

Flexible thinking & flexible options: Effects on work engagement & organizational commitment

Authors: Marcie Pitt-Catsoupes, Tay McNamara

Persistent link: <http://hdl.handle.net/2345/3447>

This work is posted on [eScholarship@BC](#),
Boston College University Libraries.

Chestnut Hill, Mass.: Sloan Center on Aging & Work at Boston College, 2011

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 3.0
Unported License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/>).



Flexible Thinking & Flexible Options: Effects on Work Engagement & Organizational Commitment

Findings from the
Generations



of Talent
Study

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments	3
Introduction	4
Key findings	6
From policies and programs to flexible thinking	7
Employees' Assessments of Their Own Flexible Thinking	8
Flexible Thinking in the Social Context of the Workplace	11
Employee perceptions of supervisors' flexible thinking	11
Flexible thinking: Linking self-assessments to assessments of supervisors	13
Flexible Work Options and Flexible Thinking	15
Employee ratings of the importance of workplace flexibility	15
Employee reports of flexible work options at the workplace	17
Employee use of flexible work options at the workplace	19
The Importance of Access to Workplace Flexibility, Use of Flexible Work Options, and Flexible Thinking	21
Conclusion	22
Appendix	23

Acknowledgments

The Sloan Center on Aging & Work is grateful for the generous support of the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation for the Generations of Talent (GOT) Study and of GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) for their support of this paper. We also want to express our appreciation for the patient support of the many people at each of the worksites who collaborated with us to make this study a success.

The principal investigators of the GOT Study are Dr. Marcie Pitt-Catsouphes and Dr. Natalia Sarkisian.

The GOT Study research team includes Kathy Lynch, René Carapinha, Jungui Lee, Tay McNamara, Shribha Sahani, and Rucha Bhate.

Our country liaisons are — Brazil: Sharon Lobel; China: Qingwen Xu; India: Madhavi Pundit; Japan: Miwako Kidahashi; Mexico: Celina Pagani Tousignant; the Netherlands: Martijn de Wildt; South Africa: René Carapinha; Spain: Mireia Las Heras & Marc Grau Grau; the United Kingdom: Matt Flynn & Suzan Lewis; the United States: Steve Sweet.

The Sloan Center on Aging & Work's Communications Specialist, Gaurie Pandey, who contributed to the production of this report.

Introduction

Business leaders see workplace flexibility as a 21st-century standard of excellence in management. What accounts for their enthusiasm?

Flexible work options offer supervisors and employees unusual freedom to manage work, family, and personal responsibilities. Implemented well, these options can benefit organizations, individual employees and their families, and even society (see <http://workplaceflexibility.bc.edu>). Flexible work options open the door to more flexible thinking generally, by employers and employees alike, about business opportunities and innovative responses to them.

The fast pace of change in today's business environment requires companies to be adaptable and nimble. As a consequence, the rewards for flexible thinking in the workplace may be greater now than they were just 10 years ago. For businesses to be successful, employees need the skills associated with flexible thinking.

In this report, we first explore what flexible thinking means. Then, using data from the 2011 Generations of Talent study, we consider relationships between employees' perspectives on flexible work policies and flexible thinking. Finally, we consider how flexible thinking might affect employee engagement and work commitment.

The Generations of Talent Study gathered data from nearly 11,300 employees working in 11 countries. Of this group, we asked 7,080 employees working in ten of the countries to answer questions related to flexible work options and flexible thinking. As shown on page six, some of the countries where we gathered data have emerging market economies; the economies of the others are developed market economies.

Table 1. Why the passionate interest in workplace flexibility?

Pressures	Responses
Globalization	Global business practices require some groups of employees to work during non-standard business hours, either to accommodate customers' or clients' or to coordinate with co-workers. Flexible scheduling options are tools to manage this demand.
Recognizing the whole person	Some employers have adopted flexible work options, because they recognize that employees are whole people who have responsibilities outside the workplace. Different types of flexible work options can help employees to customize the ways that they manage resources, such as time, so that they come to work fully engaged.
Constant flux in today's business environment	Economic conditions and market fluctuations can create demands for employers to delegate work and organize project teams quickly. Options such as remote work and project-based assignments can enable employers to get the right people on the right projects – regardless of geography.
Autonomy as a key to performance and employee engagement	Having some decision-making latitude about how to organize work tasks is often related to positive outcomes, such as lower turnover, which can be linked to productivity. Some employers have started to focus on <i>work results</i> rather than <i>work input</i> . The new paradigm suggests that employers will have specific expectations and metrics for employees; in return, employees will have some choice and control over when, where and how they work.
Solving business problems	Business problems – such as client demands, unwanted turnover, tight labor markets, or even concerns about on-the-job-safety – might urge employers to expand their flexible work options.
Corporate social responsibility	Community challenges such as long commutes, have spurred interest in flexible work options. Some companies position their flexible work policies, particularly e-work, as one way they can prepare to sustain business during natural disasters.

Key findings

- Regardless of gender and age, a majority of respondents agreed with the statements “I find it easy to reorder my priorities when the need arises” and “I expect change and accept it as reality.”
- Most of the respondents said that flexibility in the workplace is “important” to them.
- The highest percentage said they had access to time off (paid or unpaid); slightly less than half reported that they had flexibility in the number of hours they worked.
- Although about two out of three (66.6 percent) respondents reported having taken advantage of the option to work remotely (“flexible place”) over the previous year, only about one out of five (21.8 percent) indicated that they had taken advantage of options for flexibility in the number of hours worked.
- Employees’ assessments of their own flexible thinking, supervisors’ flexible thinking, and access to flexible options were all positively related to work engagement and organizational commitment. Use of one or more flexible options was related to organizational commitment.

Emerging and developed market economies where employees were surveyed for in this report

Emerging market economies		Developed market economies	
Botswana		Japan	
Brazil		Spain	
China		United Kingdom	
India		United States	
Mexico			
South Africa			

From policies and programs to flexible thinking

What is flexible thinking?

Flexible thinking has three dimensions:

- cognitive (the thinking process itself)
- emotional (the subjective experience of engaging in flexible thinking)
- behavioral (actions that demonstrate flexible thinking)

An employee may have strengths in one of these dimensions – not all three. In this research brief, we address each dimensions. The survey used in the Generations of Talent study asked employees to respond to two statements related to dimensions of flexible thinking, by noting the extent to which they agreed or disagreed:

- cognitive
“I expect change and accept it as reality”
- behavioral
“I find it easy to reorder my priorities when the need arises”

The first statement gauges the cognitive dimension and the second the behavioral dimension.

Additionally, the study probed the respondents’ level of job engagement and organizational commitment, which are related to the emotional dimension of flexible thinking.

When developing flexible work initiatives, organizations tend to focus first on policies that align with business needs and the needs of their employees. Some also pay considerable attention to the changing culture of flexibility (see Table 2).

Table 2. Adoption and implementing flexibility policies and programs

Adoption / implementation stage	Employer focus	Possible action steps
Identifying possible flexible work options	Comparing the advantages and disadvantages of these options	Scanning the best options in each class
Selecting flexible work options that are the best fit for the organization	Creating the business case, taking business priorities and problems into consideration	Surveying employees to assess needs
Designing flexible work initiatives	Specifying practices and procedures that would work at the organization	Benchmarking
Implementing flexible work initiatives	Launching policies effectively and efficiently	Creating a plan to communicate the new emphasis on flexible thinking; training supervisors and managers
Assessing and improving the quality of the implementation	Monitoring unexpected problems and unanticipated consequences (positive or negative) for individuals, work teams, and business units	Evaluating utilization (and barriers to utilization, including workplace culture) and outcomes of interest, such as improvements in recruitment, engagement, and performance

Recently, management specialists have suggested that flexible policies and programs and a culture of flexible work rules in general lead to the type of flexible thinking about business challenges and opportunities that employers need.

Flexible thinking refers to a person’s ability to anticipate and respond to situations that require either a shift in perspective or entirely new ideas. Given the demands for innovation in today’s economies, many business leaders feel that it is important to help their employees get ready for innovation that will be needed tomorrow. Employers whose workforces are adept in flexible thinking may well have a competitive advantage.

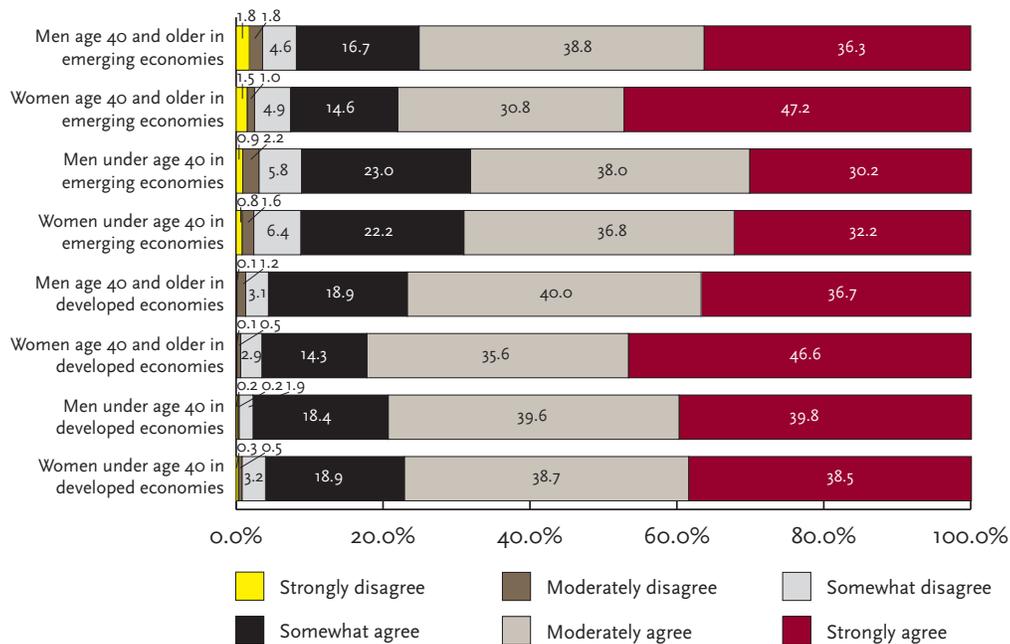
Employees' Assessments of Their Own Flexible Thinking

The survey asked employees to respond to two aspects of their work lives that are related to flexible thinking: 1) the extent to which they expect change and accept it as a reality; and 2) the extent to which they find it easy to reorder priorities when the need arises.

Most of the respondents expect change to be part of their everyday lives. A majority—93.8 percent—agreed (somewhat/moderately/strongly) with the statement, “I expect change and accept it as a reality,” while just 6.2 percent disagreed (somewhat/moderately/strongly).

Our analyses suggest that the group most likely to strongly agree with the statement, “I expect change and accept it as a reality,” are women who are 40 and older (working both in countries with emerging economies and developed economies.)

Figure 1. “I expect change and accept it as a reality”: Percentages of responses by gender, age, and country's economy



Which groups of employees were most likely to report that they expect change?*

We analyzed the responses of employees to this statement from the perspectives of many variables. Table A1 in the appendix shows the breakdowns in detail.

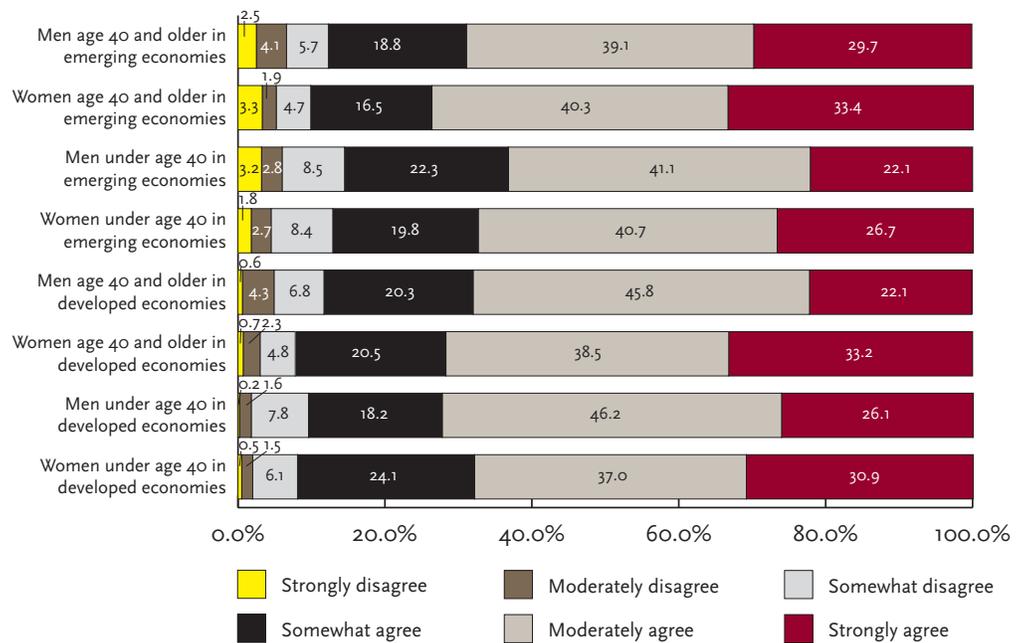
At the managerial level, employees in professional and technical occupations were only 0.67 times, as likely as employees in the managerial group as a whole to expect change and accept it as reality. In contrast, managers in service and sales occupations were 0.95 times as likely as the managerial group as a whole to expect change. Managers

in all other classes of occupations were only 0.59 times as likely as employees in the managerial group as a whole to expect change.

Most employees also indicated that they can respond flexibly and make adjustments to their work tasks in response to changes. Of all the respondents we surveyed in the ten-country subgroup, 92.0 percent agreed (somewhat/moderately/strongly) with the statement, “I find it easy to reorder my priorities when the need arises”; 8.1percent disagreed (somewhat/moderately/strongly).

Here again, women who are 40 and older (working both in countries with emerging and developed economies) were the group most likely to demonstrate the behavioral dimension of flexible thinking, as indicated by their agreement with the statement, “I find it easy to reorder my priorities when the need arises.”

Figure 2. “I find it easy to reorder my priorities when the need arises”:
Percentages of responses by gender, age, and country’s economy



* Figures are based on odds ratios from random-effects logistic regression controlling for the following: whether 40 or older, whether a supervisor, whether female, whether part-time, whether has eldercare responsibilities, whether has childcare responsibilities, occupation (managerial, professional/technical, service/sales, other), and whether an emerging economy. Random effects were used to adjust for correlation within sites. See Table A1 in the appendix for all odds ratios.

*Which groups of employees were most likely to report that they are able to reorder their priorities when the need arises?**

- Employees with supervisory responsibilities were 1.38 times as likely as those without supervisory responsibilities to say that they find it easy to reorder their priorities when the need arises.
- Employees in support roles classified as “other”—that is, in occupations other than professional/technical, production, clerical/administrative support, service/sales, and manual labor— were 0.70 times as likely as those in occupations with managerial responsibilities to say that they find it easy to reorder their priorities when the need arises.
- Employees in service occupations were 1.32 times as likely as employees with managerial responsibilities to say that they find it easy to reorder their priorities when the need arises.

* Figures are based on odds ratios from random-effects logistic regression controlling for the following: whether 40 or older, whether a supervisor, whether female, whether part-time, whether has eldercare responsibilities, whether has childcare responsibilities, occupation (managerial, professional/technical, service/sales, other), and whether an emerging economy. Random effects were used to adjust for correlation within sites. See Table A1 in the appendix for all odds ratios.

Flexible Thinking in the Social Context of the Workplace

The employees who responded to the Generations of Talent survey all worked for large organizations. Supervisors have a direct impact on these employees' opportunities and capacity for flexible thinking. Thus, how employees rate their supervisors' capacity for flexible thinking is useful information for business planning.

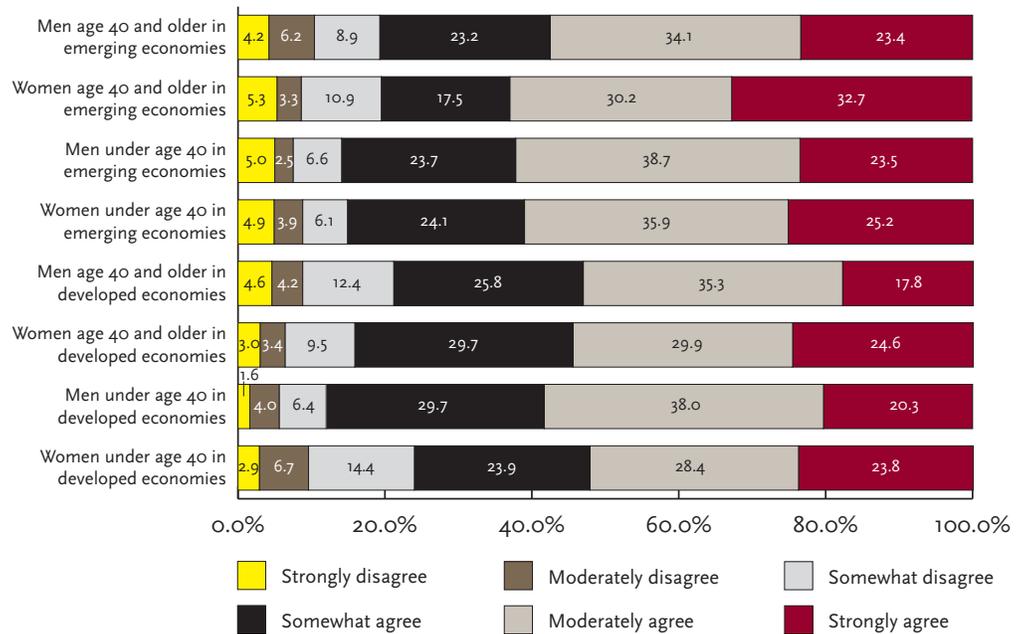
Employee perceptions of supervisors' flexible thinking

We asked employees to respond to two aspects of their work lives related to their supervisors' capacity for flexible thinking: 1) the extent to which the supervisor looks at issues flexibly, from many different points of view, and 2) the extent to which their supervisor proactively seeks different views and perspectives.

A majority of the respondents agreed that their supervisors display flexibility thinking—although not quite so large a percentage as that of respondents with favorable assessments of their capacity in this area. Of all of the employees we surveyed in the ten-country subgroup, 82.7 percent agreed (somewhat/moderately/strongly) with the statement, “My supervisor looks at issues flexibly from many different points of view”; 17.4 percent disagreed (somewhat/moderately/strongly).

We found that women who are 40 and older in countries with emerging economies were the group most likely to strongly agree with the statement, “My supervisor looks at issues flexibly from many different points of view.”

Figure 3. “My supervisor looks at issues flexibly from many different points of view”: Percentages of responses by gender, age, and country's economy

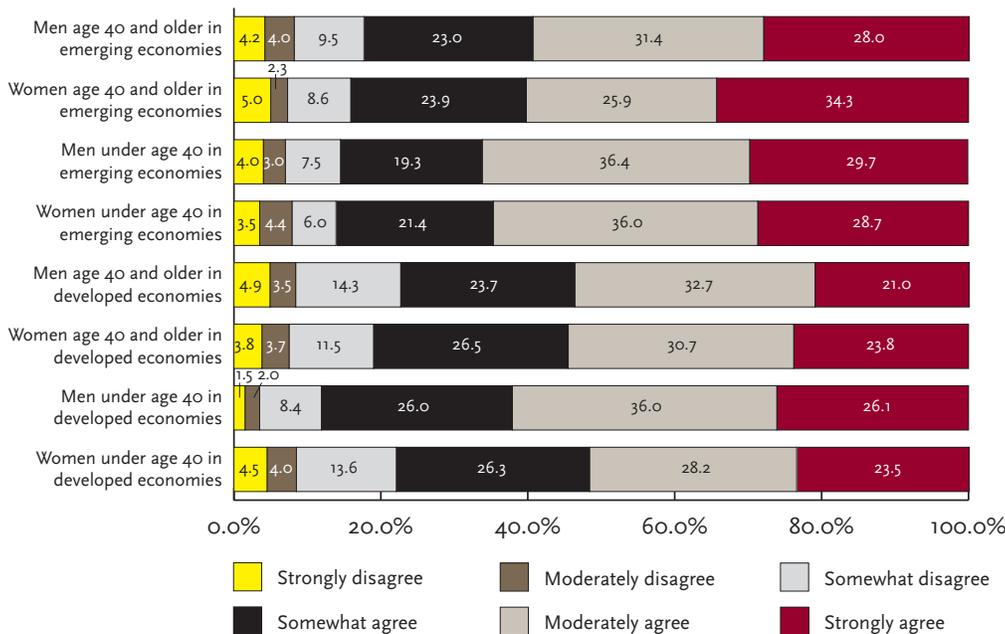


Which groups of employees were most likely to report that their supervisor looks and thinks about issues flexibly, from many points of view?

- Employees with supervisory responsibilities were 1.33 times as likely as those without supervisory responsibilities to agree with the statement that their supervisor looks at issues flexibly, from many different points of view.
- Employees in service occupations were 1.30 times as likely as those in managerial occupations to agree with that statement.
- Of all respondents in the ten-country subgroup, 82.7 percent agreed (somewhat/moderately/strongly) with the statement, “My supervisor proactively seeks different views and perspectives”; 17.3 percent disagreed (somewhat/moderately/strongly). However, as noted in Figure 4 below, the percentages varied by gender, age, and whether the respondent worked in a country with an emerging or developed economy.

We found that women who are 40 and older in emerging economies were the group most likely to strongly agree with the statement, “My supervisor proactively seeks different views and perspectives.”

Figure 4. “My supervisor proactively seeks different views and perspectives”:
Percentages of responses by gender, age, and country’s economy



*Which groups of employees were most likely to report that their supervisors displayed flexible thinking?**

- Employees with supervisory responsibilities were 1.31 times as likely as those without supervisory responsibilities to agree with the statement that their supervisor proactively seeks different views and perspectives.
- Women were only 0.83 times as likely as men to agree that their supervisor proactively seeks different views and perspectives.

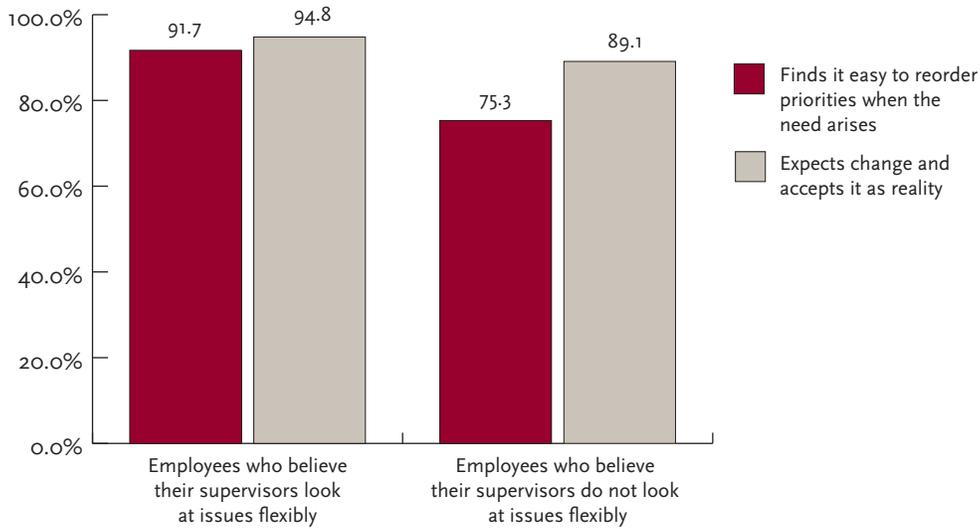
Flexible thinking: Linking self-assessments to assessments of supervisors

As shown in Figure 5, employees who view their supervisors as flexible thinkers (that is, they moderately to strongly agreed that “My supervisor looks at issues flexibly from many different points of view”) were more likely to state that they find it easy to reorder their own priorities (91.7 percent) than were those who moderately to strongly disagreed with that statement (75.3 percent). Those who view their supervisors as flexible thinkers were also more likely to expect change (94.8 percent) than were those who view their supervisors as inflexible thinkers (89.1 percent.)

This suggests that a relationship exists between employees’ perceptions of their supervisors’ practice of flexible thinking and their assessments of their own practice of this skill.

* Figures are based on odds ratios from random-effects logistic regression controlling for the following: whether 40 or older, whether a supervisor, whether female, whether part-time, whether has eldercare responsibilities, whether has childcare responsibilities, occupation (managerial, professional/technical, service/sales, other), and whether an emerging economy. Random effects were used to adjust for correlation within sites. See Table A1 in the appendix for all odds ratios.

Figure 5. Employees who are “flexible thinkers” shown as percentages of those who do and do not view their supervisors as flexible thinkers



Note: Differences were significant for “Expects change” ($F=87.61, p<.001$) and for “Finds it easy to reorder priorities” ($F=235.0, p<.001$).

Flexible Work Options and Flexible Thinking

The Generations of Talent survey asked employees questions about their experience of different types of flexible options:

- flexibility in the number of hours worked, such as part-time work or part-year work
- flexible work schedules, such as changes in starting and quitting times or choices about shifts
- flexible place, such as being able to work from home or at a different worksite in the organization
- options for time off, such as paid/unpaid leave for dependent care or paid/unpaid sabbatical
- flexibility in changing career path, such as being able to transfer to a job with reduced or increased responsibilities

Before we examined the relationship between flexible work options and flexible thinking, we considered how important flexible work options, in general, are to the respondents.

Employee ratings of the importance of workplace flexibility

Overwhelmingly, the respondents reported that flexibility in the workplace is important to them, with nearly half (47.3 percent) reporting that it is “very important.”

We found that women in developed economies (younger and older than 40) are the most likely to consider flexibility in the workplace “very important.”

Figure 6. Employee ratings of the importance of flexibility in the workplace

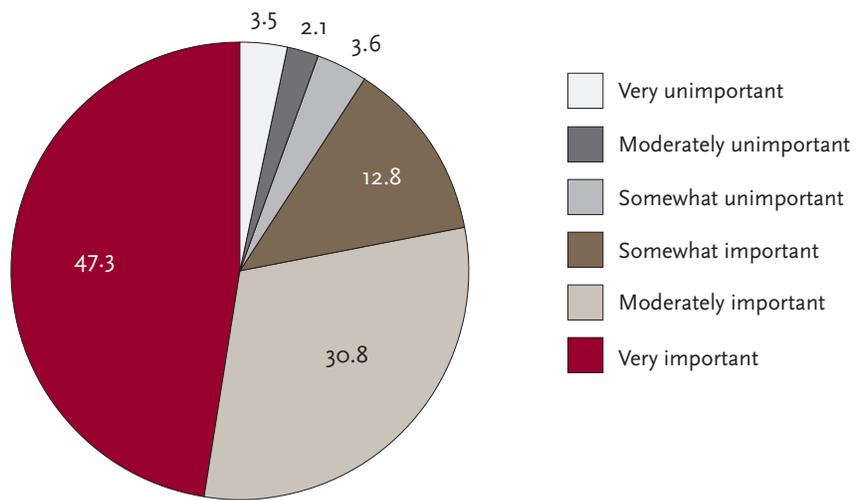
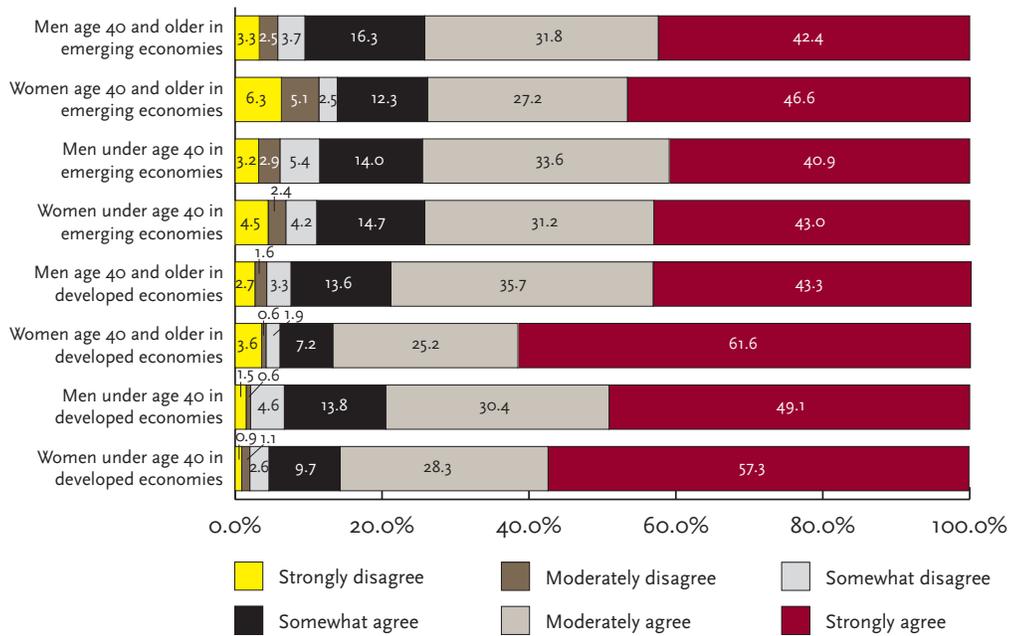


Figure 7. Importance of flexibility in the workplace:
Percentages of responses by gender, age, and country's economy



Which groups of employees were most likely to indicate that flexible work options are important to them?

- Women were 1.31 times more likely than men to consider workplace flexibility important.
- Employees in occupations designated “other” were 0.71 times as likely as those in managerial occupations to consider flexibility important.

Employee reports of flexible work options at the workplace

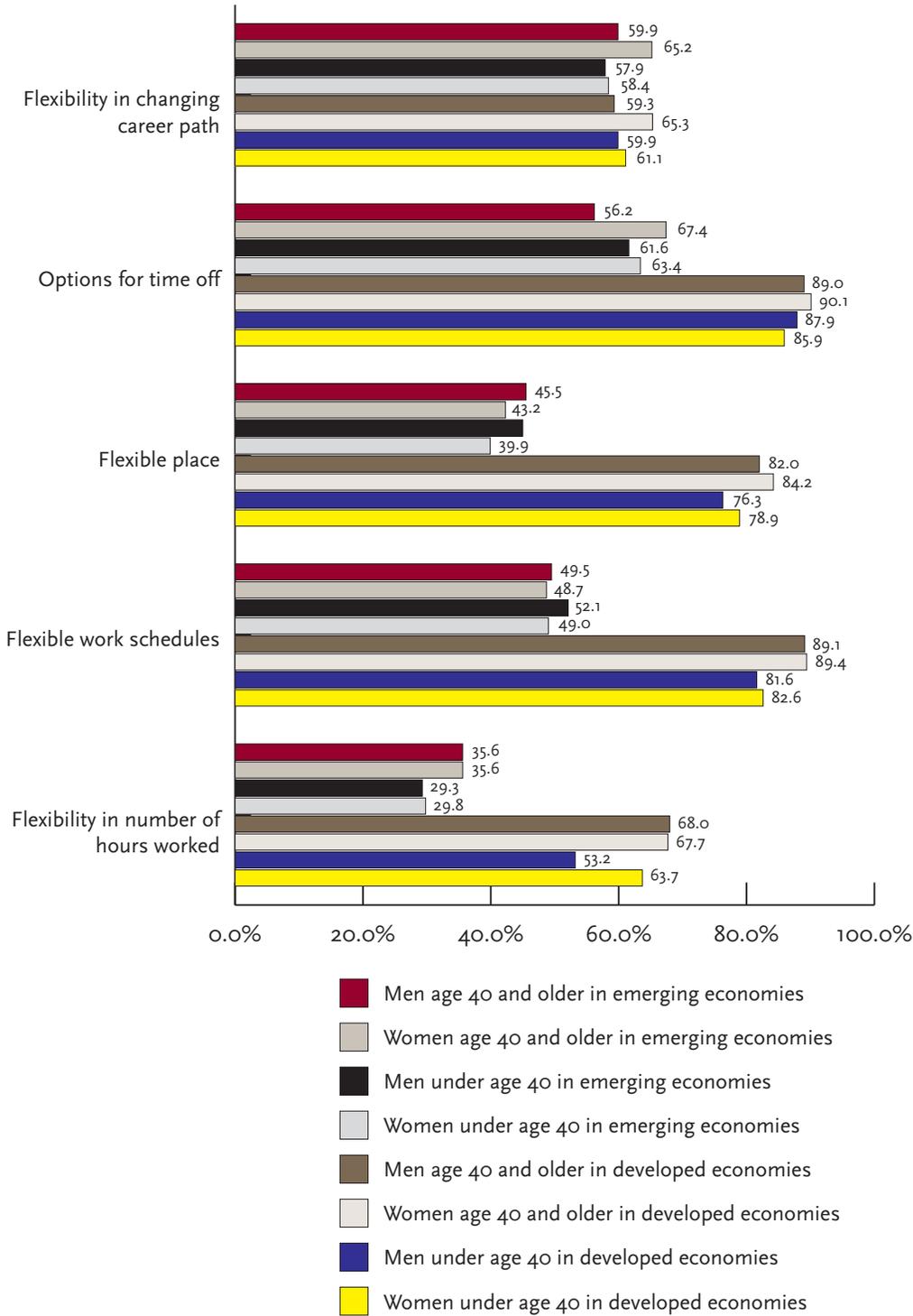
Given how important flexible work options are to employees working in countries around the world, we were interested in the access that the respondents have to these options.

Of all respondents in the ten-country subgroup, nearly three-quarters reported having access to time off (paid or unpaid). Slightly less than half reported that they have flexibility in the number of hours they work. Specifically:

- 74.7 percent stated that options for time off, such as paid/unpaid leave for dependent care or paid/unpaid sabbatical, are available at their workplaces
- 67.1 percent stated that flexible work schedules, such as changes in starting and quitting times or choices about shifts, are available at their workplaces
- 60.6 percent stated that flexible place, such as being able to work from home or at a different worksite in the organization, is available at their workplaces
- 60.6 percent stated that flexibility in changing career path, such as being able to transfer to a job with reduced or increased responsibilities, is available at their workplaces
- 47.1 percent stated that flexibility in the number of hours worked, such as part-time work or part-year work, is available at their workplaces
- 47.1 percent stated that flexibility in the number of hours worked, such as part-time work or part-year work, is available at their workplaces

The employees' responses suggest that options for time off, flexible place, flexible work schedule, and flexibility in number of hours worked are noticeably more available in developed economies (regardless of the age and gender of respondents.) However, flexibility in changing career path is not more available in developed economies than in emerging economies (see Figure 8.)

Figure 8. Awareness of flexibility options:
Percentages by gender, age, and country's economy



Employee use of flexible work options at the workplace

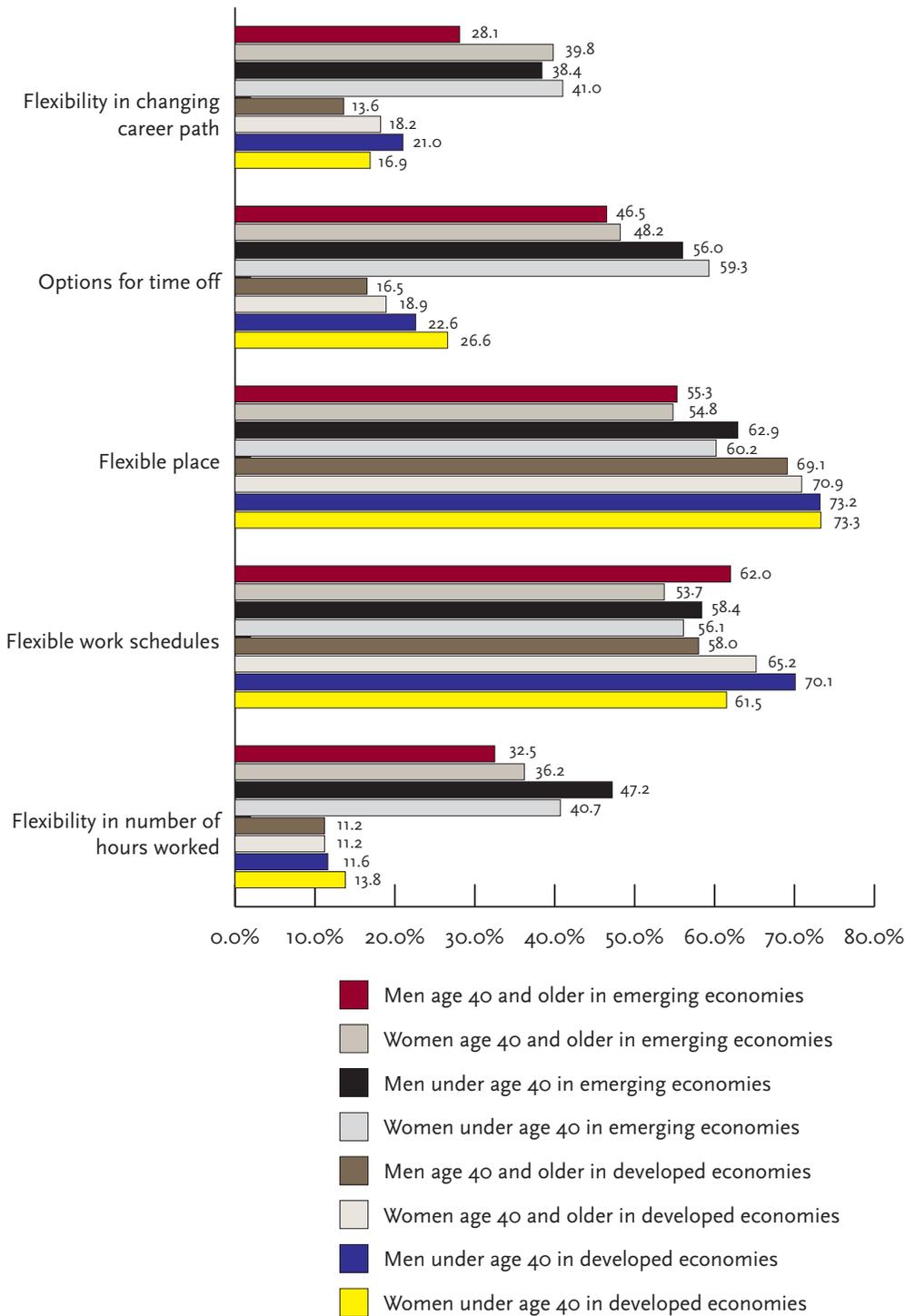
While we expected employees to indicate that flexible work options are important to them, we wondered whether employees who have access to these options actually use them. We found significant variation in the percentages of employees who use different types of flexible work options. While two out of three (66.6 percent) reported that they had taken advantage of the flexible option during the previous year, only about one in five (21.8 percent) indicated that they had taken advantage of options for flexibility in the number of hours worked.

Of the respondents in the ten-country subgroup who reported that flexible work options are available at their workplaces:

- 21.8 percent said they had taken advantage of the option of used flexibility in the number of hours worked, such as part-time work or part-year work, during the previous year
- 28.0 percent reported having taken advantage of the option of a flexible career path, such as being able to transfer to a job with reduced or increased responsibilities, during the previous year
- 35.4 percent said they had used options for time off, such as paid/unpaid leave for dependent care or a paid or unpaid sabbatical, during the previous year
- 60.6 percent stated that flexibility in changing career path, such as being able to transfer to a job with reduced or increased responsibilities, is available at their workplaces
- 60.5 percent reported having used flexible work schedules, such as changes in starting and quitting times or choices about shifts, during the previous year
- 66.6 percent said they had taken advantage of the option of flexible place, such as being able to work from home or at a different worksite in the organization, during the previous year.

Among those who have access to flexible work options, the ones they use most commonly (both in developing and emerging economies) are flexible work schedules and flexible place (Figure 9). Flexibility in number of hours worked, options for time off, and changing career path are used much more commonly in developed economies.

Figure 9. Use of flexibility options:
Percentages by gender, age, and country's economy



The Importance of Access to Workplace Flexibility, Use of Flexible Work Options, and Flexible Thinking

Do employees' assessments of their own capacity for flexible thinking have an effect on their attitudes toward their work?

Our data show that both of the indicators of employees' flexible thinking—readiness for change and willingness to adapt—are related to employees' work engagement and their organizational commitment.

Do employees' perceptions of their supervisors' flexible thinking have an effect on employees' work attitudes?

Both indicators of supervisors' flexible thinking are related to employees' work engagement and their organizational commitment.

Does access to flexible work options have an effect on employees' work attitudes?

Our data show that access to at least one flexible work option enhances employees' level of engagement in their work and their commitment to their organizations

Does use of one or more flexible work options affect employees' attitudes toward their work?

While use of at least one flexible work option increased the level of organizational commitment, we did not find this effect on work engagement. (It is important to remember, of course, that use of flexible work options could be related to other important employee outcomes.)

Table 3. Effects of flexible thinking and flexible practices on work engagement and organizational commitment

	Work engagement				Organizational commitment			
	b	se	t		b	se	t	
Employees' assessment of own flexible thinking								
Whether expects change	0.49	0.06	8.14	***	0.51	0.06	8.94	***
Whether can easily reorder priorities	0.58	0.05	11.00	***	0.55	0.04	12.50	***
Employees' perceptions of supervisors' flexible thinking								
Whether considers supervisor a flexible thinker	0.29	0.06	5.12	***	0.39	0.04	9.14	***
Whether believes supervisor proactively seeks different points of view	0.38	0.05	7.43	***	0.36	0.05	7.19	***
Access								
Whether has access to one or more flexible options	0.13	0.06	2.25	*	0.14	0.05	2.78	**
Use								
Whether uses one or more flexible options	-0.05	0.05	-1.09		0.08	0.04	2.05	*
Constant	3.53	0.10	34.84	***	2.17	0.10	22.57	***

b=unstandardized regression coefficients; se=standard error of the unstandardized regression coefficients; t=ratio of coefficients and standard errors

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

Conclusion

Previous studies have provided ample evidence that access to and use of flexible work options are linked to positive outcomes, such as fewer episodes of stress related to work and family. However, employers who want to support and sustain employees' positive attitudes about their work and their organizations can go a step further, and encourage employees to apply flexible thinking not only to the structure of their work but also to the work's content.

Appendix

Table A1. Odds ratios from random-effects logistic regressions

	Expects change		Reorders priorities		Has a supervisor who is flexible		Has a supervisor who is proactive		Believes flexibility is important	
Whether 40 or older	0.82		1.09		1.08		0.89		0.84	
Whether a supervisor	1.22		1.38	**	1.33	**	1.31	**	1.08	
Whether female	0.94		0.97		0.91		0.83	*	1.31	*
Whether part-time	0.53		1.31		0.90		0.66		1.33	
Whether has elder care responsibilities	0.99		0.82		0.89		0.99		0.99	
Whether has child care responsibilities	0.99		0.96		1.01		1.08		1.18	
Occupation (ref=managerial)										
Professional/technical	0.67	*	0.79		0.98		0.82		1.29	
Service/sales	0.95		1.32	*	1.30	*	1.15		0.96	
Other	0.59	**	0.70	*	0.98		0.87		0.71	*
Whether an emerging economy	0.63		0.67		1.05		0.97		0.71	
N	6328		6330		6236		6232		6790	

N=sample size

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

Note: "Moderately agree" to "Strongly agree" were coded as 1; while "Moderately disagree" to "Strongly disagree" were coded as 0.

Table A2. Coefficients from random-effects regressions

	Work engagement				Organizational commitment			
	b	se	t		b	se	t	
Whether 40 or older	0.35	0.03	10.65	***	0.25	0.03	8.11	***
Whether a supervisor	0.04	0.04	0.94		-0.01	0.04	-0.30	
Whether female	-0.02	0.04	-0.55		0.03	0.03	0.92	
Whether part-time	0.44	0.21	2.13	*	0.46	0.17	2.71	**
Whether has elder care responsibilities	0.02	0.05	0.35		0.05	0.04	1.35	
Whether has child care responsibilities	0.10	0.03	3.35	**	0.05	0.03	1.77	
Occupation (ref=managerial)								
Professional/technical	-0.23	0.05	-4.50	***	-0.03	0.04	-0.69	
Service/sales	0.08	0.05	1.67		0.13	0.04	3.26	**
Other	-0.19	0.06	-3.38	**	0.05	0.05	0.90	
Whether working in an emerging economy	0.65	0.04	18.27	***	0.54	0.04	15.57	***
Whether expects change	0.49	0.06	8.14	***	0.51	0.06	8.94	***
Whether can easily reorder priorities	0.58	0.05	11.00	***	0.55	0.04	12.50	***
Whether considers supervisor a flexible thinker	0.29	0.06	5.12	***	0.39	0.04	9.14	***
Whether believes supervisor proactively seeks different points of view	0.38	0.05	7.43	***	0.36	0.05	7.19	***
Whether has access to one or more flexible options	0.13	0.06	2.25	*	0.14	0.05	2.78	**
Whether uses one or more flexible options	-0.05	0.05	-1.09		0.08	0.04	2.05	*
Constant	3.53	0.10	34.84	***	2.17	0.10	22.57	***
N	6039				6210			

b=unstandardized regression coefficients; se=standard error of the unstandardized regression coefficients;
t=ratio of coefficients and standard errors

N=sample size

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

About the Sloan Center on Aging & Work

Established in 2005, the Sloan Center on Aging & Work at Boston College promotes quality of employment as an imperative for the 21st century multi-generational workforce. We integrate evidence from research with insights from workplace experiences to inform innovative organizational decision-making. Collaborating with business leaders and scholars in a multi-disciplinary dialogue, the center develops the next generation of knowledge and talent management.

Since our founding, we have conducted more than 20 studies in collaboration with employers: for example, studies on “Age & Generations,” “Talent Management,” and “Generations of Talent.” Studies under way are “Assessing the Impact of Time and Place Management” and “Engaged as We Age.” The Sloan Center on Aging & Work is grateful for the continued support of the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation.

For more information about the Sloan Center on Aging & Work at Boston College, please visit: <http://agingandwork.bc.edu>.

Contact us:

The Sloan Center on Aging & Work
140 Commonwealth Avenue
3 Lake Street Building
Chestnut Hill, MA 02467
Phone: 617.552.9195 • Fax: 617.552.9202

Authors

Marcie Pitt-Catsoupes, Ph.D. directs the Sloan Center on Aging & Work and is an associate professor in the Graduate School of Social Work, with an appointment at the Carroll School of Management at Boston College.

Tay McNamara, Ph.D. is a senior research associate for the Sloan Center on Aging & Work.

About the Generations of Talent (GOT) Study

To gather business-relevant information about the work experiences of employees of diverse ages who work in different countries, the Sloan Center on Aging & Work at Boston College conducted the Generations of Talent (GOT) Study.

From May 2009 through November 2010, the Sloan Center on Aging & Work collaborated with seven multinational companies. In total, 24 worksites in 11 countries participated in the study, and 11,298 employees responded to the survey. Employees were invited to complete one 30-minute online survey during work time, which they were able to access on a secure website. The survey was translated into Japanese, Mandarin Chinese, Brazilian Portuguese, and Spanish.

The survey consists of core questions (questions that were included in the surveys made available to each respondent) and module questions (additional, complementary questions, a subset of which was randomly assigned to the respondents). The survey focused on employees' perceptions of their work experiences, workplace-based resources, demographic information, and employees' assessments of their health and well-being at work and in their lives in general.