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## **Employees' Time Off Experience**

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## Employees' Time Off Experience

### Abstract

For my capstone, I researched employee leave programs at two state agencies. I identified features of leave programs that were valued by employees, and how the agencies differed in the options they offered. I created a grid comparing leave programs at these agencies with 14 additional organizations to get a broader perspective. Next, I completed in-depth interviews with 12 employees, both professional and classified, as well as the human resource directors at both agencies. To generalize, I surveyed 36 additional employees. Besides identifying key features of leave programs desired by employees, I found that greater flexibility leads to higher motivation and higher retention. Work-day mood maps show the motivation of staff with rigid schedules declines after the lunch hour, and half are looking for new employment opportunities. In contrast, the motivation of professionals with flexible schedules remains high, and 75% plan to stay in their current job. My project will impact policies at both local agencies.

# Employees' Time Off Benefits



BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY

Yung Stiffler | Multidisciplinary Studies | Leadership & Human Relations Certificate and User Experience Research Certificate

## How Might We Improve Employees' Time Off Experience?

### Employees are saying:

"we haven't changed with the times, haven't changed with the desires of the workforce – stuck in the past." -Baby Boomer, Nov'19

"company's work-life benefits are average, standard, not competitive to what's out there now." -Millennial, Nov'19

### Employee Persona

**BEHAVIORS:**  
Spend time tracking and planning time off requests  
Think about impact to peers and supervisor  
Put the organizational needs first

**WHAT THEY ARE LOOKING FOR:**  
Supervisor and peers to be supportive and encouraging as time off is "earned time – they earned it."  
Allow them to leave work at work and not have it overflow into other aspects of their lives – "life's too short."

**STRESS POINTS:**  
"Working to provide for family" and to live life, not spending more time at work than family and not to be "living the best life".

### EMPLOYEES WANT HELP

They want to "feel supported when gone, and not feel guilty or stressed about the work they have when they get back." ...and some employees need something to "incentivize" them "to take time."

"We spend more time at work than with family" – interview, Nov 2019

95% of employees surveyed would prefer a shorter work week or workday.

### Benefits key observations

#### Key observations

Organization	Vacation	Sick	PTO/YTO	Paid Holidays	Maternity Leave	Paternity Leave	Volunteer Time Off
City of Boise	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Staples	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
St. Lukes	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
US Army	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Winco	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

**Paid holidays ranges from 6 to 13 depending on the organization.**

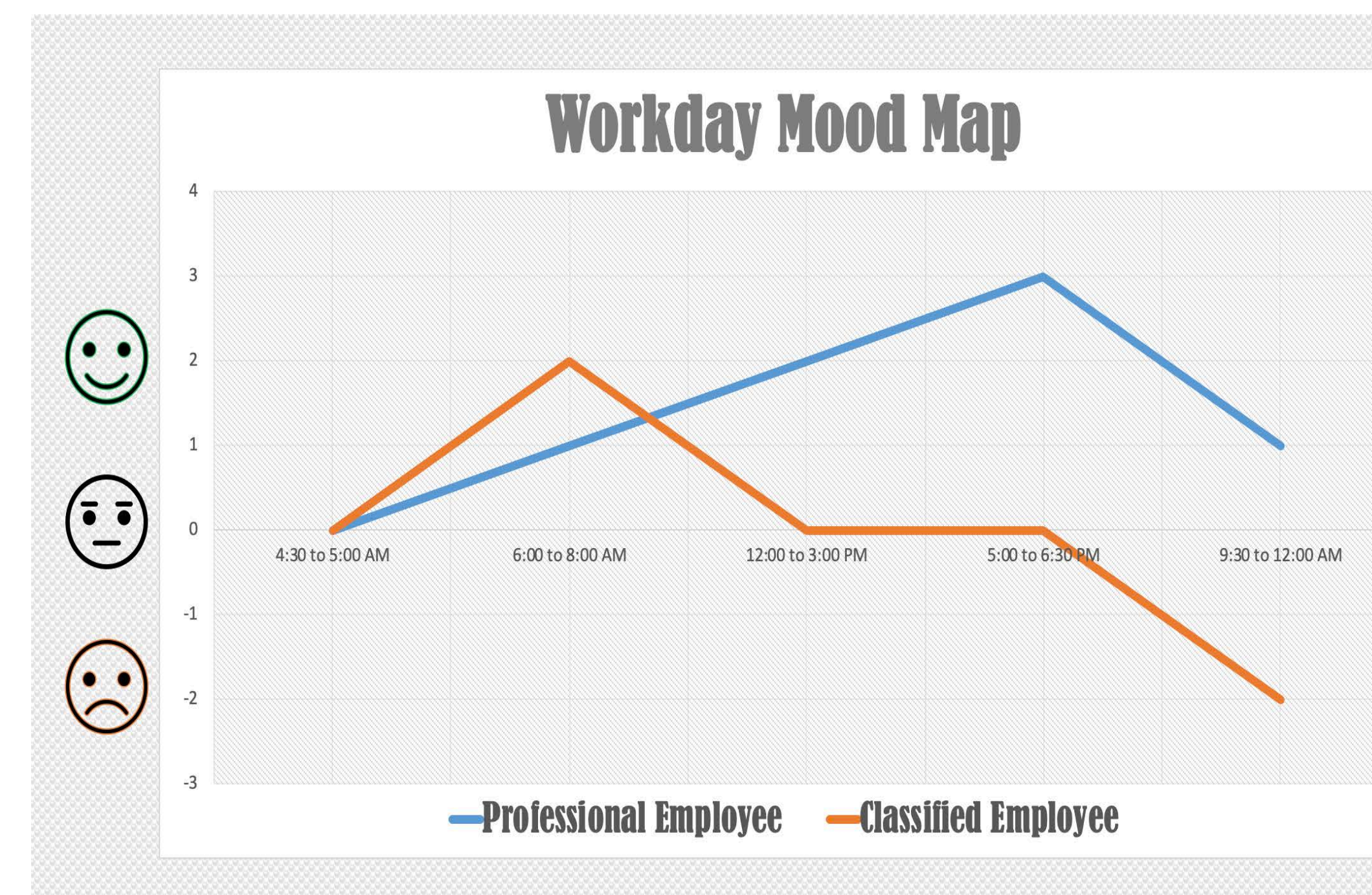
**Maternity and paternity leave are not available in most Idaho organizations, with others offering up to 6 months in addition to the federal mandated FMLA benefit.**

**Maternity and Paternity leave**

**Vacation and sick, or combined as PTO/YTO ranges from 2 weeks to 4 weeks depending on the organization.**

**Vacation and Sick Time or PTO/YTO**

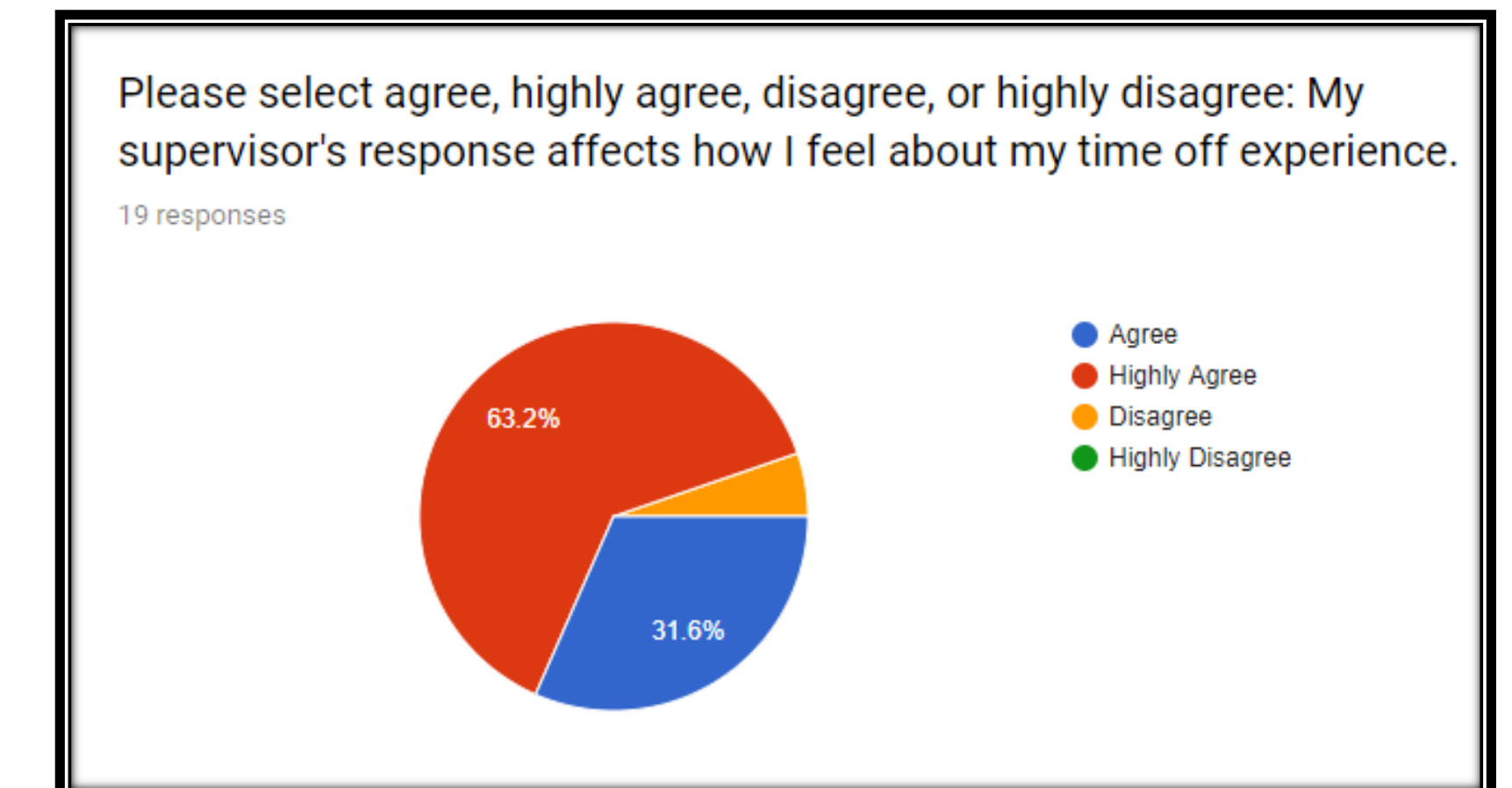
**Some organizations offers incentives for self-care and volunteering. Some provide the upfront vacation and sick or PTO/YTO while others accrues over time. Some also offers floating holidays, even an employee's birthday is considered a holiday.**



### Impact of Reactions

95% - My supervisor's response affect how I feel about my time off experience

- 63.20% highly agree
- 31.60% agree
- 5.20% disagree



### Feeling CHEATED

I observe a time accrual gap difference between roles/tenure. I feel cheated as I put in the same hours and work for the same mission as everyone else. So I think that it is unfair for one employee to be able to have more time or flex their schedule and not the other. I really want to be treated the same, treated like a professional and to be trusted – like the rest.

### Employees' Ratings

Professional employee ratings:

- C for time off benefits b/c it's standard
- 8 out of 10 for sentiment about job
- 75% probability of staying, 25% leaving job
- Staying b/c like colleagues, type of work, and health benefits. Leaving for more money, better work-life balance, and better health benefits.

Classified employee ratings:

- D for time off benefits depends on boss
- 6 out of 10 for sentiment about job
- 50% probability of staying, 50% leaving job
- Staying b/c like supervisor and wanting to be vested. Would leave if vested.

#### Key observations

Handwritten notes and diagrams illustrating employee experiences and observations during the study.

Both employees' days starts as neutral as they wake up. They both feel good as they're getting ready for work and at the start of their work day. Both enjoys the type of work they are doing and work non-stop until lunch. They are both feeling good or neutral up until lunch.

Professional employee is consistent with taking lunch around noon, when there's a good shopping mall. Classified employee mostly work through lunch due to pressure, tends to eat a quick lunch at desk. The difference depends on the second half of their work day. They are feeling good or exhausted depending if they get a lunch break and if they get out of work on time to go home to family.

### UX Certificate Capstone Project, Dec 2019

- PHASE 1: +10 HOURS = Met 2 clients
- PHASE 2: +30 HOURS = Interviewed 12
- PHASE 3: +50 HOURS = Surveyed 36
- PHASE 4: +35 HOURS = Compared & analyzed

70% - My colleagues's response affect how I feel about my time off experience:

- 35% highly agree
- 35% agree
- 30% disagree

