**Can Flexible Schedules Really Improve Employee Wellbeing?**

Each year, more and more employers have been realizing that the strict nine-to-five workday schedule is outdated. Too many hours spent in the office can lead to chronic stress, poor health habits, and low job satisfaction.

In contrast, employees with flexible work schedules have been shown to have higher levels of job satisfaction and less absenteeism, along with reduced rates of turnover. By simply offering employees the ability to choose their own hours and work from home when needed, employers can improve the overall health and wellbeing of their employees.

If your company doesn’t currently offer some type of flexibility for your employees, we urge you to consider these five employee wellness perks of a flexible schedule:

**Increased Happiness**

[Research](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2129520) has shown that employees tend to be happier with flexible work environments. This makes sense because flexible schedules usually allow for a better work-life balance. Many employees with flexible schedules feel that their employer respects their personal lives and trusts them to get work done on their own time. As added bonus for employers, happier employees tend to be more productive, loyal, and have higher retention rates.

**Decreased Stress**

Flexible schedules can help reduce some of the stress in employees’ lives. Jam-packed schedules can contribute to feelings of chronic stress and anxiety. Flexible workplaces can help diminish some of this stress by reducing the amount of time spent commuting and allowing employees to work on projects during a time that best suits their lifestyle. Flexible schedules also work to reduce stress by helping to eliminate negative spillover between family and work life – and vice versa.

**Less Chance of Burnout**

Most full-time American employees are [overworked](http://info.totalwellnesshealth.com/blog/the-dangerous-link-between-overworked-employees-and-their-health) – and research has made it clear that you don’t want overworked employees running your business! Too many hours in the office can easily lead to employee burnout. The negative health effects associated with [workplace burnout](http://info.totalwellnesshealth.com/blog/heres-how-to-spot-burnout-in-the-workplace-and-what-to-do-about-it) are not only costly to the employee, but to the employer as well. According to [Harvard Business Review](https://hbr.org/2017/04/employee-burnout-is-a-problem-with-the-company-not-the-person), the psychological and physical problems of burned-out employees cost an estimated $125 billion to $190 billion a year in healthcare spending in the U.S.

**Financial Perks**

The financial perks of flexible work environments are often overlooked. Employees who are offered the ability to work from home when needed or work flexible hours will save money on gas from not having to commute as often. Employees with children will also benefit financially by saving some money on childcare expenses when they are able to look after their children or pick them up from school themselves. This perk should be especially important for companies that are putting a focus on [financial wellbeing](http://info.totalwellnesshealth.com/blog/the-role-of-financial-health-in-employee-wellbeing) in their employee wellness program.

**Ability To Practice Healthy Habits**

Employees with flexible work schedules have more time to practice healthy habits. Telecommuting and flex hours allow employees to make time for regular exercise, practicing self-care, and cooking healthy meals. Researchers from the University of Minnesota [conducted a study](http://www.asanet.org/sites/default/files/savvy/images/journals/docs/pdf/jhsb/DEC11JHSBFeature.pdf%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) to determine if flexible schedules really increased employees’ overall wellbeing and healthful behavior. It was found that employees with flexible schedules were able to get more sleep, take care of any health issues, and felt more energized throughout the workday.

One of the best things about flexible work environments is that employers can benefit from it just as much as employees do. Healthier and happier employees contribute to a productive, successful company – making it the ultimate win-win solution.