to be world-class employers in the minds of working families.

To acknowledge the 25th anniversary of the Working Mother 100 Best Companies, the Working Mother Research Institute fielded a different kind of survey. We, of course, wanted to know how working moms see things today. But we also wanted the view from the people they work with: working women without kids, male colleagues (fathers and not), and their managers. With support from Ernst & Young, IBM and Procter & Gamble, we reached more than 4,600



women and men nationwide. We surveyed perceptions of and about working mothers on a range of issues that surround both work and family life.

Some of our findings will surprise you. They will also educate you on the variety of views when it comes to working mothers. And it will give you useful insight to help provide the best environment for working mothers, so they can provide their best for your company.

A JOB OR A CAREER? WHY IT MATTERS.

The attitude difference

“Attitude determines altitude.”
- Anonymous

The way women view their employment situation has enormous implications for their attitudes about work and life. When women self-identify themselves as having a career, they report being more satisfied and feeling more positive in every area.

For example, their satisfaction with career prospects is twice as high as women who say they just work for the money. They are also much more likely to feel a match between their job interests and the work they do.

Career-oriented working mothers are also more satisfied with their decision to work, the opportunity they have to develop skills, the level of respect they perceive at work, and the support they get from their managers in meeting family and home demands.

This positive attitude extends to family matters, too. Career-oriented women feel more respected at home and say their spouses are more helpful in caring for children and managing the household. They also feel more positive about their childcare arrangements. Plus, they are more likely to report feeling healthy, that their life is in balance and that their work fulfills a higher purpose than “just making money.”

The downside for career-oriented mothers is that they are more likely to feel they can’t get away from work, and more likely to think that managers and co-workers question their commitment.

Career-oriented women feel more respected at home and say their spouses are more helpful.

(As it turns out, moms don't need to sweat the perceptions of working fathers and male managers; more on this later.)

So what contributes to a woman labeling her work as a career versus a job? You might surmise that higher-paid women all see themselves as having a career. But more than half of these career-oriented moms earn less than \$50,000. The belief in one's career seems to come from common opportunities among women to grow and advance, to feel supported and respected, and to believe that work fulfills a more meaningful purpose than just making money.

IMPLICATIONS FOR EMPLOYERS

Positive attitudes can yield positive business outcomes

Research confirms the connection between employee attitudes and business success. The Corporate Leadership Council, for example, found that every 10 percent improvement in commitment can increase an employee's level of discretionary effort by 6 percent and performance by 2 percent.¹ Field research and case studies abound of employers reaping benefits including improved attraction and retention, greater productivity, reduced absentee-

ism and improved customer service and satisfaction.²

Certainly, having a good attitude going into any type of work benefits both the employer and the employed. But what is it that successful companies do to nurture a positive attitude among working mothers whose lives can be stressful?

Our survey shows that building a sense that a woman's work is more than just a job is critical. It doesn't so much matter if the job is cashier at a retail store or sales executive for a global tech company. What matters is that the working mom sees that her employment offers her:

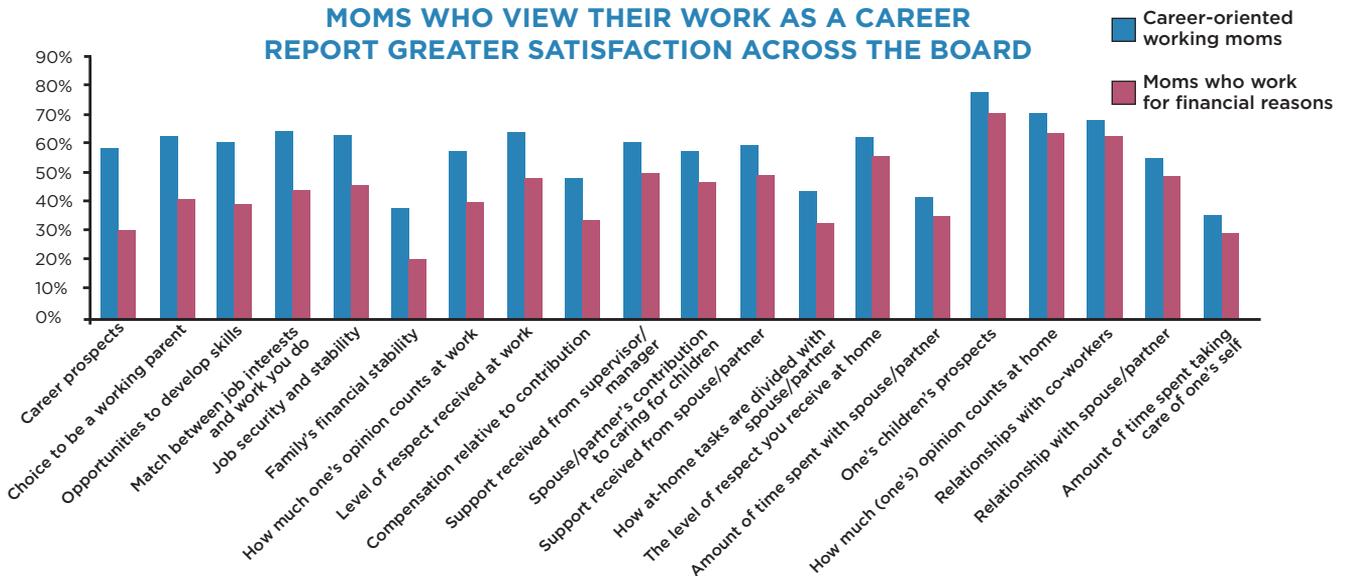
- Career prospects
- Opportunities to develop skills
- Support from managers in meeting home and family demands
- Respect for her contributions
- The sense that her work fulfills a higher purpose

Successful employers offer clear information on job-progression opportunities and the needed training to prepare employees to advance their careers. Managers who model behavior that supports life outside of work will see it reflected among their teams. A feedback-rich culture helps people

¹ Urban Institute. *The Business Case for Flexible Work Arrangements*. 2010.

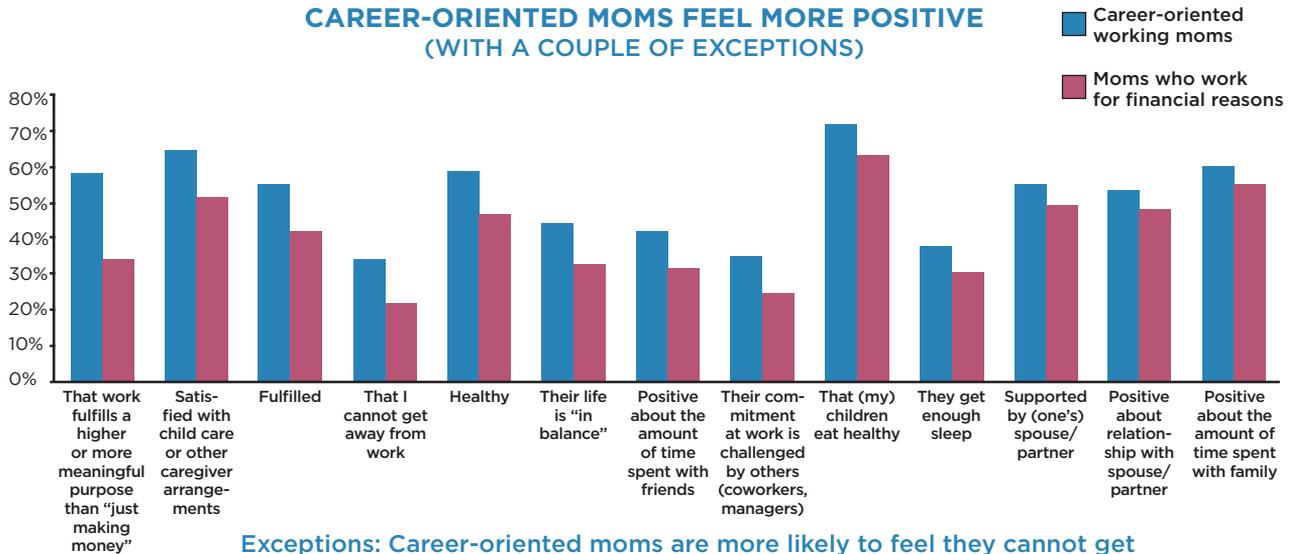
² See, for example, Women on Business. *The Business Case for Building Flexible Work Cultures-Series Part II*, October 2010; and Sylvia Ann Hewlett for Harvard Business Review. *In Hard Times, Re-Commit to Flex Time*. October 2009.

MOMS WHO VIEW THEIR WORK AS A CAREER REPORT GREATER SATISFACTION ACROSS THE BOARD



Percentage tending to or strongly agreeing

CAREER-ORIENTED MOMS FEEL MORE POSITIVE (WITH A COUPLE OF EXCEPTIONS)



Exceptions: Career-oriented moms are more likely to feel they cannot get away from work and that their commitment to work is challenged

Percentage marking 4 or 5 (Very Frequently) on Frequency scale

Source: What Moms Think: The Working Mother Report

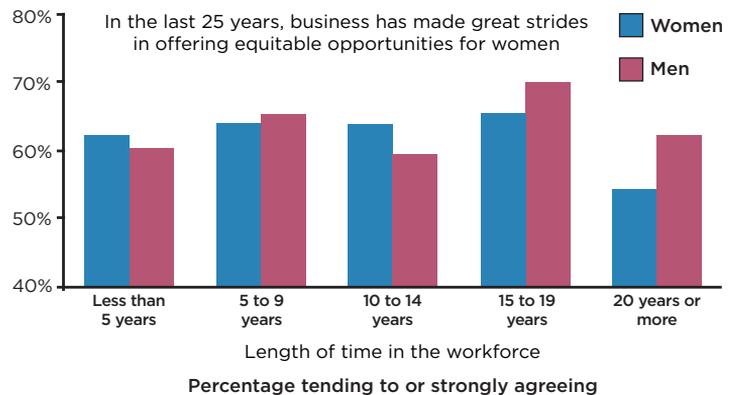
recognize when their contributions are valued and when there are things that could be improved.

It's not just a job

You might wonder how positions that could otherwise be seen as "just jobs" can provide a sense of fulfilling a higher purpose. It doesn't have to come from the title or position. It can come from working for an organization that is involved in its local community or one that is known for its commitment to corporate responsibility. It can come from working for an organization whose "brand" is known and respected.

It can also come from actively engaging employees in making important business decisions. For example, Working Mother 100 Best Company Tri-Health, a Cincinnati-based healthcare system, uses "Shared Leadership Committees" to engage front-line nurses in evaluating processes and proposing efficient alternatives. Says one nurse on the committee, "Being a part of [the committee] gives me the knowledge that I do have the power to make a difference. ... We have a voice, and there are many things we can change."

HAS BUSINESS MADE PROGRESS IN OFFERING EQUITABLE OPPORTUNITIES TO WOMEN?



- Women who have been in the workforce for 20+ years are least likely to agree
- Men who have been in the workforce less than 15 years views are compatible with women of the same age
- Men working longer than 15 years views are most disconnected from women's

Source: What Moms Think: The Working Mother Report

Screening for attitude is an important factor in the hiring process. Beyond that, having the right elements in place to make a job feel like a career (even when it might not seem to be in others' minds) can go a long way in engaging working mothers.

WHERE DO MEN STAND? IT DEPENDS ON WHERE THEY SIT.

Men see moms favorably — if they are dads

It's probably no big surprise that working fathers have favorable perceptions about the contributions of working mothers. It's logical that the shared experience of raising children would have an impact on their views.

But what about working men who aren't fathers? Their perceptions are far less favorable than those of men with kids. Compared to fathers, men without children rate working mothers as far less likely to:

- Be committed to career advancement
- Take on additional work
- Be committed to job responsibilities
- Be willing to do whatever it takes to get the job done
- Take stretch assignments
- Reliably deliver quality work
- Be prepared for promotion

Working women with no children share some of their male counterparts' harsher views of working mothers.

Their perceptions are similar to men with no kids on working mothers' likelihood to take on additional work, take stretch assignments and be committed to career advancement.

These judgments are of the kind working moms dread. Our survey shows that career-oriented working mothers fear their colleagues and managers question their commitment.

But they don't have the whole story.

The male manager: an exceptional ally

Among all groups surveyed, male managers — regardless of whether they have



children — hold the most favorable perceptions of working mothers. On several items, they hold more positive perceptions than even working mothers do. For example, more male managers agree that working moms:

- Are likely to take on additional work (+6%)
- Will travel for work (+16%)
- Take stretch assignments (+10%)
- Are committed to career advancement (+8%)
- Would relocate if called on to do so (+15%)

The views of male managers with children are more positive than those of male non-managers without children, and are also more positive than working men generally. But why are their perceptions more positive than working mothers' own perceptions? It's possible that working mothers' responses reflect their preferences versus their likelihood of making certain contributions. So, while working mothers may be willing to travel or consider relocating, they may prefer not to. In the same vein, working mothers may only take on positions that require things like travel or relocation if they are definitely willing to do it.

While male managers may be strong workplace advocates for working mothers, their social views stand in stark contrast. For example, 51 percent feel that one parent should stay at home to care for children. However, with today's economic realities and preferences, just one in five of today's families meets this mold.³

Forty-three percent of male managers believe that a mother's work outside the home has a negative effect on her relationships with her children. Most women we surveyed, and a large body of research, would disagree. In fact, statistical and anecdotal evidence shows a strong beneficial effect on working mothers' relationships with their children. The benefits to the kids of working mothers extend to academic performance and social adjustment, as well.⁴ We see this reflected in working mothers' positive attitudes about their children's future;

more than three quarters feel satisfied with their children's prospects.

Perhaps not surprisingly, male managers also see great strides in the availability of equal opportunity for women over the last 25 years. Seventy-three percent of them believe this, but only 58 percent of women agree with them.

IMPLICATIONS FOR EMPLOYERS

A new inclusiveness target?

When comparing men's attitudes toward working mothers, it's reasonable to assume that male managers are in a better position than others to assess a working mother's contributions. So it isn't a big surprise that male managers hold positive regard for working mothers. Indeed, it is commendable that they can set aside their more traditional social notions to equitably assess working mothers' true performance. Still, while not necessarily surprising, the perception gap between male managers and all others is impressive.

These findings suggest that employer efforts at building acceptance and appreciation of working mothers at the manager level are succeeding. It may be time to direct concerted effort toward people without children. Diversity and inclusiveness training could include specific reference to unintended biases people without children may hold. It may be worthwhile to include the message that younger childless workers today may be the working mothers and fathers of tomorrow.

The role of role models

Another remedy to the negative perceptions held by working mothers' colleagues is the existence of positive role models. It's not enough to hang posters that introduce "great working moms" around offices. Companies can actively engage women to support one another — whether or not they are working moms, through existing women's networks.

Exposure to great working moms who are committed to their careers and

While male managers may be strong workplace advocates for working mothers, their social views stand in stark contrast. For example, 51% of male managers feel that one parent should stay at home to care for children.

³ Heather Boushey and Ann O'Leary, *A Woman's Nation Changes Everything*. Executive Summary to the Shriver Report. 2010.

⁴ See Tracey Reynolds, Claire Callender and Rosalind Edwards, *The Impact of Mothers' Employment on Family Relationships*, 2003; American Academy of Pediatrics, *Caring for Your Baby and Young Child: Birth to Age 5*, 2005; Lois Wladis Hoffman, *The Effects of Mother's Employment on the Family and the Child*, 1998.

When flexibility is positioned as a working mother issue, it can wreak havoc on employee attitudes.

their families will help wear away biases of perception.

Flexibility for all

When flexibility is positioned as a working mother issue, it can wreak havoc on employee attitudes. Colleagues may see working mothers as having special status, and feel they are left to pick up the slack. "Developing a culture of 'flexibility for all' has a positive impact on perceptions of fairness," says Billie Williamson, Americas inclusiveness officer at Working Mother 100 Best Company Ernst & Young, the global professional services firm. "It's a problem when one group of employees is seen as having something others don't. So when everyone can work flexibly when needed, the tension goes away."

The effectiveness of teaming

Effective teaming is also important in building positive relationships and perceptions. When teams work together to determine how best to serve their clients or customers, everyone has input in how the work is going to get done. Teams can identify one another's needs for flexibility and work around them together.

Working Mother 100 Best Company First National Bank, based in Memphis, introduced a new manager assimilation program in 2009 that focuses on effective teaming. Through one- to two-day sessions, teams provide the new manager with information about themselves and the work they do, and learn about each others' operating styles and expectations.

People on effective teams better understand each other as individuals and are better able to recognize each other's contributions.

FLEXIBILITY STARTED WITH WORKING MOMS. WHERE IS IT NOW?

"We're really in the middle of something like an industrial revolution. But it's a work-time revolution."

— Phyllis Moen, Ph.D
Sociologist, University of Minnesota

Then vs. now

Workplace flexibility has its roots in the movement to attract and retain talented working mothers. But through the years, forward-thinking employers have come to realize the role flexibility can play in the lives of all employees. The growth of two-earner household is just one of several reasons flexibility has moved from a "nice to have" to a necessity for millions of workers — whether male or female, parents or not. The youngest generation in the workforce considers flexibility a key element of their job satisfaction.

"Companies understand the challenges that their employees face in finding work-life balance," says Jeffery Smith, Associate Director of Global Diversity and Inclusion at Cincinnati-based Procter & Gamble, another Working Mother 100 Best Company. "That is why we have to be diligent in offering flexible programs to help manage their lifestyle while meeting the business need."

Among top employers, the notion of flexibility as a formal work arrangement has given way to more of a "flexibility for all" mentality. Of course, formal flexible work arrangements continue to support working mothers and others who need the consistency of a regular schedule or the option of telework.

At Working Mother 100 Best Company General Mills, based in Minneapolis, there is no stigma if an employee takes a child to the doctor at 3 p.m. or needs to come in late one morning. As long as performance is high, employees are trusted to use good judgment managing time.

Our survey shows that a majority of men and women find the notion of flexible work attractive. But less than half (and fewer working mothers than fathers) say that their kind of work allows for flexibility in where and when it's conducted.

But the economic downturn may end up having a positive effect on flexibility policies. A recent Families and Work Institute study of the recession's impact on employers found that 81 percent of companies retained the workplace flexibility options in place prior to the recession.⁵ Interestingly, another 13

percent increased flexibility.⁶ The latter group has employed flexibility as a cost-cutting measure (for example, compressed workweeks to reduce operating costs). We may find that new flexibility options remain following the economic recovery.

The jury is out on what actual impact, if any, working flexibly has on career advancement. In our survey, we see a difference of opinion between men and women on the subject. Seventy-four percent of men whose work allows for flexibility say it has had a positive impact on their career advancement. Just 58 percent of women agree.

Flex works for dads who work

Working fathers are more likely than working mothers to find flexibility attractive (77% vs. 67%) when their work allows for it. Working fathers are also slightly more likely to report they can take time off when they need to.

These differences may have to do with dissimilar experiences men and women have when it comes to working flexibly. A working mother may sense tension (real or perceived) when taking time out of the workday for her daughter's dental appointment. But when a father leaves early to coach his son's baseball team, his co-workers may simply think he's a devoted dad.

The tension working mothers feel when they flex isn't all perception. As noted earlier, men and women without children are more likely to doubt the abilities and commitment of working mothers.

I flex. Therefore I am.

The opportunity to work flexibly has a strong and positive impact on employee attitudes. Eighty-one percent of those whose work allows for flexibility feel that it positively affects their productivity. It also has a positive impact on employee morale, commitment to the organization, and overall job satisfaction. IBM sees a positive impact not just on attitudes, but on business outcomes. "Increased flexibility helps both male and female employees have more options, as they integrate their work

and personal needs," explains Patricia Lewis, who serves as vice president, Diversity and Employee Experience at the global information technology company, which is a 25-year Working Mother 100 Best Company. "Flexibility at IBM is considered a competitive business tool, which enables us to attract and retain critical talent, while also increasing effectiveness and productivity."

A Corporate Voices for Working Families survey revealed that senior executives recognize the positive impact of workplace flexibility. By a ratio of 9-to-1, executives report that flexible work strategies have a positive effect on helping organizations reach business goals.⁷

IMPLICATIONS FOR EMPLOYERS

Diversity demands flexibility

While flexibility started out as an issue for working mothers, it's not just about moms, anymore. As our workforce becomes more diverse, employees look for the flexibility to observe important cultural or religious customs and holidays. People with disabilities need to flex in an instant depending on their needs for self-care. Working fathers are more inclined than in previous generations to take on a share of child caregiving responsibilities. Still others want flexibility to take on significant

Eighty-one percent of employees whose work allows for flexibility feel that it positively affects their productivity.



⁵ Families and Work Institute. *The Impact of the Recession on Employers*. 2009.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Corporate Voices for Working Families. *Flexible Work Strategies: Attitudes & Experiences*. 2008.

Only 42% of men who earn less than their wives feel comfortable when the scenario moves from theory to reality.

community commitments, or to accommodate teaming with colleagues in different time zones. And younger workers expect flexibility far more than their parents ever did. They expect it because it all comes so naturally with their technological grace and multi-tasking ease.

Top employers engender a culture of flexibility for all. They make the financial commitment to the technologies that allow for the flexibility demands of a 24/7 global world. They understand that working flexibly means different things to different people. And giving all employees the opportunity to work flexibly may go a long way in addressing negative perceptions of working mothers held by their non-parent counterparts.

The rigidity of the full-time/face-time work schedule simply doesn't work for millions of today's employees. Forward-thinking employers recognize the value of offering flexibility for all, both to their people and to their organizations.

WHEN MOM EARNS MORE...

...does it bother her spouse?

No. At least not in theory.

Men think they are comfortable enough

with the notion of their spouse earning more than they earn. Our survey showed that 59 percent of men think it would be okay for their spouse to be the higher earner.

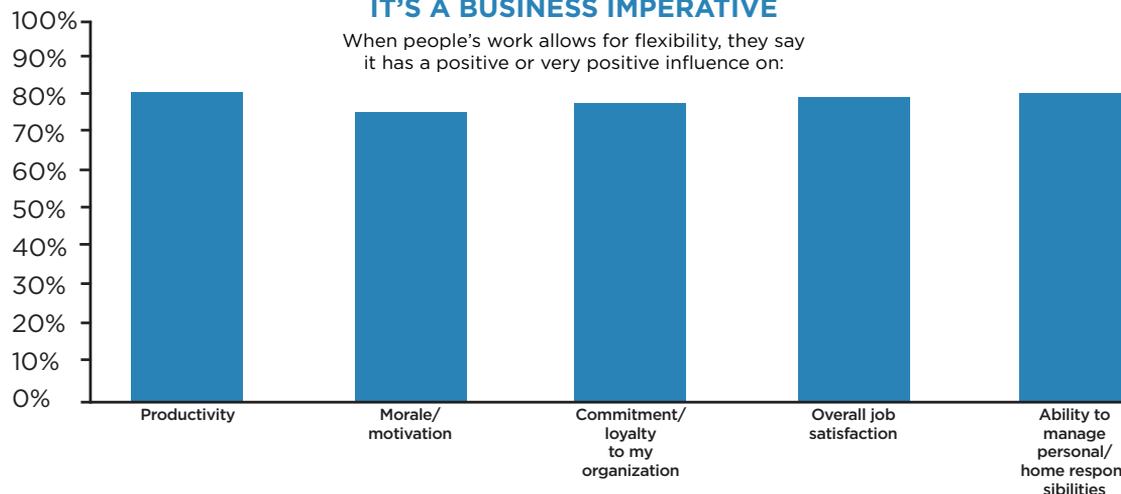
But what happens when women actually earn more than their spouses? We find that only 42 percent of men who earn less feel comfortable when the scenario moves from theory to reality (a 17-point dip).

As it turns out, women seem as affected as men by notions of traditional gender roles when it comes to earnings. Seventy-three percent of women say they would be comfortable if their spouses were the higher earners. But when women are the higher earners, the percentage who say they would be comfortable if their spouse earned more jumps to 87 percent. (See chart on page 15.)

As of 2008, 26 percent of women in dual-earner couples earned at least 10 percentage points more than their spouse or partner. The impact of the recession on male unemployment, combined with women's continued growth in educational achievement may result in rapid growth of women as the higher earner in dual-income couples, according to the Families and Work Institute.

FLEXIBILITY IS NOT ONLY A WORKING MOTHER'S ISSUE, IT'S A BUSINESS IMPERATIVE

When people's work allows for flexibility, they say it has a positive or very positive influence on:



Among people whose work allows for flexibility, the percentage saying that flexibility has had a positive or very positive influence

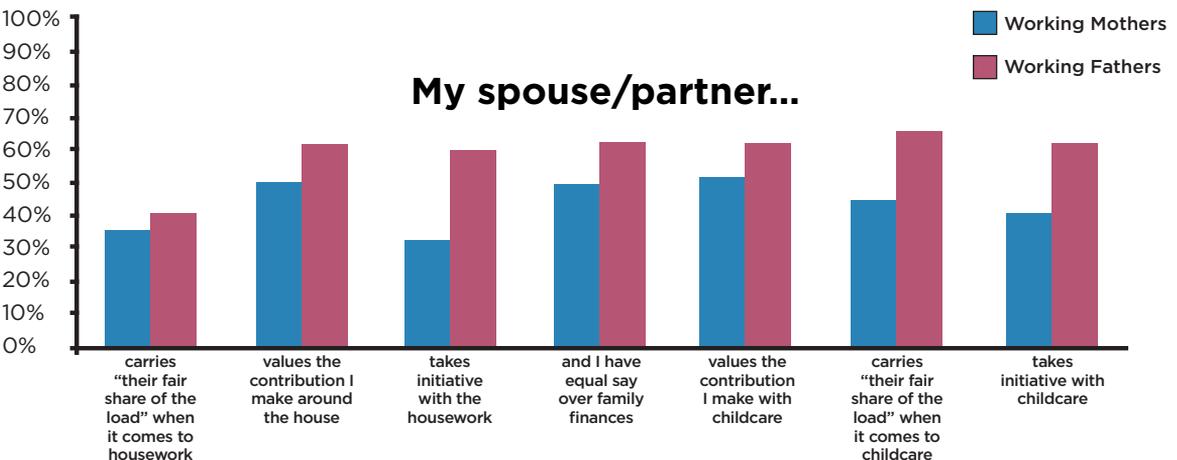
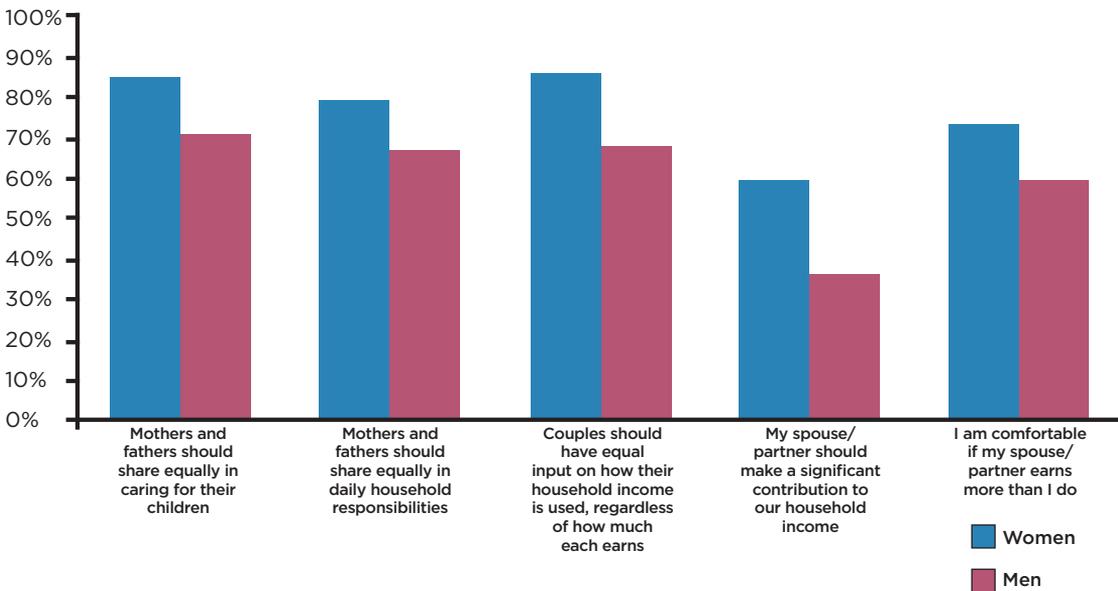
...do her family duties go down? Not so much.

When working mothers are the primary breadwinners, their spouses are more likely to agree that they should share equally in childcare and household responsibilities. But ask the higher-earning working mother and she'll tell you it's not really working out that way. While 68 percent of lower-earning working fathers think they carry their fair share of the housework, only 45 percent of the higher-earning working

mothers agree.

There's also disagreement when it comes to taking initiative with housework and childcare. Just 33 percent of working mothers say their working spouses take initiative with housework, and just 41 percent see initiative when it comes to childcare. When women earn more than their spouses, they do see more initiative from their husbands on the domestic front but not by all that much. Less than half say their husbands show initiative.

AGREEMENT ON GENDER ROLES ELUDES BOTH MEN AND WOMEN



Percentage tending to or strongly agreeing (both charts)

This echoes a struggle that occurs across millions of households. Men complain that their wives don't appreciate the work they do around the house. And their wives complain that they have to ask their spouses to take care of specific tasks or they won't get done. Sociologists point to the "invisible mental labor" women often take on when it comes to things like taking care of children, for example.⁸ Whether it's the lunch money, field trip forms, doctor's appointments, recital dates, or

team schedules — it typically falls to the mom to keep on top of it all.

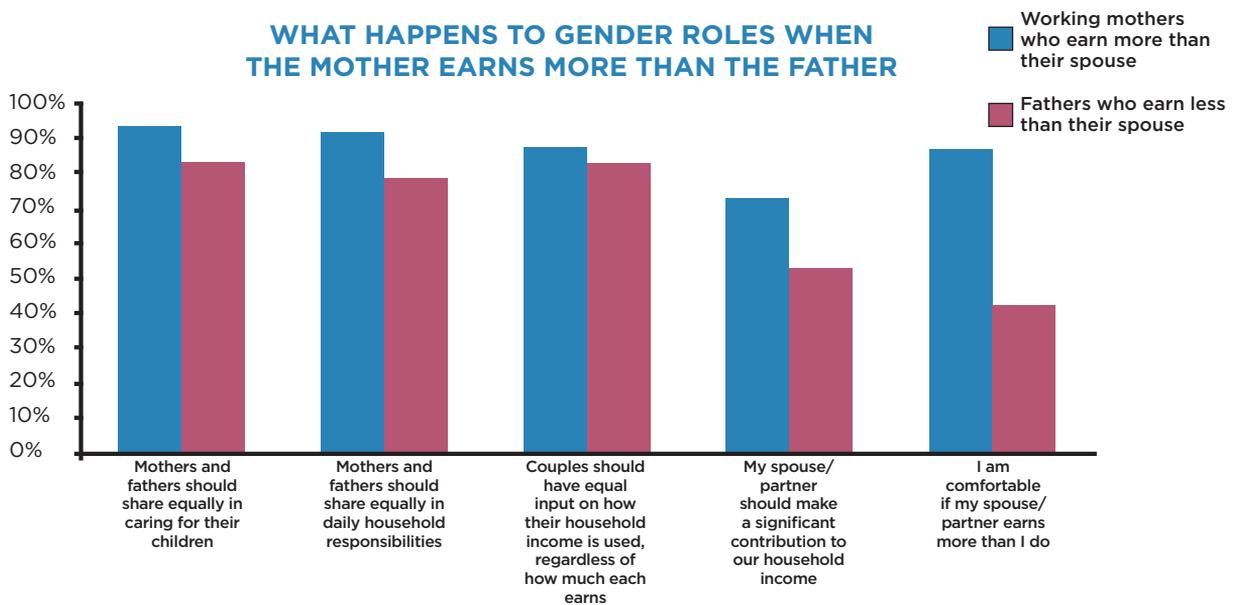
IMPLICATIONS FOR EMPLOYERS

Be mindful of outside stresses

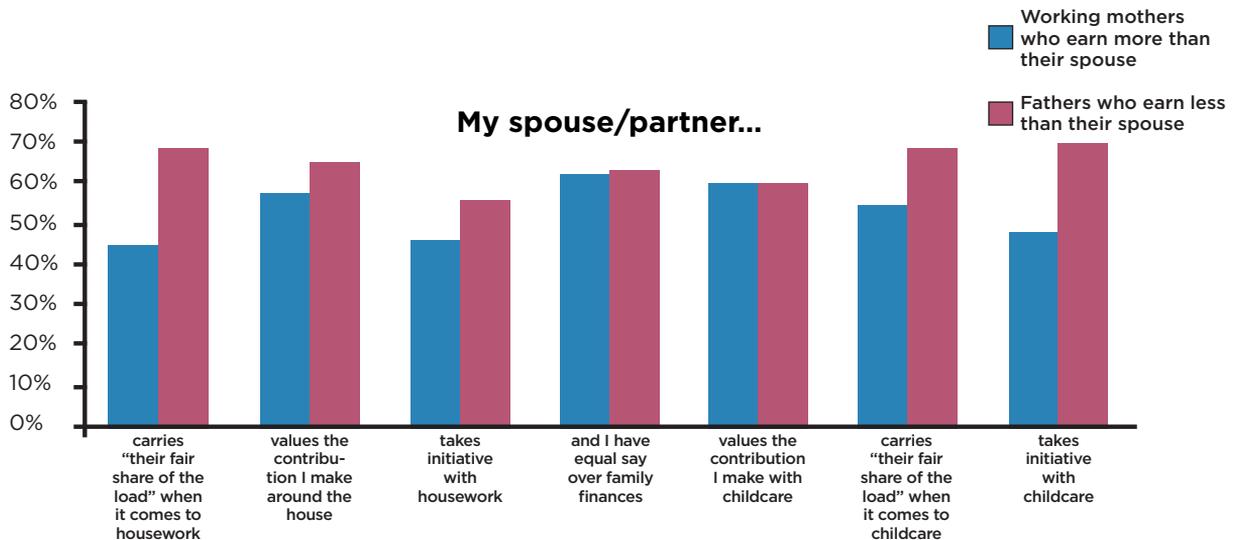
Certainly no one would suggest that employers should get involved in the ongoing war of the sexes when it comes to managing housework and kids. But employers should recognize that high-performing hard-working moth-

⁸ Stephen J. McNamee and Robert K. Miller. *The Meritocracy Myth*. 2004.

WHAT HAPPENS TO GENDER ROLES WHEN THE MOTHER EARNS MORE THAN THE FATHER

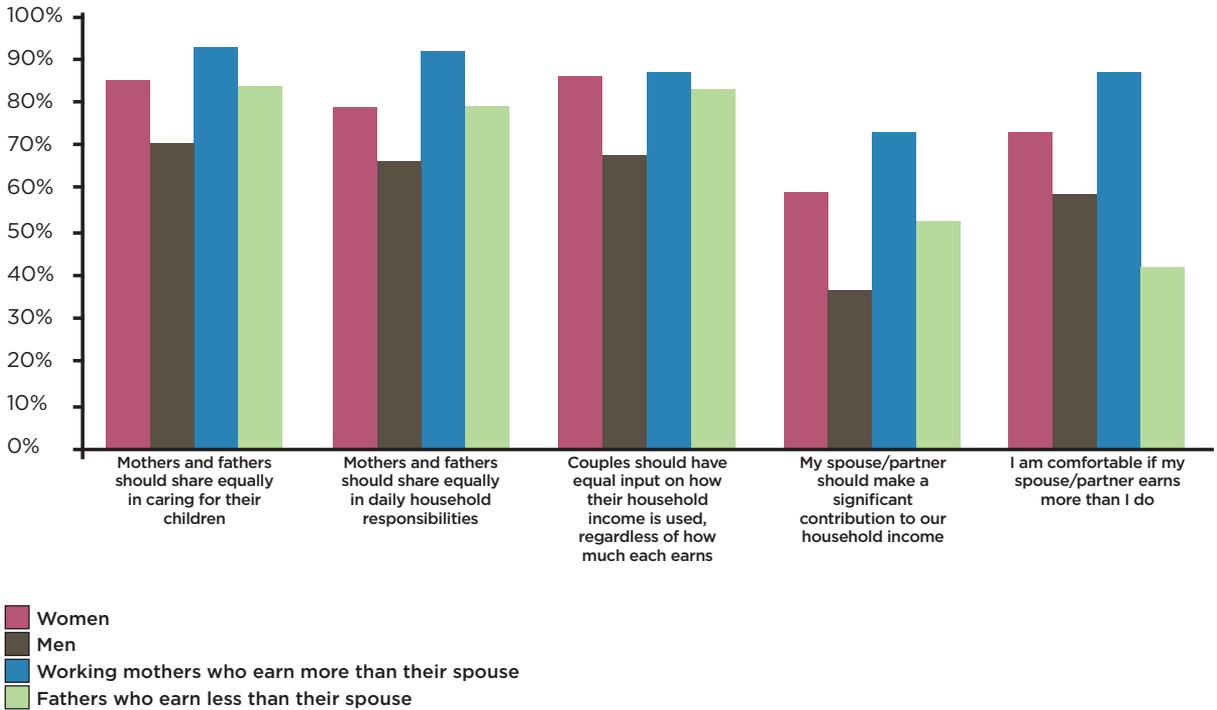


My spouse/partner...

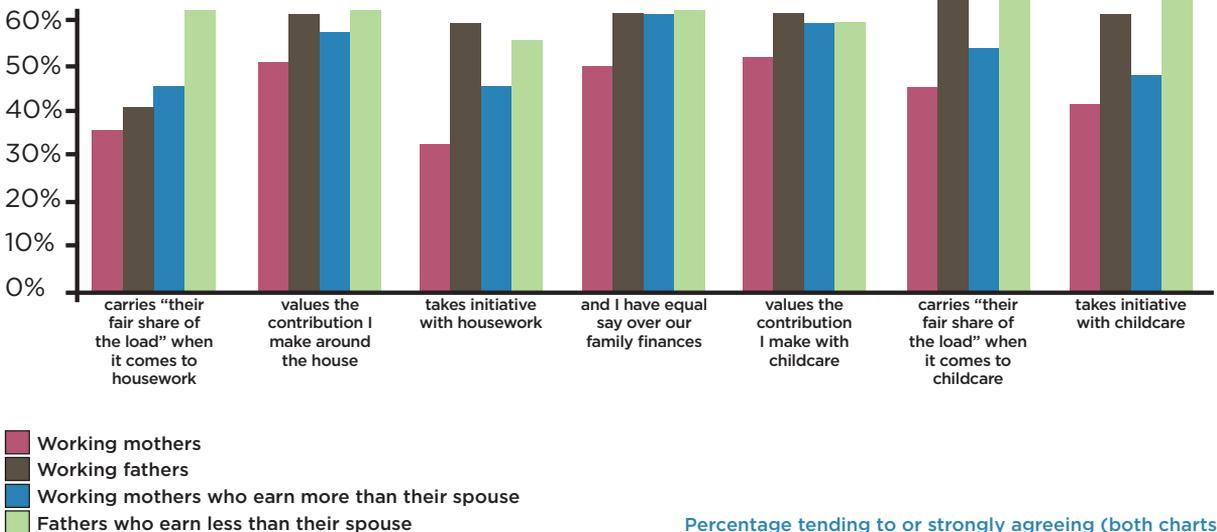


Percentage tending to or strongly agreeing (both charts)

WHO EARNS MORE IMPACTS HOW MEN AND WOMEN FEEL ABOUT GENDER ROLES AT HOME



My spouse/partner...



Percentage tending to or strongly agreeing (both charts)

Has business made great strides in providing equitable opportunities for women? It depends on whom you ask.

ers and fathers face real stressors outside of work. The model of a stay-at-home spouse who takes care of all the family matters is but a shadow of its former self. As of 2008, 79 percent of married or partnered employees lived in dual-earner couples.⁹ The answer in part comes back to allowing for flexibility in how and where work gets done.

Provide an assist

Being stretched isn't just a passing phenomenon. Employers differentiate themselves when they make efforts to make life a little easier for their people. Ten or fifteen years ago, progressive employers were pulling out all the stops on this front. Errands like dropping off and picking up the dry-cleaning or getting the oil changed in the car were left to concierge services employers provided. These high-touch and high-cost services were likely among the first to go when the downturn hit.

But employers can provide meaningful support in other ways. Employee assistance programs (EAPs) that, for example, provide a vetted list of nanny services, can be exceptionally helpful to stretched employees. "Employers don't have to pay for the nanny, but they can help identify reputable resources for parents," explains Ernst & Young's Williamson. "These kinds of programs are the price of admission for being seen as a great employer. To that end, Working Mother 100 Best Company FINRA, an independent securities regulator based in Washington, DC, offers childcare search services, access to adoption agencies and support, personal financial planning help and more through its EAP.

Pay it forward

As women continue to break through to senior executive roles, it is important to provide support in this transition. One avenue is through professional women's networks. Virtually all the organizations on the Best Companies list sponsor them. Among other things, these networks provide opportunity for women climbing the ladder to hear from the company's female executives on how they manage demanding careers

and their lives at home. Companies can use this forum for higher-paid female executives to share their experiences with the income issue, and how they've dealt with it.

Many top companies hold special meetings to help newly minted senior executives understand their new roles and responsibilities. These venues are prime opportunities to bring in the spouses and significant others of new executives, to help them understand the demands that come with the role. Discussions could include the potential impact on couples when the woman is the higher earner.

WHAT A DIFFERENCE 25 YEARS MAKES.

Do you see what I see?

Has business made great strides in providing equitable opportunities for women? It depends on whom you ask. Least likely to think so are women with more than 20 years in the workforce (54%). Their views make sense — they witnessed their moms' struggles and experienced the challenges themselves. It's also not surprising that their male colleagues see great strides (62%). With many more female colleagues than ever before (never mind that most aren't in the C-suite), it must look like business has made great progress.

When we look at men and women who have worked five years or less, we see much closer agreement. Sixty-two percent of women and 60 percent of men early in their careers think businesses have made great strides. Most young workers have fundamentally different experiences than the generations before them. But they've heard the stories and witnessed the continued challenges of a still uneven playing field. Younger men and women in the workforce understand that business has made progress, but we aren't yet where we need to be.

Do you want what I want?

Our survey found universal agreement on what employees say they look for



when choosing a place to work: a desire for job security tops the list and competitive earnings comes in second. A flexible work schedule and culture is the third most-sited issue for working mothers.

A new study of the global workforce by Towers Watson, a global professional services firm, finds that employers underestimate the importance of security and well-being when their people evaluate whether or not to leave their current organization. The study concludes that, “with many employees feeling more responsible for managing their careers and retirement, they are increasingly likely to be influenced by job offers that include a (better) pension, greater job security, better work/life balance or more flexible work arrangements.”¹⁰

IMPLICATIONS FOR EMPLOYERS

Big steps? Yes. Great strides? They're working on it.

Despite the tremendous efforts by the Working Mother 100 Best Companies, only 40 percent of today's workforce think business has made great strides in providing equitable opportunities for women. These Working Mother Best Companies, as a result, are in the best position to draw from the critical talent pool of working mothers.

It's interesting that men and women who are early in their careers see things similarly when it comes to businesses' efforts to date on providing women with equitable opportunities. The alignment of their attitudes suggests that they've experienced through their parents the challenges that came before them, and that they're cognizant of the

Balance and flexibility are fast becoming the domain of all workers — not just working mothers.

¹⁰ Towers Watson. 2010 Global Talent Management and Rewards Study. September 2010.

challenges that remain. As women seek to break remaining barriers (and there remain a lot of barriers despite the strides of the past 25 years), it appears they may find useful allies among their male colleagues.

Stability and fair pay are fundamental

Perhaps the desire for job stability is rooted in the tortuous economy of the last few years. Though the recovery seems unable to decide when it will truly kick in, history suggests that it

will. Even when we start to see less tumult in the labor market, though, employees will still likely place the desire for job stability and competitive earnings above all else. Simply put, these are foundational components of satisfaction at work.

As the labor market continues to evolve, work-life balance and the ability to work flexibly will likely join security and fair pay as what employees most desire. Balance and flexibility are fast becoming the domain of all workers — not just working mothers.

CONCLUSION

The growth of the female workforce has been exponential. Ten years ago, men held six million more jobs than women. Today, that gap is just half a million.¹¹ Women today earn 60 percent of the college degrees awarded each year (including half of all Ph.Ds and professional degrees).¹²

As women begin to outnumber men in the workforce, employers must respond to their desire for equitable opportunities to reach the upper ranks. Sheer demographics make this a simple reality, and

business results prove the value. Among the latest studies to show the positive business impact of female executives comes from Pepperdine University. It found a strong correlation between high-level female executives and business profitability.¹³

A large and growing number of employers recognize the imperative of adjusting to the new face of the American workforce. The new reality requires breaking away from traditional modes of how work

gets done, and how careers progress. Employers that get this will win the loyalty of talented working mothers, and all employees who desire vibrant work and personal lives.

Employers that recognize their culture as a competitive advantage — in good times and in bad — will most likely be the employers of choice when Working Mother Media celebrates the 50th Anniversary of its 100 Best Companies.

Will your organization be among them?

¹¹ Ad Age Insights. *White paper: The Reality of the Working Woman. Her Impact on the Female Target Beyond Consumption.* June 7, 2010.

¹² Maria Shriver and the Center for American Progress. *The Shriver Report. A Study by Maria Shriver and the Center for American Progress.* 2010.

¹³ Miller-McCune Research Essay. *Profit, Thy Name is...Woman?* February 27, 2009.

Appendix

DIFFERENCE IN SATISFACTION BETWEEN CAREER-ORIENTED MOMS AND THOSE WHO WORK FOR FINANCIAL REASONS

Satisfaction with...	Career-oriented working moms	Mothers who work for financial reasons	Difference
Career prospects	58%	30%	28%
Choice to be a working parent	62%	41%	22%
Opportunities to develop skills	61%	39%	22%
Match between job interests and work you do	64%	44%	21%
Job security and stability	63%	46%	18%
Family's financial stability	37%	20%	17%
How much (one's) opinion counts at work	57%	40%	17%
Level of respect received at work	64%	48%	16%
Compensation relation to contribution	48%	33%	15%
Support received from supervisor/manager in meeting home and family obligations	61%	50%	11%
Spouse/partner's contribution to caring for children	57%	46%	11%
Support received from spouse/partner in meeting work demands	59%	49%	11%
How at-home tasks are divided (with) spouse/partner	43%	32%	10%
The level of respect you get at home	62%	55%	7%
Amount of time spent with spouse/partner	41%	35%	7%
(One's) children's prospects	77%	71%	7%
How much (one's) opinion counts at home	70%	64%	6%
Relationships with co-workers	68%	62%	6%
Relationship with spouse/partner	55%	49%	6%
Amount of time spent on taking care of (one's) self	35%	29%	5%

DIFFERENCE IN FEELING-SCALE BETWEEN CAREER-ORIENTED MOMS AND THOSE WHO WORK FOR FINANCIAL REASONS

Frequently feel...	Career-oriented working moms	Mothers who work for financial reasons	Difference
That work fulfills a higher or more meaningful purpose than “just making money”	58%	34%	24%
Satisfied with childcare or other caregiver arrangements	65%	51%	13%
Fulfilled	55%	42%	13%
That (I) cannot get away from work	34%	22%	12%
Healthy	59%	47%	12%
Their life is “in balance”	44%	32%	12%
Positive about the amount of time spent w/friends	42%	31%	11%
(Their commitment at work is challenged by others (coworkers, managers)	35%	25%	10%
That (my) children eat healthy	72%	63%	9%
They get enough sleep	38%	30%	8%
Supported by (one’s) spouse/partner	55%	49%	6%
Positive about relationship w/ spouse/partner	54%	48%	6%
Positive about the amount of time spent w/family	60%	55%	5%

Source: What Moms Think: The Working Mother Report

DEMOGRAPHICS OF CAREER-ORIENTED MOTHERS AND THOSE WHO WORK FOR FINANCIAL REASONS	Career-oriented mothers	Mothers who work for financial reasons
Age	37.15 years old	38.40
Years in the workforce (average)	13.51	13.57
Average income individual	\$55,800	\$39,900
Average income household	\$70,890	\$51,390
% earning more than spouse /partner	48%	28%
#of children (average)	1.71	1.82
Age of children (average)	9.63	10.00
% currently married	57%	61%
% that are single parents	34%	32%
% whose spouse/partner is employed full time	84%	57%
# of nights away from children due to work or travel requirements	1.18 (70% spend 0 nights away)	0.89 (79% spend 0 nights away)
% with children in childcare center	27%	15
% with supervisory/management responsibility	47%	28%
% spending time caring for parents/family members	37%	30%
% with a mother that worked outside the home	62%	55%
% that graduated college or above	53%	39%
% identifying as other than Caucasian	23%	29%

Source: *What Moms Think: The Working Mother Report*

Methodology

When Working Mother Media decided to mark the 25th anniversary of the Working Mother 100 Best Companies with new research into the mindset of today's working moms, it approached Ernst & Young, IBM, Procter & Gamble. Together, this team focused on how best to understand current perceptions of and about working mothers.

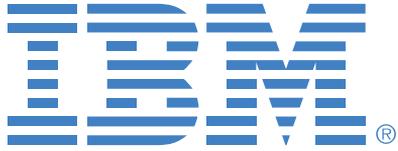
A research team from Ernst & Young facilitated a dialogue that assisted in identifying what we wanted to learn and designed a survey to accomplish our goals. New York-based research company Walker Communications fielded a national survey through a series of email blasts sent by Survey Sampling International (SSI) between June 7 and June 14, 2010, and a total of 4,606 individuals submitted an online questionnaire.

Walker Communications received and tabulated the responses, which were then analyzed by the Ernst & Young research team. The final results are documented in this report.

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Working Mother magazine reaches 2 million readers and is the only national magazine for working moms; WorkingMother.com brings to the Web home and career information, advice and a broad range of solutions daily. This year marks the 25th anniversary of *Working Mother's* signature research initiative, Working Mother 100 Best Companies, the most important benchmark for work-life practices in corporate America. Working Mother Media, a division of Bonnier Corp., includes the National Association for Female Executives (NAFE) and Diversity Best Practices. Working Mother Media's mission is to serve as a champion of culture change.

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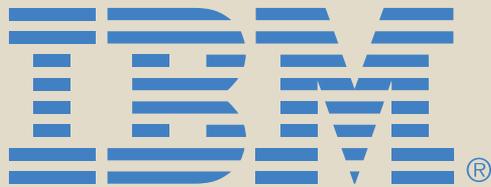
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