



Flexibility and ROI: Asking the Right Questions

The Return on Investment (ROI) of Creating a Flexible Culture: *Asking the Right Questions*

Leaders will ask, “Why we should we manage people any differently than we always have?” The short answer is that the ground has shifted. To have the best talent and free people to produce all that you need them to, organizations must reinvent themselves. They must become genuinely flexible, or they will not be able to compete.

On New Ground

People live and work in a fundamentally different way today than they once did. They invest more of themselves in their work because their work requires it. They need more say over it and expect more satisfaction from it, or they leave. They have 24-7 work lives that overlap with 24-7 personal lives, increasing the chance of conflict and distraction.

These people are *the new human capital*. They expect more, require more, and offer more. Powerful contributors but torn in two directions, they hold the reins to organizational performance because their creativity, knowledge, and relationships determine whether the organization flourishes.

Organizational systems that have promoted and rewarded those with a singular focus on work must now recognize that this focus is simply not possible -- even for the best performers. Managers must recognize that employees' time is no longer an unlimited resource at their disposal, reward results instead of time invested, and offer career patterns that allow time out.

To meet business needs they must grant employees greater choice about how, when and where they work and then hold them accountable for results.

Asking The Right Question

To those who would ask, 'What is the Return On Investment?' we would say, without question, it is sizable -- as evidenced by an avalanche of research. (Download [Research on the Impact of Flexibility on Business Performance](#))

Still, focusing on the ROI alone may be asking the wrong question. Instead, leaders should ask themselves, '**What is it worth?**' What is it potentially worth to the organization:

- To expand the range of ideas and problem solvers?
- To achieve an alignment of purpose and culture?
- To create new knowledge in an atmosphere of mutuality (where employees openly contribute their best ideas)?
- To increase the sense of loyalty, affiliation and ownership throughout the organization?
- To attract and keep a higher level of knowledge capital and increase the workforce's ability to focus, create, and build relationship capital?
- To replace the sense of a "transactional relationship" (I will get mine) between managers and employees with a mutual commitment to common goals?
- To increase the proportion of employees who are fully engaged, motivated by the work itself and require minimal oversight?
- To reduce waste, errors, mis-hires, disengagement, turnover, and burnout?
- To have the nimbleness to respond quickly to market forces and increase efficiency?



- To enhance customer experience and increase customer satisfaction and retention?

Becoming a more flexible organization is not simply a new initiative—tacked on to the ‘normal’ way of doing things. It asks leaders and managers to summon the personal and organizational courage to examine what they believe and how they operate, and to change from the inside out. But in return, it offers the opportunity to leverage this new human capital for all it's worth. For those who do, the dividends can be enormous.

Learn how FlexPaths can help your organization use flexibility to:

- Make the most of existing talent
- Solve for organizational challenges
- Move the organization above the pack

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