WORKFLEX TOOLKIT FOR CONGRESS

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Part of the “Life in Congress” Project by:

SHRM

CONGRESSIONAL MANAGEMENT FOUNDATION
Presenters

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Agenda

• About the “Life in Congress” Project

• Highlights of the *Workflex Toolkit for Congress*:
  - Why Workflex?
  - What Is Workflex?
  - Common Concerns about Workflex
  - Assessing Whether Workflex Is Right For You
  - Setting Up and Adjusting Workflex
  - Flex Success Strategies for Staff

• Q&A
SHRM's Chatrane Birbal presents Rep. Carbajal with a Democracy Award for "Life in Congress" Workplace Environment.
“Life in Congress”

A Research Series Examining Congress As a Workplace
Life in Congress: Aligning Work and Life in the U.S. House and Senate

• An inside look at the workloads of staff and the difficulties of managing work, family, and personal responsibilities

• Based on survey of 1,400+ staffers (House and Senate, D and R, DC and district/state)
Workflex Toolkit for Congress

• Combination of advice, research, and worksheets

• Download full booklet through webinar handouts or visit our website (bonus: specific sections are excerpted as worksheets in Word)

⇒ http://CongressFoundation.org/workflex-toolkit
Chapter 1

Why Workflex?
What’s Driving Workflex?

- Change
- Technology
- Demographics
Why Workflex Matters

- 57% Offer Flextime
- 69% Offer Telework
- 32% Offer Compressed Work Weeks
- 27% Offer Job Sharing

Source: SHRM Employee Benefits Survey, 2019
Why Workflex Matters

Employees with workflex options result in more productive, healthier employees who are more engaged and less likely to leave.

The Effective Workplace Index

- Co-worker Support for Job Success
- Supervisor Support for Job Success
- Autonomy
- Satisfaction with Wages, Benefits and Opportunities to Advance
- Work-Life-Fit
- Culture of Respect, Trust and Belonging
- Job Challenge and Learning Opportunities
How Do Employees with High & Low Work-Life Fit Compare?

**Flex Matters**

*When employees have a high degree of work-life fit...*

- More than 2x as many want to stay (77% vs. 30%)
- 3x as many are engaged at work (55% vs. 17%)
- And almost 4x as many are in excellent health (42% vs. 12%)

*When compared to employees with low work-life fit.*
Chapter 2

What Is Workflex?
Why Do Employers Offer Workflex?

- Attracts Talent
- Retains Talent
- Employee Loyalty
- Employee Engagement
- Employee Job Satisfaction
- Productivity
- Customer Service
- Business Continuity
- Employee Health & Wellness

- Absenteeism
- Turnover
- Real Estate Costs
- Utilities
- Business Expenses
What Does Workflex Look Like?

- **Flex Time & Place**
  - Regular or short-notice flex time
  - Compressed workweeks
  - Telecommuting

- **Choices in Managing Time**
  - Uninterrupted time
  - Self-scheduling & shift trading

- **Reduced Time**
  - Reduced hours & part-year work
  - Gradual return to work

- **Time Off**
  - Unanticipated time off
  - Paid vacations & sick leave
  - Time off for caregiving

- **Flex Careers**
  - Career lattice (dialing careers up, down or sideways)
  - Cross-promotion between DC and district/state
  - Sabbaticals
  - Phased retirement
How Satisfied are Congressional Staff with the Work-Life Aspects of Their Jobs?

- **Overall office culture**: 79% satisfy, 41% rate as very important.
- **Paid time off**: 60% satisfy, 44% rate as very important.
- **Flexibility to balance life and work issues**: 55% satisfy, 26% rate as very important.
- **Managing the amount of work-related stress**: 46% satisfy, 20% rate as very important.
Chapter 3
Common Concerns About Workflex
Why Don’t Congressional Offices Offer Workflex?

The Member/Senator will never go for it.  
We’re too small.

How do I know staff are working if I can’t see them?

The congressional workload won’t allow for these types of arrangements.

I’m concerned about giving preferential treatment.
Poll Question
Chapter 4
Assessing Whether Workflex Is Right for You
Organizational Considerations

• What are your office’s strategic goals and priorities?
• What values do you want to promote within your office and among your staff?
• What are the Member’s views on turnover?
• What kind of workplace culture exists in your office?
• Has your office attempted workflex in the past? How did it go?
Employee Assessment

Do They:
- Plan ahead
- Prioritize
- Meet deadlines
- Solve problems and resolve issues independently
- Communicate well
- Want workflex to work for office and themselves

Are They:
- Focused
- Productive
- A high performer
- A team player
Chapter 5

Setting Up and Adjusting Workflex
Components of a Workflex Arrangement

I. Benefits (for office and for staffer)
II. When and Where
III. Availability
IV. Impact on Coworkers/Constituents/Outside Groups
V. Communication
VI. Performance
VII. Connectivity (for teleworkers)
Assess Your Arrangement

• How is it working overall?
• Any problems with communication, collaboration, or scheduling?
• Are we meeting or on track to meet office goals?
• How is the staffer performing?
• Is workflex causing any difficulties between DC and district/state offices?
• Are there specific issues we need to address?
Chapter 6

Flex Success Strategies for Staff
Strategies for Staffers

• Create a workflex communication plan
• Build team relationships
• Assess how you are doing (with goals, deadlines, colleagues, supervisor)
• Manage expectations
• Stay visible and promotable
• Set boundaries
Q&A

Type your questions in the chatbox!
• Nancy Juarez, Deputy Chief of Staff and Legislative Director, Rep. Salud Carbajal
Conclusion

Evaluation & Additional Resources
What did you think of today’s program?

Please take 1 MINUTE to give us feedback!

• Evaluation will come up after webcast ends
  • Will also be included in follow-up email
• Add any additional comments to the chatbox
Download the Workflex Toolkit for Congress (& more!)

Go to CongressFoundation.org/workflex-toolkit for PDF toolkit and Word worksheets/assessments:

- Workflex options, benefits & examples
- Organizational questions
- Assessing an employee’s work style, performance, & habits
- Drafting a written workflex arrangement
- Check-in questions
- Creating a workflex communication plan
- Contact info for key institutional & support offices
Download SHRM’s Benefits Survey Leave & Flexible Working

Go to https://shrm.org/benefits19 for PDF
Additional “Life in Congress” Reports

- Life in Congress: Aligning Work and Life in the U.S. House and Senate
- Life in Congress: The Member Perspective
- Life in Congress: Job Satisfaction and Engagement of House and Senate Staff
- Congressional Benefits & Personnel Practices
District/State Resources

• Visit CongressFoundation.org/district-state-resources for downloadable and adaptable:
  ▪ Constituent Service and Casework Manuals
  ▪ Event Checklist
  ▪ Scheduling Forms
  ▪ Sample Job Descriptions
  ▪ Customer Satisfaction Surveys
Complimentary Management Guidebooks

- **Setting Course: A Congressional Management Guide**
- **Keeping It Local: A Guide for Congressional District/State Offices**
  - Sponsored by grants from SHRM
  - Contact us for copies at CMF@CongressFoundation.org
For These & Other Resources

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