

Employee Time-Off Benefits

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Transcript

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Up next, we have Yung Stiffler from Multidisciplinary Studies who'll be talking to us about the impact of time off of different employees on work-life balance in employee time off benefits. Take it away, Yung.

YUNG STIFFLER

Thank you. What I hear most are frustrations as my friends, family, and colleagues manage their time off from work. So for my user experience research project, I set out to research employee leave programs at two state agencies, and what I wanted to know was: how does the time off benefits compare across different organizations? What type of time off benefits are employees looking for? Does the time off benefits impact an employee's overall job satisfaction?

With the help of two HR experts and my instructor, Dr. Kendall House, I set off to explore how might we improve employees' time off experience. First, I started with some unstructured interviews and offered observations with the two HR clients to identify features of the leave programs that employees value most, and how these state agencies differed in the options they offered. I also created a grid comparing leave programs at these agencies, with 14 additional organizations, to get a broader perspective, and noticed huge gaps in time off benefits offered.

Next I completed in-depth structured interviews with twelve employees, both professional and classified, as well as the HR experts at both agencies. To generalize, I also surveyed 36 employees to identify key features of leave programs desired by employees, and found that greater flexibility leads to higher motivation and higher retention. I also created a workday mood map on employees' work-life balance experience to help showcase how the overall human experience is directly impacted by work cultures and policies.

Through this, I learned that the employees often feel motivated as they start their workday, but then their mood declines depending on whether and when they get a lunch break or if they

leave work on time. The biggest impact is when work bleeds into their personal life, personal time, impacting the family life.

For both the professional and classified employees, being able to leave work on time is important, as they stress that they are working to provide for family and to live the life not spending more time at work than family, and not to be living the best life.

Overall, what I learned from this rapid ethnographic work is that 95 percent of employees, before either a shorter work week or shorter work days, when surveyed about how their supervisors and colleagues impact them, approximately 95 percent stated that their supervisors' reactions impact the time off experience. Now, that's 95 percent of employees stating that their supervisors' reactions truly impact their time off experience, and another 70 percent stated that their colleagues' reactions impact their time off experience. Employees also stated that they feel cheated, as they just want to be treated the same when it comes off to taking times off.

Overwhelmingly, employees want help. Employees want to feel supported when gone, not feel guilty or stress about the work they have when they return. Some also need to be incentivized to take the time off. Their overall experiences are impacted about how their supervisors and colleagues react to their time off request, as they often feel stressed when work overflows into their personal lives. They want to be treated like a professional and to be trusted, and to live that best life. Life is way too short. Thank you, and special thanks to Dr. Kendall House and Dr. Kelly Meyers.

End of transcript.