

Eli's Rehab Report

Staffing Strategies: Offer Your Employees Flexible Work Arrangements

If you don't, someone else will.

Many of your employees may want to switch over to a flexible work arrangement (FWA). And if they don't get it through you, they could be flying the coop to go to another company that's willing to provide it. Here's how you can retain your best employees through FWAs, if your company would allow them.

Why do you need FWAs? Balancing work and family has played an increasing role in the workforce, says **Gregory P. Smith** in his article, "Flexible Work Arrangements Help Retain Good People." One of the reasons for this is the increasingly diverse workforce. Another reason is that our workforce is shrinking, he says.

With a shortage of good people and an increased need for those people to balance their work and family lives, you might need FWAs to keep your employees happy with your company. With FWAs, you can offer your employees a chance to pick their own schedule, rather than the same 9-to-5 schedule that could be keeping them from their families.

When you offer FWAs to your employees, you'll find that they are more loyal, committed and productive for you and the company, says Smith.

The biggest challenge for you is that your employees may never even ask you for an FWA. Approximately 59 percent of respondents in the survey said they never asked their employers to change their schedules because they were afraid their employers would deny them.

What can you do? Consider your employees' and your department's needs. Remember that FWAs usually involve fewer work hours, says Smith. If your department can take a few FWAs, spread the word to your employees.

If you notice one of your employees is struggling to make it into work on time because she has to get her daughter to school, offer an FWA to ease her stress and help her be a more reliable employee.