

# 2014 ACC Global Work-Life Balance Report

*Association of Corporate Counsel*

September 2014

## **OBJECTIVE:**

The survey was conducted in order to better understand work-life balance and their universal challenges along with their impact on business outcomes. The report examines the problem in-house lawyers face when work demands compete with caregiving and parenting responsibilities.

## **METHODS USED:**

The Association of Corporate Counsel reached out to over 30,000 lawyers. 2,004 responses were collected from corporate counsel in 43 countries.

## **KEY FINDINGS:**

- Overall, 58% of in-house counsels are somewhat to very happy with their work-life balance.
  - Respondents from Europe are less happy with their work-life balance compared to those in Canada and the U.S.
- For many, work-life balance had a significant impact on the decision to join the in-house counsel community.
- Organizational support for work-life balance heavily influences employees' intentions to leave or stay with the company.
- In-house counsel who take advantages of work-life benefits such as vacation days and sick days often end up working during the days off due to the influence by technology and end up answering work emails and responding to clients while away from work.
- 1 in 4 respondents have left past jobs for one that better supports their caregiving role.
- Respondents expressed the desire to take advantage of programs such as flexible scheduling and telecommuting, however they did not do so due to their fear of losing out on advancement opportunities.
- For many of the respondents, they are the only ones in the company who can perform the work, therefore, they need to be available all the time.
- Many indicated they felt sacrificing their personal life is the cost of succeeding in their work role.
- 55% of respondents are caregivers (individuals who have responsibility of someone who needs assistance such as children under 21 and elders).
  - There was no difference in happiness with work-life balance between caregivers and non-care givers.
  - More caregivers indicated difficulty in balancing personal responsibilities with demands of the job than non-caregivers.

- Caregivers were less likely to say they are considering changing their role or company in the next year when they work at an organization that offers supportive benefits such as flexible scheduling or telecommuting.
- 70% of females and 38% of males believe being a caregiver has had a negative impact on opportunity for career advancement.
- Telecommuting, flexible work schedule, and maternity/paternity leave are the benefits that companies frequently offer.
- Availability of childcare vouchers was the top benefit selected based on comfort of use.
  - Respondents indicated that when childcare vouchers are offered, they were better able to balance the demands of the legal field along with personal commitments.

#### **CONCLUSION:**

- Legal departments should adopt a policy to value employees based on performance rather than time they spend in the office.
- Organizations and managers should develop and adopt strategies to support work-life balance as a means to both attract and retain valuable and talented lawyers.
- Benefits of offering childcare/eldercare support include employee work retention, improved productivity, and less stress, improved moral and physical health.
- Organizations should provide education and training to supervisors and managers on having caregivers on the job and on retaining great performers.

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