Appendix

The Flexible Work and Well-Being Center is part of a national network, the Work, Family & Health Network, sponsored by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The goals of this initiative are to conduct interdisciplinary evidence-based research on work and family programs and policies in multiple workplace settings. The Flexible Work and Well-Being Center in particular investigates how organizations can adapt their policies and practices in ways that promote the health of employees and their families. The Flexible Work and Well-Being Study is a multi-method research study. The research design includes conducting in-depth interviews, observations of teams, observations of the change process, analyses of health care claims data, focus groups and surveys. This summary report contains information from the Wave I survey component of the study.

Eligibility Criteria

Eligibility for being in the study was employment at the company headquarters. People excluded were those who had already gone through the initiative and contingency workers.

Recruitment

The Flexible Work and Well-Being Center sent out an email inviting respondents to complete the web-based survey. Each employee had a unique code and password so we could ensure that each person completed only one survey and so we can send reminders and gift cards to the appropriate people. It was explained that survey responses were confidential, that the survey would take about 45 minutes to complete, and that a $25.00 gift card would be awarded to those who completed the survey. The Wave I A survey was opened to respondents in February and March of 2006. Wave IB was opened in June, 2006 and Wave IC was opened in August, 2006. Respondents were given about 4 weeks to complete the survey.

Sample

1243 employees were invited to participate in the survey. 993 began it and 923 completed it 100% of the way through, for a total response rate of 75%. 506 of those invited were in teams that would start the “FREE” initiative in the next year. 386 of them completed it, for a 76% response rate. We invited 731 employees from ‘traditional’ teams that were not scheduled to participate in “FREE”. A total of 544 completed the survey for a 74% response rate.
These employees are not more likely than others in our survey to report that family interferes with their work responsibilities. Instead, we suspect this group may do all that they need for their families and at work, but not make the time to take care of themselves. They score quite low on a measure of having enough time to take care of themselves. 66.3% report scores between "sometimes having enough time" and "never having enough time" to get enough sleep. 71.7% agree that they only "sometimes" or "do not at all" have enough time to be by themselves, 75% do not have enough time to exercise and keep in shape and 80% do not have enough time to be active in their community.

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"I am able to better balance my work and personal life because of amenities provided to me by Streamline on the job (i.e. workout facility, banking, cafeteria, pharmacy, etc.)."
Employees who have children with a disability or chronic condition

Having a family places many types of challenges on an individual employee. Having a child with a disability or chronic condition is a unique type of family challenge. This survey investigates who has a child with special needs, what conditions or disabilities they have, and how the family manages these challenges. This survey asks about physical, mental, and emotional disabilities and how they affect the child's play activities, school work or arrangements at school. We also ask if these employees have children with a chronic condition that requires them to follow a special diet, attend therapy, take prescribed medicines, see a doctor regularly, or have been hospitalized for their condition.

9.3% of employees have a child with a disability or chronic condition. Counting only those with children, 24.7% have a child with a disability or a chronic condition. These workers are overwhelmingly in the exempt category (94.6%). Most of the employees who are parenting a child with a disability or chronic condition are typically managers (51.6%), followed by professional (28.6%), technical positions (6.5%), executives (4.4%) and then administrative or clerical positions (3.3%). There is about an equal split between those who supervise others and those who don’t (47.3% vs. 52.7% respectively).

There are slightly more men with children with a disability or chronic health condition (52.7%) and most of these workers are married (90.3%). Most of the workers who have children with a disability or chronic condition are between the ages of 29 and 39 (52.7%), 39.8% are 40 to 60 and only 7.5% are 29 or younger. Slightly less than half of this population report that they themselves are in excellent or very good health (47.8%), 31.7% report good health and 7.2% report fair or poor health. Most of these workers have either a bachelor or graduate degree (70%). As with the Streamline headquarters employees overall, most are white (89.2%).

Despite the family challenges of raising children with disabilities and chronic conditions, 98% of these employees say “no” when we ask if they plan to leave the workforce to devote more time to caring for children. (This was a question asked of all parents.) This is particularly notable because 86.2% of this sample works more than 40 hours per week with 27% working 55 hours or more per week.

“There should be more flexible hours. Start time and finish time put me right in the middle of rush hour. I waste a lot of my life sitting in traffic, and I hold my job accountable for that.”
**HIGHLIGHTS**

**Introduction to Study**

This preliminary report summarizes the findings from the Flexible Work and Well-Being Study. We conducted a survey of 923 employees at the headquarters of a national retail organization that we call Streamline. This report describes the work experiences, personal lives, and health and well-being of employees, as part of a larger study to understand the connections between work, family, and health. We will be re-interviewing this same sample six months later to capture any changes in their work environment, health, and well-being.

**Nature of the Workforce**

The Streamline employees are young compared to other white-collar workplaces, and about evenly divided between men and women. One-third are single, one-third are married or partnered (but do not have children), and one-third are parents. 14% provide care to an adult relative and 24.7% of the parents in this study have a child with a chronic health condition or a disability.

**Work Environment**

- **Hard Work.** The Streamline employees are a hardworking group! On average, they report putting in 47.8 hours per week on their Streamline jobs.

- **High Job Demands but also High Control.** We examine employees’ perceptions of control over their work (including how, when, and where they do their work) because previous research has shown that “job control” is closely related to work effectiveness and to health and well-being. Streamline employees report high psychological job demands, as well as high control at work. This suggests a climate of high involvement in their jobs.

- **High Schedule Control by Some.** Employees at higher ranks in the organization tend to have more schedule control over when and where they work. Parents score higher on some aspects of job control, but this difference may reflect the fact that parents are also older than other employees and so more likely to have moved up in the organization, achieving jobs with higher autonomy.

- **Ideal-Real Work Hours Gap.** The average gap between actual and ideal work hours in our study is 7.5 hours. Employees’ ideal work hours average 41.1 hours per week. Women, supervisors, and managers are among those who want, in an ideal world, to reduce work hours most.

Managers experience the lowest scores on the “Time Adequacy Scale” (4.65), followed by professionals (5.06), and then technical, administrative, and sales employees (5.31). Supervisors have a lower average score (4.40) on the scale than non-supervisors (5.17). Ratings on the “Time Adequacy” scale do not differ by gender. Neither do they differ by employees’ exempt status (salaried/hourly) or whether employees have internal or external clients.
The lowest report of enough time is for participating in civic groups or being active in their community (3.85). Respondents report the highest "Enough Time Score" for socializing (5.75) which is still low on the 0-10 scale.

Evaluating Work

- **Good Job Assessments.** Most Streamline employees rate their own job performance as high. In fact, Streamline employees rate high in individual and team job performance, job involvement, organizational commitment, work engagement, satisfaction with job, coworkers, and managers. Employees typically have low intentions of turnover.

- **Team Performance is High.** Employees tend to rate their teams' performance as high. Those with external clients have higher ratings of both their own and their teams' job performance than those whose clients are internal. Hourly employees score their teams' performance higher than do salaried employees.

- **High Satisfaction.** Most Streamline employees report being satisfied or very satisfied with their jobs, coworkers, and managers. They score high on work engagement as well.

- **Burnout Differs by Age.** Most employees experience emotional exhaustion, a component of burnout, at least monthly. Employees in their 20s are more committed to the organization but slightly less engaged. They are also more likely to report burnout.

Work-Family Conflict and Enhancement

- **Some Work-Family Conflict.** Our study reveals that respondents are more likely to experience interference from work to family life than the other way around. Most employees we interviewed report some work-family conflicts. But they also tend to have fairly high family engagement and involvement.

- **Parents Report More Work-Family Conflict.** As we would expect, employees with children report the highest levels of work-family conflict, followed by those who are married (or partnered) but child-free and then by single employees.

- **Gender Differences.** Men report slight— but statistically significantly higher work-family conflict than women. Managers and executives report the highest levels of work-family conflict. Supervisors are more likely to report job spillover with their jobs affecting their personal lives in both positive and negative ways.
Health

- **Healthy Workforce.** Overall, the Streamline employees are quite a healthy group. Employees report both good physical and emotional health and have good health-related behaviors. This is partly expected because of their young age.

- **Parents Have More Health Problems.** Parents rank the lowest on self-reports of their overall health. Parents have more minor health problems (such as headaches and sore throats) and report the poorest quality sleep. They are also less likely to exercise and tend to have the highest body-mass index.

- **Time Pressures Highest for Working Parents and Managers.** In a series of questions asking whether employees have adequate time to take care of themselves, be involved in the community, be with their families, etc., parents and managers report the greatest lack of time in their lives.

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**Time Adequacy and Pressures**

We asked employees whether they have enough time for various personal care and community activities. The scores range from 0 to 10 with a greater score indicating greater feelings of having adequate time to do these activities. (10 is having plenty of time and 0 is having none.) The employees in our survey score a little low, an average of 4.98 on the “Time Adequacy” scale for activities such as preparing or eating healthy meals, keeping in shape, socializing, being by themselves, getting enough sleep/rest, nurturing their spiritual and/or creative side, completing housework and chores, participating in civic groups or being active in their community.
Exercise

Around half of this sample reports exercising 3-5 days a week or more, and only 11.2% of employees do not exercise at all. In general, non-supervisors (3.20) exercise more often than supervisors (2.89). Single employees without children exercise most frequently (3.36), followed by married employees without children (3.17), and those with a child at home exercise the least (2.92). Professionals exercise the most (3.26), followed by technicians/administrative/sales (3.04), and then managers (2.99). Age matters here again. Employees in their 20s exercise most frequently (3.42), followed by those between 40 and 60 (2.96) and employees in their 30s (2.90). Employees who work with external customers (3.45) exercise more than employees who work with internal customers (3.07). There is no significant difference in this measure by gender, and exempt status.

“The time I spent working outside of the office is my most productive work time.”
Introduction and Overview of the Flexible Work and Well-Being Study

Purpose of this Study

This report summarizes preliminary findings from an on-going research partnership between the University of Minnesota’s Flexible Work and Well-Being Center and a Fortune 500 retail organization that we call Streamline. This organization is pioneering an innovative culture change initiative to give employees more control over when, where and how they do their work. We call this initiative the Focus on Results for an Effective Work Environment initiative or “FREE.” (A confidentiality agreement precludes us from identifying the company or the specific initiative we are studying.)

The Goals of this Study Are To:

1. Describe the psychosocial work environment at Streamline’s corporate headquarters and investigate the work conditions that promote effectiveness, engagement, satisfaction and commitment to the organization.
2. Describe the personal lives and family experiences of employees at Streamline’s corporate headquarters and investigate how the work environment affects personal life and vice versa.
3. Describe the health and well-being of employees at Streamline’s corporate headquarters and investigate how the work environment affects health and health behaviors.
4. Investigate the ways in which the Focus on Results for an Effective Work Environment (“FREE”) initiative attempts to change the work environment, as well as any actual changes that may occur among employees participating in the “FREE” initiative.
5. Investigate whether and in what ways any changes produced by the “FREE” initiative affect employees’ effectiveness, engagement, satisfaction, commitment, personal lives (including work-family conflict), health and well-being.

Data Included in this Report

With Streamline’s cooperation, we are conducting a multi-method study of the work environment and “FREE.” The study involves surveys.

Smoking

Most Streamline employees do not smoke. In fact, 8 out of 10 employees do not smoke at all and only 5.7% of employees smoke every day or almost every day. Hourly employees are more apt to smoke than salaried employees. 72.4% of hourly employees and 85.6% of salaried employees do not smoke at all. Only 5.5% of salaried employees smoke everyday, while 15.5% of hourly employees do so. There is no significant difference in smoking by employees’ gender, age, family status, supervision status, job category, and internal/external customer status.

Alcohol Consumption

Over three-fourths (76.1%) of employees only drink alcoholic beverage 1-2 days a week or less, with only 7.7% of employees having an alcoholic beverage every day or almost every day. In general, men drink alcoholic beverages a little more frequently than women (mean of 2.98 vs. 2.57 on a scale of drinking frequency from 1 to 6, 6=everyday and 1=not at all). Single employees tend to consume alcohol more than others (2.96), followed by married or partnered employees raising children (2.72), and married (or partnered) employees who are child free (2.71). Salaried employees (2.80) drink more than hourly employees (2.48). There is no significant difference in this measure of alcohol consumption by age, supervision status, job category, and internal/external customer status.
The Body Mass Index (BMI) categories (a ratio of weight to height) classify a body mass index of 18.5 or less as underweight, 18.5-24.9 as “normal” weight, 25-29.9 as overweight and 30 or greater as obesity. Employees as a group score 26.08 on this scale of body mass index which is slightly over the “normal” weight category. Men score high (27.35) falling into the overweight range (25-29.9). Women score somewhat lower (24.87) but also tend to fall into the overweight range. Employees with a child at home score highest (26.66), followed by those married without a child (25.84) and those not married without child (25.59). Technical, administrative, and sales employees score high (26.62), followed closely by managers (26.52) and professionals (26.62). Employees above 40 typically have the highest BMI (27.54), followed by the 29-30 age category (26.76), and those in their 20s (24.80). Hourly workers average higher Body Mass Index (28.63) than salaried workers (25.91). There are no significant differences in BMI by supervisory status.

This report summarizes just a small part of the data we will draw on in the full study. We report here on the responses of 923 Streamline employees who completed our survey in February - September 2006. 75% of those we invited to participate completed this survey. Participants included those who would begin the “FREE” initiative later on and a large comparison group of employees who were not scheduled to begin the “FREE” initiative. We call these groups the “FREE” group and the “traditional group.” See the Appendix for more detail on the study.

This report is preliminary. It describes employees’ experiences at work and at home and their health and well-being at Time 1 - before the launching of the flexibility (“FREE”) initiative. We cannot investigate how “FREE” affects work, personal life, or health until we survey these same employees after they have implemented the “FREE” initiative.

Most of the numbers we report here are averages (means) for various questions or scales (sets of related questions). When we contrast the average scores of sub-groups of employees (e.g. women and men, supervisors and those who do not have supervisory responsibilities), we only report differences that are statistically significant. This means we are fairly certain they are not due to random variation but instead reflect real differences between subgroups. The results reported here are bivariate analyses (cross-tabulations and ANOVA) with appropriate statistical tests. Regression analyses that can isolate the effects of particular characteristics or work conditions, net of other traits, will be conducted in the future.
The Nature of the Workforce

Age, Occupational Category and Tenure

Streamline has a young workforce, even at their headquarters. In fact, half of the employees we surveyed are under age 32. The average (mean) age of this sample is 33.3, although employees who supervise others tend to be a bit older (on average 37.5 years old, compared to 32 years for those without supervisory responsibilities). There are age differences as well by occupational category: Managers and executives tend to be older (36.8 years), followed by technical, administrative, and sales employees (34.2), and professionals (30.4). Note that we group employees in two different ways: by whether they have supervisory responsibilities or not and by the occupational category they report (executive, manager, professional, technical, administrative, sales). These two classification systems overlap – managers and executives are also supervisors – but not perfectly. For example, some technical, administrative, or sales employees may also have some supervisory duties.

Given the youthfulness of this workforce, it is not surprising that their average tenure with Streamline is about four and a half years. Supervisors have been with Streamline the longest, around 6 years, compared to 4.2 years for employees who are not supervisors. Average tenure differs by job category as well: managers’ average tenure is 5.8 years, technical, administrative, and sales employees average 4.4 years employment at Streamline, and professionals have been with the firm around 4.0 years.

Gender Distinctions

This sample is equally divided between men and women. The men we interviewed tend to be a bit older (average age of 34.12 years) than the women (average age of 32.45 years).

There is also a significant difference between men and the women employees in the average time they have worked at Streamline. Men have worked at the company for an average of 4.94 years, while women have been there a slightly shorter time period (4.45 years).

Not Going to Doctor When Needed

About half (49.7%) of employees either agree or strongly agree with the statement that sometimes they are so busy they don’t go to the doctor even when they should. Overall, employees score 2.48 on this item (ranked from 1 to 4) which asks whether the employees feels that, “Sometimes I’m so busy that I don’t go to the doctor even when I should” (4=strongly agree). Supervisors (2.67) are more apt to agree with this statement than are non-supervisor (2.42). Managers report high agreement with this statement (2.59), followed by professionals (2.48) and then technical, administrative, and sales employees (2.30). Employees in their 40s and 50s (2.54) tend to report highest agreement with this statement, followed by those in their 30s (2.52), and younger employees in their 20s (2.41). There is no significant difference in this measure by employees’ gender, family status, salaried/hourly status, and internal/external customer status.

Sleep Quality

Employees score 2.71 on a scale from 1 to 4 (1=very bad and 4=very good) which assesses their overall sleep quality in the past four weeks. Non-supervisors (2.74) tend to have better sleep quality than supervisors (2.61). Salaried employees (2.72) have better sleep quality than hourly employees (2.57). Married or partnered employees with no child at home typically score highest (2.78), followed by the singles with no child (2.73) and then those with a child at home (2.64). Employees in their 20s (2.78) report the best sleep quality, followed by those in their 40s and 50s (2.67), and then employees in their 30s (2.66). There is no significant difference in sleep quality by gender, job category, or internal/external customer status.
Well-Being Scale

Another scale measures employees' sense of well-being. Employees score an average of 5.02 on a scale from 1 to 6 (6 indicating greater well-being) assessing subjective well-being. A sample question is, “In many ways, I feel disappointed about my achievements in life (reverse labeled).”

Women tend to score higher (5.07) on overall well-being than men (4.97). Supervisors tend to report better overall psychological well-being (5.15) than others (4.98). Salaried employees (5.04) typically score higher than hourly employees (4.69) in terms of their feelings of well-being. Managers also typically have higher well-being (5.12), followed by professionals (5.04) and technical, administrative, and sales employees (4.80). A sense of psychological well-being also varies by age, with those in their 20s scoring highest (5.11), followed by employees in their 30s (4.99), and then those aged 40-60 (4.88). Employees working with external customers tend to report better overall well-being (5.09) than those who work with internal customers (4.93). There is no statistically significant difference in psychological well-being scores of Streamline employees in our sample by their family situation.

Health Related Behaviors

Coming to Work Sick

Employees score on average 2.56 on a scale from 1 to 4 (4 being strongly agree) which measures “the pressure employees feel to come to work when they are sick.” In fact, close to 50% either strongly agree or agree with this statement.

Supervisors as a group tend to experience higher pressure to come to work sick (2.64) than non-supervisors (2.53). Professionals also experience high pressure to come to work sick (2.59), followed by managers (2.58) and technician/administrative/sales (2.43). There is no significant difference in employees feeling pressure to come to work sick based upon their gender, family status, age, salaried/hourly status, or internal/external customer status.

Family Circumstances

The sample is about evenly divided by family status. A third of those we surveyed are not married or partnered (29.2%), a little over a third are married or partnered but do not have a child at home (33.5%), and almost four in ten are parents with children at home (37.3%). Most of the parents live with their spouse or partner.

Family status reflects, in part, employees’ ages. Those who are neither married or partnered nor raising children are on average 30.2 years of age, those married or partnered but without children are around age 31.8 years old, and those who are parents (and mostly married or partnered) are the oldest at 37.1 years. Another way of looking at age differences is that only 11.5% of employees in their 20s are parents, while more than half of employees in their 30s and almost 6 in 10 employees ages 40-60 have at least one child at home (52.6% and 60.4% respectively).

Almost 5 percent of the Streamline employees in our study live with their parents or other adult relatives. There is a significant difference by family status. One in ten of those who are not married and not parents are living with their own parents or other adult relatives, compared to only 2.4% of the married but child-free employees, and 2.4% of those who are parents themselves.

The proportion of our respondents who are married or living with a partner (64.5%), ranges from 56.3% of those in their 20s to 80.6% of those 30 and older. In this sample more men than women are married (71.4% to 64%) and men are also more apt to be parents (with their children living with them).

Those who are parents as well as employees tend to have been with the company the longest, on average 5.65 years, compared to an average of 4.5 years for those without children.

Most managers are married or partnered (79.5%), while only around half of professionals (59%) and technical, administrative, and sales employees (64.2%) live with a spouse or partner. Most managers/executives are also parents (53.9%), compared to only 26.5% of professionals, and 34.3% of those in technical, administrative or sales occupations.
Adult Caregiving

Despite the youthfulness of the workforce, 14% are caring for other adults (most commonly infirm parents). Men are more likely to be engaged in such adult caregiving (59% vs 41% female). Whether employees are married or parents does not predict whether or not they are providing special attention or care for someone in their family (who is elderly, seriously ill or disabled). However, adult care provision is related to employees’ age. Among those in their 20s, only 12.2% provide special attention or care for a parent or other adult family member requiring care, while 12.3% in their 30s do, as do 18.3% for those in their 40s or older.

From Work to Home and Back

The average commute for the workers in this survey is 30.3 minutes. Commute time is longest for parents (34.26 minutes each way), followed by employees who are married or partnered but without children, who spend slightly less time in the commute (29.31 minutes). Employees who are neither married nor parents typically have the shortest commute to and from work (25.86 minutes). Commute time also varies by age. Employees in their 30s tend to spend longest time in commute (31.7 minutes), followed by employees in their 40s and 50s (31.0 minutes), and then employees in their 20s (28.7 minutes). Commute time does not vary by gender, occupational type, or supervisory status.

Almost half of the employees in our survey work at home or at another location from time to time. Respondents who supervise others are more apt to do so (74.3%), compared to those who don’t (53.6%). Employees working for internal customers are more prone to work off campus (60.7%) than those working for external customers (51.9%). Managers/executives are far more likely to work off campus (74.1%) than are technical, administrative, or sales employees (54.7%) or professionals (49.8%). Salaried employees are more likely to work at home (59.7%) than hourly employees (45.0%).

In terms of family status, we find those raising children are most likely to work off campus (72.0% work at home or elsewhere), followed by those who are neither married nor parents (50.2%) or else married but child-free (50.8%). There is also an age difference as to work location:

Minor Physical Symptoms

Employees report an average score of 3.33 on a minor physical symptoms scale which can range from 0 to 16 (0 indicating no reported physical symptoms in the last month and 16 indicating reporting all 16 physical symptoms listed in the last month). Examples of physical symptoms include headache, backache, dizziness or sore throat.

Women report on average more physical symptoms than do men (3.68 vs 3.02). Supervisors claim on average less physical symptoms than non-supervisors (3.43 vs 3.03). Employees raising children tend to have more physical symptoms (3.49) than those without a child (3.07). Professionals (3.53) report the most symptoms, followed by technicians (3.36) and managers/executives (3.09). Employees in their 30s report the most physical symptoms (3.70), followed by younger workers in their 20s (3.31) and then those aged 40-60 (2.83). There is no significant difference in reported physical symptoms of survey participants based on their supervisory status.

Emotional Health

Mastery

Employees score an average of 4.80 on a scale measuring their sense of personal mastery on a scale ranging from 1 to 6 where 6 indicates high mastery. Examples of typical items are, ‘I have little control over the things that happen to me (reverse labeled),’ and ‘I can do just about anything I really set my mind to.’ Mastery has been shown to predict well-being and those with low mastery are vulnerable to stress.

Supervisors (5.00) tend to have higher mastery levels than non-supervisors (4.74). Managers score highest on personal mastery (4.97), followed by professionals (4.72), and technical, administrative, and sales employees (4.70). There is no statistically significant difference in a sense of personal mastery of employees in this study by their age, gender, family status, salaried/hourly status, and internal/external customer status.
Health & Well-being

**Physical Health**

**Overall Assessment of Health**

Employees score an average of 3.69 on an item ranging from 1 to 5 on subjective health assessment (1=Poor, 5=Excellent). Employees who are married or partnered but with no children rate themselves highest on this health "ladder" (3.76), followed by the child-free singles (3.70). Working parents rate themselves lowest on the health ladder (3.61).

Women’s subjective assessment of their health (3.75) is higher than men’s (3.64). Supervisors’ evaluation of their health status (3.71) is higher than that of non-supervisors (3.61). Professionals tend to score highest on the health ladder (3.77), followed by technical, administrative, and sales employees (3.63) and managers (3.60). The 20-something employees typically are the healthiest (3.83), followed by those in their 40s and 50s (3.60), with 30-somethings the least healthy on this self-report measure (3.59). Salaried employees (3.70) score higher than hourly employees (3.48). Employees who work with external customers (3.78) score higher than employees who work with internal customers (3.66) on the self-rating of health.

**Energy**

Employees score an average of 3.52 on an energy scale that ranges from 1 to 6 (6 indicating high energy). Typical scale items are, "How much of the time during the past 4 weeks did you have a lot of energy?" and "How much of the time during the last 4 weeks did you feel worn

Employees in their 30s are most likely to work off campus (71.3%), followed by those in their 40s and 50s (60%), with workers in their 20s the least apt to do so (46.2%). We believe that the youngest group of employees is less likely to work off campus because they are less likely to be in managerial or executive positions, but it may also be that these employees enjoy the sociability of working at Streamline headquarters.

“Commuting is a waste of personal and professional time.”

“Work loads are impossible and 40 hour work weeks are history as is lunch ‘hour’ or time off.”
We used questions from the well-known Job Content Questionnaire, developed by Robert Karasek, to measure psychological work demands. Employees score an average of 2.99 on a job demands scale ranging from 1 to 4 (with 1 being low psychological job demands and 4 being high). The questions on this scale include items such as, “My job requires excessive work” and “My job involves conflicting demands.”

Men and women report similar levels of such psychosocial job demands, while supervisors score much higher (3.22) than non-supervisors (2.92). Employees who are married and with children at home (3.03) tend to have the highest job demands, followed by those who are married and not living with children (2.99) and those who are unmarried and without children (2.94). Manager/executives score the highest (3.14) in terms of the degree of psychosocial demands, followed by professionals (2.95) and technical, administrative, and sales employees (2.86). Salaried employees experience higher job demands (3.00) than those non-exempt (2.82).

Demands on the job also vary by age. Those employees in their 40s and 50s report the highest psychosocial job demands (3.08), followed by those in their 30s (3.04), followed by those in their 20s (2.90).

Employees at Streamline work an average of 47.8 hours per week at their jobs, but this varies widely across groups. Men, for example, tend to put in longer hours (49.54) than women (47.67). And supervisors work more hours (51.33) than non-supervisors (47.69). Salaried employees average 48.91 hours per week while hourly employees average several hours less, 44.86 hours per week.

Everyone at Streamline seems to work far more than the standard 40-hour week. Managers typically put in the longest hours (50.77), followed by professionals (48.42) and technical, administrative, and sales employees (45.77). Employees who are in their 40s and 50s work longer (50.27) than employees in their 30s (48.64) and 20s (47.86). Family status and internal/external customer status do not predict work hours.

"Going back to work just 3 months after having a baby seemed way too soon..."
My life at home and work has been very chaotic ever since."
Flexible Work and Well-Being

Family Engagement

Employees score an average of 3.56 on a Family Engagement scale (scores ranging from 1 to 5 with 5 being higher levels of engagement). This scale consists of two main categories: attention, which consists of 2 items (for example, “I concentrate a lot on my family/personal relationships”) and absorption, which consists of 5 items (for example, “When I am focused on my family I often lose track of time”). Employees holding supervisory positions score somewhat lower on degree of family engagement (3.41) than non-supervisors (3.61). The age group scoring the highest on the family engagement scale are those in their 20s (3.61), followed by employees in their 30s (3.57), and then those in their 40s and 50s (3.44). Technical, administrative, and sales employees tend to have the highest family engagement score (3.61), followed by professionals (3.60), and then managers and executives (3.47). Employees’ scores on family engagement do not differ by gender, or other work characteristics.

Family Involvement

Employees average 3.99 on the Family Involvement Scale, which consists of 4 items (e.g. “To me, my family is a very large part of who I am”) with scores ranging from 1 to 5 (5 indicating greater family involvement). Family involvement levels differ significantly by family status, with employees having a child at home scoring highest (4.23), followed by those married or partnered with no child (3.98), and then child-free singles (3.67). Moreover, women (4.06) score higher on family involvement than males (3.93). Family involvement does not differ by age or any of the work characteristics, however.

Ideal Work Hours

Employees at Streamline typically say they would like to ideally work a little over 40 hours per week (40.8), but this varies widely across groups. Men tend to want to work somewhat more than women (ideally 42.45 hours per week vs. 39.02). Supervisors also want to work longer than non-supervisors (42.44 to 40.28). Employees who are married while “child free” (41.71) want to work longer than employees who are single without children (40.83) and those who are married with children (40.03). Managers/executives incline to ideally work longer (41.69) than professionals (40.81) and technical, administrative, and sales employees (39.58). There is no difference by age, salaried/hourly status, or by internal/external customer status in the hours employees see as ideal.

Gap Between Usual and Ideal Work Hours

Clearly, there is a “gap” between actual and ideal hours, on average a 7.97 hour gap between employees’ usual work hours and their ideal work hours. This gap is greater for women than men (8.15 vs. 6.79). Although they work longer, supervisors want a larger ideal reduction in their work hours (6.67) than others (7.34). Employees who are married and have kids at home want a 9 hour reduction in work hours, followed by employees who are single and child free (7.58) as well as employees who are married without children (7.11). Managers see working fully nine hours less per week as ideal. Professionals and technical, administrative, and sales employees each want between a 6 and 8 hour reduction (7.89 and 6.49 respectively). Employees in their 40s and 50s would like more than 9 hours reduction in work hours (9.31), followed by those in their 30s (7.96) and 20s (7.31). There is no difference in the gap between usual and ideal work hours based upon employees’ internal/external customer status.

Pressure to Work Overtime

Employees score an average of 2.09 on a scale from 1 to 4 (with 1 being low pressure and 4 being high pressure), measuring the pressure they feel to put in overtime hours. Women (2.16) report slightly more pressure to work overtime than men (2.02). Although this seems to be a small difference, it is statistically significant (p=0.007). Supervisors report more pressure than (2.23) than do non-supervisors (2.05), and exempt employees (2.11) report more pressure for overtime work than do non-exempt (1.77).
Schedule “Fit”

We also ask the people in our survey about the degree of “fit” between their work schedules and their lives. Asking, “How well is your work arrangement working for you?” (with 1 being the worst schedule fit and 7 being the best) we find an average response of 5.54. Women report somewhat less schedule fit than men (5.42 vs. 5.64). Professionals (5.44) tend to experience less schedule fit than managers/executives (5.62) and technicians/administrative/sales staff (5.65). Salaried employees (5.52) report somewhat less schedule fit than hourly employees (5.77).

Moreover, schedule fit varies across age groups. Employees who are in their 40s and 50s report the highest schedule fit (5.71), followed by those in their 20s (5.51) and 30s (5.48). We see no statistically significant differences in schedule fit based on supervision or internal/external customer status.

Interruptions At Work

We ask all participants to indicate the degree to which they agree or disagree with the statement, ‘I have many interruptions and disturbances in my job.’ (1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Agree, 4=Strongly agree.) A considerable 83% of all respondents agree or strongly agree that they have many interruptions and disturbances in their job. Supervising someone is significantly related to ratings of level of interruptions. Supervisors are more likely to report interruptions and disturbances (3.38) than are non-supervisors (3.06). What a respondent’s job category is is also significantly related to ratings of disturbances on the job. Managers are interrupted the most (3.3), followed by professionals (3.11) and then technicians (2.95). How much one agrees or disagrees about having many interruptions on the job does not differ significantly by gender, family status, exempt status or whether employees have internal or external clients.

Positive Work Spillover

Research shows that employees often experience positive spillover from their jobs; in other words, life at work enhances their personal lives. The people we surveyed report similar levels of positive spillover (on average 3.00 – “sometimes”) as negative spillover from their jobs (on average 2.94). While there are no gender or age differences in positive spillover from work, supervisors tend to report higher positive spillover (on average 3.07 compared to 2.95 for non-supervisors) as well as higher negative spillover, suggesting their jobs reach into their personal lives in ways that are both welcome and unwelcome. Managers and executives tend to have the highest positive work spillover score (3.07), followed by technical, administrative, and sales employees (2.96), and then professionals (2.93). Married child-free employees have the highest levels of positive work spillover (3.04), followed by employees with a child at home (3.00), and then single child-free employees (2.87).

Positive Family Spillover

Having positive experiences with your family and/or personal life can also spill over and positively affect your work live. The positive family to work spillover scale measures this by asking items such as, “Has talking with someone at home helped me deal with problems at work?” (1-5, 5=Great positive spillover) Those who are married or partnered but do not have children report the highest levels of positive family spillover (3.31), meaning their scores fall between sometimes and most of the time. Women tend to have higher levels of positive family spillover (3.36) than men. However, positive family spillover does not differ in statistically significant ways by workers’ age, occupational category, having a salaried or hourly job, being a supervisor or not, or whether their clients are internal or external.
professionals (2.96) compared to technical, administrative, and sales employees and other employees (2.73). Moreover, women (2.98) score higher on negative work spillover than men (2.89). Employees with a child at home have the highest levels of negative work spillover (3.00), followed by married child-free employees (2.92), and then single child-free employees (2.86).

More negative spillover

more negative spillover

less negative spillover

Family Status

- Not Married, no child
- Married, no child
- Most Married, child at home

Negative Work to Family Spillover by Family Status

Negative Family Spillover

We also ask about any negative spillover from home to work on the same 5-point scale. Sample scale items are, “Have responsibilities at home reduced the effort I can devote to my job?” and “Have personal or family worries and problems distracted me when I was at work?” Employees rank on average 2.28, meaning that they rarely experience negative family spillover into their work lives. Employees with a child at home have the highest levels of negative family spillover (2.38), followed by married child-free employees (2.24), and then single child-free employees (2.19). This does not differ by age, gender, or other work-related characteristics.

Time to Reflect and Process Work

We also ask people in the survey to respond to the extent they agree with the statement, ‘I do not have time to step back and process or reflect on the work I’m doing.’ (1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Agree, 4=Strongly agree) A majority of workers (58%) report that the agree or strongly agree with this statement. Supervisors are more likely to agree with this statement (2.93) than non-supervisor (2.63). Managers are more likely to agree (2.81) than professionals (2.68) who are more likely to agree than technicians (2.58). Not having enough time does not vary significantly across gender, family situation or client status.

Unnecessary Work

Almost 2 out of 3 (64%) of the people we interviewed agree or strongly agree with the statement, “I do things that really aren’t necessary to get my job done but are required anyway.” (1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Agree, 4=Strongly agree) There is a small correlation between age and such unnecessary work. Those 29 and younger are most likely to agree with this statement (2.81), followed by those 40-60 (2.72) and then those 30-39 (2.69). The responses to this item do not vary significantly between gender, supervision, family status, job category, exempt status or client status.
Control
Schedule Control

Schedule control means the ability to control when, where, and how many hours you work. Employees score an average of 3.65 on a scale of schedule control with categories ranging from 1 to 5, where 1 indicates low control and 5 indicates high control. Typical items in this scale include, “How much choice do you have over when you can take a few hours off?” and “How much choice do you have over when you begin and end each workday?”

Supervisors (3.95) score much higher than non-supervisors (3.54) on control over the time and timing of their work. Managers rank high (3.95) on schedule control, followed by technical, administrative, and sales employees / administrative / sales (3.69) and professionals (3.41).

Note that those with children at home (3.91) report the highest levels of schedule control. This could possibly be because in light of their demands on the home front, parents seek out jobs or negotiate arrangements offering them the greatest schedule flexibility. We see similar schedule control scores among married but child-free employees (3.49) and those neither married nor parents (3.48).

Recall as well that parents are typically older than their colleagues without children, so it could be that those in more senior jobs (such as managers) tend to have the most schedule control, and that these are also the group most apt to be parents. Employees in their 40s and 50s (3.85) report the highest schedule control levels, with those in their 30s next (3.82) and the youngest group in their 20s having the least schedule control (3.38). Surprisingly, there is no difference between exempt and non-exempt workers or employees with internal / external customers on schedule control.

Negative Work Spillover

Employees score an average of 2.94 on a scale of negative work to family spillover, ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (all the time). The most common answer is 3 (sometimes). This scale includes items such as, “Have job worries or problems distracted you when you are at home?” This scale is a way to isolate how work affects family and personal life.

There are no statistically significant differences in negative work spillover by whether employees are salaried or hourly, or by whether their clients are internal or external. However, supervisors score slightly higher in negative work spillover (3.08) than do employees without supervisory responsibilities (2.89), as do managers (3.03) and
Work and Family Conflicts, Enhancements

Work Family Conflict

Employees score an average of 2.65 on the Netemeyer Work-Family Conflict scale, which examines both family-to-work and work-to-family conflict. A typical Work to Family conflict item is, “The demands on my work interfere with my home and family life.” A typical Family to Work Conflict item is, “The demands of my family or personal relationship interfere with work related activities.” For both scales a higher score indicates higher levels of conflict (scales are 1-5, 5= more conflict). There are significant differences in work-family conflict by age, gender, family status, supervisory status, job category, and salaried/hourly status. Employees with a child at home have the highest levels of work-family conflict (2.85), followed by married, child-free employees (2.62), and then single child-free employees (2.40).

The age group scoring the highest on the work-family conflict scale are those in their 30s (2.76), followed by employees in their 40s and 50s (2.74), and then those in their 20s (2.50). Managers and executives tend to have the highest work-family conflict score (2.81), followed by professionals (2.60), and then technical, administrative, and sales employees (2.43). Salaried employees (2.67) have a higher likelihood of overall work-family conflict than hourly employees (2.31). Supervisors typically have a higher work-family conflict rating (2.89) than those not holding a supervisory position (2.57). Levels of work family conflict does not differ by gender or by whether employees have external or internal clients.

Decision Authority

Another kind of control is employees’ ability to make decisions about what they work on and how they do their work. Decision authority is known to vary by place in the organizational hierarchy, but different organizations allow their employees at all levels more or less control over what they do and how they do it. Employees in this survey score an average of 2.95 on a scale from 1 to 4 (with 1 indicating low decision authority and 4 being high decision authority). Typical scale items include, “On my job, I have very little freedom to decide how I do my work,” (an item that is reverse labeled in the scale) and “My job allows me to make a lot of decisions on my own.” These measures also come from the well-known Job Content Questionnaire developed by Robert Karasek.

Men tend to have higher decision authority than women (3.00) to (2.90). Supervisors (3.13) score much higher than non-supervisors (2.90). Again, this is at least partially explained by men’s and women’s positions within the organization. Married employees with kids tend to report the highest decision authority (3.00), followed by those who are married without kids (2.96), and those who are single and not living with children (2.90). Managers (3.08) score the highest among the three working groups, with those in other types of jobs, such as technical, administrative, and sales employees (2.92) and professionals (2.89), scoring about the same. Employees in their 40s have the highest types of decision authority (3.02), followed by employees in their 30s (2.99), and 20s (2.88). There is no difference in the level of decision authority between exempt and non-exempt employees, or between employees with different customers.
Skill Discretion

In addition to employees’ schedule control (over when and where they work) and decision authority (control over what and how they work), we now consider “control over use of skill by the individual.” Employees score an average of 2.96 on a scale from 1 to 4 (with 1 indicating low skill discretion and 4 indicating high skill discretion). This scale asks employees to respond to items such as, “My job requires that I learn new things,” “My job involves a lot of repetitive work” (reversed) and “My job requires a high level of skill.” These measures also come from the well-known Job Content Questionnaire.

Both gender and supervisory status matter, with men tending to have higher skill discretion than women (3.01 vs. 2.90) and supervisors (3.19) scoring much higher than non-supervisors (2.88). Employees with internal customers (2.96) tend to score higher than those with external customers (2.88). Managers (3.13) score highest among the three working categories, with employees in other categories having similar scores on degree of skill discretion (technical, administrative, and sales employees score 2.90 and professionals 2.87). Salaried employees (2.97) score higher on schedule control than hourly employees (2.84).

Parents typically report the highest skill discretion in their jobs (3.05), followed by those who are married but child-free (2.96) and those who are single (2.84). As with schedule control, these differences may actually reflect age differences among employees who are parents, married without children, or single. The oldest employees (40-60) score highest (3.11), followed by employees in their 30s (3.04), followed by those in their 20s (2.80).

Work Engagement

Streamline employees tend to score high on our measure of work engagement, with an average of 3.84 on a scale from 1 to 5 (a higher score indicating higher work engagement). Items measuring work engagement include statements like, “I concentrate a lot on my work” and “When I am working I am completely engrossed by my work.”

We find an age effect suggesting that older employees typically have higher work engagement. Specifically, employees aged 40 to 60 score almost 4 (3.93) on this five level scale of work engagement, followed by the employees in their 30s (3.86). Members in their 20s tend to report the least work engagement (3.77). Supervisors (3.96) report higher work engagement than non-supervisors (3.80). Professionals report the highest work engagement (2.07) followed by technicians, administrative, and sales employees (1.90) and then managers and executives (1.89). However, there are no statistically significant differences in work engagement by gender, family status, job category, or salaried/hourly status.

Burnout

Employees score almost right in the middle (an average of 3.69) on a scale measuring emotional exhaustion ranging from 1 to 7 (7 indicating higher levels). Emotional exhaustion is part of what is called job burnout. Typical items include, “I feel emotionally drained from my work” and “I feel stimulated by my work” (reverse coded).

Women typically report experiencing higher levels of emotional exhaustion (3.77) than men (3.61), and salaried employees (3.71) tend to score higher on this measure of burnout than do hourly employees (3.40). Surprisingly, younger employees tend to report higher job burnout than older employees. Those in their 20s score an average of 3.80 on this scale, followed by those in their 30s (3.69), and those 40 to 60 (3.29). We find no significant difference in feelings of emotional exhaustion among the participants in our survey by their family status, job category, and internal/external customer status.
Dissatisfaction with Coworkers

Employees average a low score of 1.82 on a question asking them about their dissatisfaction with coworkers. (Scores range from 1 = Very satisfied to 5 = Very unsatisfied.) Men are more satisfied with their coworkers (1.77) than women (1.89) in our survey. In terms of coworker dissatisfaction, we find no significant differences in the people we surveyed in terms of their age, family status, supervisory status, job category, salaried/hourly status or having internal versus external clients.

![Dissatisfaction with Coworkers Chart]

Dissatisfaction with Manager

Employees average a score of 1.98 on the item asking them about their dissatisfaction with their manager. (Scores range from 1 = Very satisfied to 5 = Very unsatisfied.) Supervisors are more satisfied with their manager (1.85) than are employees in non-supervisory positions (2.03). There are no significant differences in level of dissatisfaction with managers by employees’ age, gender, family status, job category, salaried/hourly status or whether they have internal versus external clients.

Organizational Commitment

We also assess employees’ degree of commitment to Streamline using an Organizational Commitment Scale with scores ranging from 1 to 4 (greater score indicating greater commitment). Typical items in this scale are, “I feel very little loyalty to Streamline” (reverse coded), “I would take almost any job to keep working for Streamline,” and “I would turn down another job for more pay in order to stay with Streamline.”

Employees score an average of 2.89 on the organizational commitment scale, with men typically having slightly higher scores of organizational commitment (2.92) than women (2.85). Young workers in their 20s score highest on the Organizational Commitment Scale (2.96), followed by thirty-something employees (2.85), with those in their 40s and 50s reporting the least organizational commitment (2.80). This finding may...
Work Effectiveness

Individual Job Performance

Most Streamline employees rate their own job performance as high, scoring on average 7.87 on a scale from 0 to 10 (where 0 = worst performance and 10 = performance of a top worker) measuring ratings of their overall job performance in the past 4 weeks. Employees with external clients have higher ratings of their own job performance (8.21) than those with internal clients (7.83). Employees 29 years or younger scored highest on individual job performance (8.01), followed by those 30-39 years (7.79), and those 40 years or older (7.74). Married employees with no children rate their job performance the highest (7.98), followed by single employees with no children (7.91), and employees with a child at home (7.73). Supervisors typically rate their performance (7.66) lower than employees who are not in supervisory positions (7.93). There are no significant differences in self-ratings of performance by gender, job category, or salaried/hourly status.

Team Job Performance

We also ask employees to rate their teams’ performance, asking “How would you rate your team’s overall job performance on the days you worked during the past 4 weeks?” Those in our sample rate their teams on average at 7.52 on a scale from 0 to 10 (where 0 = worst performance team could have and 10 = performance of a top team). Hourly employees score their teams’ performance higher (8.04) than do salaried employees (7.49). Employees with external clients have higher ratings of their teams’ job performance (7.75) than those with internal clients (7.47), but there are no significant differences in team performance ratings by respondents’ age, gender, family status, supervisory status, or job category.

Turnover Intentions

Another potential gauge of employees’ assessments of their jobs involves their turnover intentions. We ask about turnover using a scale consisting of 3 items, with scores ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree (e.g., I am actively searching for an alternative to Streamline). Streamline employees average a low score of 2.55 on this scale measuring turnover expectations. Employees with internal clients (2.65) have higher turnover intentions than those with external clients (2.28). We find no significant differences in turnover intentions by age, gender, family status, supervisory status, job category, or salaried/hourly status.

Job Involvement

Our survey also includes a Job Involvement Scale consisting of 3 items with scores ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 4 = strongly agree. A sample question is, “Most of my interests are centered around my job.” Employees at Streamline score high on job involvement, an average of 2.49 on the 4-point scale. Supervisors score slightly higher (2.57) than non-supervisors (2.46) in the level of their job involvement.

Employees raising children have the lowest job involvement score (2.39), followed by married employees without children (2.47), and then employees who are single and child-free (2.59). Of course, this does not mean that employees with families are less committed or engaged (as we show below); it simply means they also have other parts of their lives that involve them. There are no significant differences in level of job involvement by age, gender, job category, salaried/hourly status or having internal versus external clients.

Dissatisfaction with Job

Employees average a score of 1.98 on the item asking them about their level of job dissatisfaction, with scores ranging from 1 = Very satisfied to 5 = Very unsatisfied. Supervisors are slightly more satisfied (1.80) than non-supervisors (2.04). Employees who are 40 years or older are the most satisfied (1.85), followed by those in the age range of 30-39 years (1.95), and then employees who are 29 years or younger (2.08). Managers and executives (1.89) are slightly more satisfied than technicians, administrative, and sales employees (1.90), and the least satisfied are professionals (2.07). Those with external clients (1.87) are more satisfied than those with internal clients (2.04). There are no significant differences by gender, family status, job category, or salaried/hourly status in employees’ rating of their job dissatisfaction.
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How satisfied are you with your...

- Very unsatisfied: 2.4%
- Somewhat unsatisfied: 11.6%
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied: 38.3%
- Somewhat satisfied: 17.3%
- Very satisfied: 39.5%

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Streamline employees tend to score high on our measure of work engagement, with an average of 3.84 on a scale from 1 to 5 (a higher score indicating higher work engagement). Items measuring work engagement include statements like, “I concentrate a lot on my work” and “When I am working I am completely engrossed by my work.”

We find an age effect suggesting that older employees typically have higher work engagement. Specifically, employees aged 40 to 60 score almost 4 (3.93) on this five level scale of work engagement, followed by the employees in their 30s (3.86). Members in their 20s tend to report the least work engagement (3.77). Supervisors (3.96) report higher work engagement than non-supervisors (3.80). Professionals report the highest work engagement (2.07) followed by technicians, administrative, and sales employees (1.90) and then managers and executives (1.89). However, there are no statistically significant differences in work engagement by gender, family status, job category, salaried/hourly status, or by having internal versus external clients.

Burnout

Employees score almost right in the middle (an average of 3.69) on a scale measuring emotional exhaustion ranging from 1 to 7 (7 indicating higher levels). Emotional exhaustion is part of what is called job burnout. Typical items include, “I feel emotionally drained from my work” and “I feel stimulated by my work” (reverse coded).

Women typically report experiencing higher levels of emotional exhaustion (3.77) than men (3.61), and salaried employees (3.71) tend to score higher on this measure of burnout than do hourly employees (3.40). Surprisingly, younger employees tend to report higher job burnout than older employees. Those in their 20s score an average of 3.80 on this scale, followed by those in their 30s (3.69), and those 40 to 60 (3.29). We find no significant difference in feelings of emotional exhaustion among the participants in our survey by their family status, job category, and internal/external customer status.
**Work and Family Conflicts, Enhancements**

**Work Family Conflict**

Employees score an average of 2.65 on the Netemeyer Work-Family Conflict scale, which examines both family-to-work and work-to-family conflict. A typical Work to Family conflict item is, “The demands on my work interfere with my home and family life.” A typical Family to Work Conflict item is, “The demands of my family or personal relationship interfere with work related activities.” For both scales a higher score indicates higher levels of conflict (scales are 1-5, 5= more conflict). There are significant differences in work-family conflict by age, gender, family status, supervisory status, job category, and salaried/hourly status. Employees with a child at home have the highest levels of work-family conflict (2.85), followed by married, child-free employees (2.62), and then single child-free employees (2.40).

The age group scoring the highest on the work-family conflict scale are those in their 30s (2.76), followed by employees in their 40s and 50s (2.74), and then those in their 20s (2.50). Managers and executives tend to have the highest work-family conflict score (2.81), followed by professionals (2.60), and then technical, administrative, and sales employees (2.43). Salaried employees (2.67) have a higher likelihood of work-family conflict than hourly employees (2.31). Supervisors typically have a higher work-family conflict rating (2.89) than those not holding a supervisory position (2.57). Levels of work family conflict does not differ by gender or by whether employees have external or internal clients.

**Decision Authority**

Another kind of control is employees’ ability to make decisions about what they work on and how they do their work. Decision authority is known to vary by place in the organizational hierarchy, but different organizations allow their employees at all levels more or less control over what they do and how they do it. Employees in this survey score an average of 2.95 on a scale from 1 to 4 (with 1 indicating low decision authority and 4 being high decision authority). Typical scale items include, “On my job, I have very little freedom to decide how I do my work,” (an item that is reverse labeled in the scale) and “My job allows me to make a lot of decisions on my own.” These measures also come from the well-known Job Content Questionnaire developed by Robert Karasek.

Men tend to have higher decision authority than women (3.00) to (2.90). Supervisors (3.13) score much higher than non-supervisors (2.90). Again, this is at least partially explained by men’s and women’s positions within the organization. Married employees with kids tend to report the highest decision authority (3.00), followed by those who are married without kids (2.96), and those who are single and not living with children (2.90). Managers (3.08) score the highest among the three working groups, with those in other types of jobs, such as technical, administrative, and sales employees (2.92) and professionals (2.89), scoring about the same. Employees in their 40s have the highest types of decision authority (3.02), followed by employees in their 30s (2.99), and 20s (2.88). There is no difference in the level of decision authority between exempt and non-exempt employees, or between employees with different customers.
Control

Schedule Control

Schedule control means the ability to control when, where, and how many hours you work. Employees score an average of 3.65 on a scale of schedule control with categories ranging from 1 to 5, where 1 indicates low control and 5 indicates high control. Typical items in this scale include, “How much choice do you have over when you can take a few hours off?” and “How much choice do you have over when you begin and end each workday?”

Supervisors (3.95) score much higher than non-supervisors (3.54) on control over the time and timing of their work. Managers rank high (3.95) on schedule control, followed by technical, administrative, and sales employees/administrative/sales (3.69) and professionals (3.41).

Note that those with children at home (3.91) report the highest levels of schedule control. This could possibly be because in light of their demands on the home front, parents seek out jobs or negotiate arrangements offering them the greatest schedule flexibility. We see similar schedule control scores among married but child-free employees (3.49) and those neither married nor parents (3.48).

Recall as well that parents are typically older than their colleagues without children, so it could be that those in more senior jobs (such as managers) tend to have the most schedule control, and that these are also the group most apt to be parents. Employees in their 40s and 50s (3.85) report the highest schedule control levels, with those in their 30s next (3.82) and the youngest group in their 20s having the least schedule control (3.38). Surprisingly, there is no difference between exempt and non-exempt workers or employees with internal/external customers on schedule control.

Negative Work Spillover

Employees score an average of 2.94 on a scale of negative work to family spillover, ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (all the time). The most common answer is 3 (sometimes). This scale includes items such as, “Have job worries or problems distracted you when you are at home?”

There are no statistically significant differences in negative work spillover by whether employees are salaried or hourly, or by whether their clients are internal or external. However, supervisors score slightly higher in negative work spillover (3.08) than do employees without supervisory responsibilities (2.89), as do managers (3.03) and...
professionals (2.96) compared to technical, administrative, and sales employees and other employees (2.73). Moreover, women (2.98) score higher on negative work spillover than men (2.89). Employees with a child at home have the highest levels of negative work spillover (3.00), followed by married child-free employees (2.92), and then single child-free employees (2.86).

More negative spillover

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Married, no child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married, no child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most Married, child at home</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Less negative spillover

Negative Work to Family Spillover by Family Status

We also ask about any negative spillover from home to work on the same 5-point scale. Sample scale items are, "Have responsibilities at home reduced the effort I can devote to my job?" and "Have personal or family worries and problems distracted me when I was at work?" Employees rank on average 2.28, meaning that they rarely experience negative family spillover into their work lives. Employees with a child at home have the highest levels of negative family spillover (2.38), followed by married child-free employees (2.24), and then single child-free employees (2.19). This does not differ by age, gender, or other work-related characteristics.

Time to Reflect and Process Work

We also ask people in the survey to respond to the extent they agree with the statement, 'I do not have time to step back and process or reflect on the work I'm doing.' (1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Agree, 4 = Strongly agree) A majority of workers (58%) report that the agree or strongly agree with this statement. Supervisors are more likely to agree with this statement (2.93) than non-supervisor (2.63). Managers are more likely to agree (2.81) than professionals (2.68) who are more likely to agree than technicians (2.58). Not having enough time does not vary significantly across gender, family situation or client status.

Unnecessary Work

Almost 2 out of 3 (64%) of the people we interviewed agree or strongly agree with the statement, 'I do things that really aren’t necessary to get my job done but are required anyway.' (1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Agree, 4 = Strongly agree) There is a small correlation between age and such unnecessary work. Those 29 and younger are most likely to agree with this statement (2.81), followed by those 40-60 (2.72) and then those 30-39 (2.69). The responses to this item do not vary significantly between gender, supervision, family status, job category, exempt status or client status.
Flexible Work and Well-Being

Schedule “Fit”

We also ask the people in our survey about the degree of “fit” between their work schedules and their lives. Asking, “How well is your work arrangement working for you?” (with 1 being the worst schedule fit and 7 being the best) we find an average response of 5.34. Women report somewhat less schedule fit than men (5.42 vs. 5.64). Professionals (5.44) tend to experience less schedule fit than managers/executives (5.62) and technicians/administrative/sales staff (5.65). Salaried employees (5.52) report somewhat less schedule fit than hourly employees (5.77).

Moreover, schedule fit varies across age groups. Employees who are in their 40s and 50s report the highest schedule fit (5.71), followed by those in their 20s (5.51) and 30s (5.48). We see no statistically significant differences in schedule fit based on supervision or internal/external customer status.

Interruptions At Work

We ask all participants to indicate the degree to which they agree or disagree with the statement, ‘I have many interruptions and disturbances in my job.’ (1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Agree, 4=Strongly agree.) A considerable 83% of all respondents agree or strongly agree that they have many interruptions and disturbances in their job. Supervising someone is significantly related to ratings of level of interruptions. Supervisors are more likely to report interruptions and disturbances (3.38) than are non-supervisors (3.06). What a respondent’s job category is is also significantly related to ratings of disturbances on the job. Managers are interrupted the most (3.3), followed by professionals (3.11) and then technicians (2.95). How much one agrees or disagrees about having many interruptions on the job does not differ significantly by gender, family status, exempt status or whether employees have internal or external clients.

Positive Work Spillover

Research shows that employees often experience positive spillover from their jobs; in other words, life at work enhances their personal lives. The people we surveyed report similar levels of positive spillover (on average 3.00 – “sometimes”) as negative spillover from their jobs (on average 2.94). While there are no gender or age differences in positive spillover from work, supervisors tend to report higher positive spillover (on average 3.07 compared to 2.95 for non-supervisors) as well as higher negative spillover, suggesting their jobs reach into their personal lives in ways that are both welcome and unwelcome. Managers and executives tend to have the highest positive work spillover score (3.07), followed by technical, administrative, and sales employees (2.96), and then professionals (2.93). Married child-free employees have the highest levels of positive work spillover (3.04), followed by employees with a child at home (3.00), and then single child-free employees (2.87).

Positive Family Spillover

Having positive experiences with your family and/or personal life can also spillover in and positively affect your work live. The positive family to work spillover scale measures this by asking items such as, “Has talking with someone at home helped me deal with problems at work?” (1-5, 5=greater positive spillover). Those who are married or partnered but do not have children report the highest levels of positive family spillover (3.31), meaning their scores fall between ‘sometimes’ and ‘most of the time.’ Women tend to have higher positive levels of positive family spillover (3.36) than men. However, positive family spillover does not differ in statistically significant ways by workers’ age, occupational category, having a salaried or hourly job, being a supervisor or not, or whether their clients are internal or external.
Family Engagement

Employees score an average of 3.56 on a Family Engagement scale (scores ranging from 1 to 5 with 5 being higher levels of engagement). This scale consists of two main categories: attention, which consists of 2 items (for example, “I concentrate a lot on my family/personal relationships”) and absorption, which consists of 5 items (for example, “When I am focused on my family I often lose track of time”). Employees holding supervisory positions score somewhat lower on degree of family engagement (3.41) than non-supervisors (3.61). The age group scoring the highest on the family engagement scale are those in their 20s (3.61), followed by employees in their 30s (3.57), and then those in their 40s and 50s (3.44). Technical, administrative, and sales employees tend to have the highest family engagement score (3.61), followed by professionals (3.60), and then managers and executives (3.47). Employees’ scores on family engagement do not differ by gender, or other work characteristics.

Family Involvement

Employees average 3.99 on the Family Involvement Scale, which consists of 4 items (e.g., “To me, my family is a very large part of who I am”) with scores ranging from 1 to 5 (5 indicating greater family involvement). Family involvement levels differ significantly by family status, with employees having a child at home scoring highest (4.23), followed by those married or partnered with no child (3.98), and then child-free singles (3.67). Moreover, women (4.06) score higher on family involvement than males (3.93). Family involvement does not differ by age or any of the work characteristics, however.

Ideal Work Hours

Employees at Streamline typically say they would like to ideally work a little over 40 hours per week (40.8), but this varies widely across groups. Men tend to want to work somewhat more than women (ideally 42.45 hours per week vs. 39.02). Supervisors also want to work longer than non-supervisors (42.44 to 40.28). Employees who are married while “child free” (41.71) want to work longer than employees who are single without children (40.83) and those who are married with children (40.03). Managers/executives incline to ideally work longer (41.69) than professionals (40.81) and technical, administrative, and sales employees (39.58). There is no difference by age, salaried/hourly status, or by internal/external customer status in the hours employees see as ideal.

Gap Between Usual and Ideal Work Hours

Clearly, there is a “gap” between actual and ideal hours, on average a 7.97 hour gap between employees’ usual work hours and their ideal work hours. This gap is greater for women than men (8.15 vs. 6.79). Although they work longer, supervisors want a larger ideal reduction in their work hours (8.67) than others (7.34). Employees who are married and have kids at home want a 9 hour reduction in work hours, followed by employees who are single and child free (7.58) as well as employees who are married without children (7.11). Managers see working fully nine hours less per week as ideal. Professionals and technical, administrative, and sales employees each want between a 6 and 8 hour reduction (7.89 and 6.49 respectively). Employees in their 40s and 50s would like more than 9 hours reduction in work hours (9.31), followed by those in their 30s (7.96) and 20s (7.31). There is no difference in the gap between usual and ideal work hours based upon employees’ internal/external customer status.

Pressure to Work Overtime

Employees score an average of 2.09 on a scale from 1 to 4 (with 1 being low pressure and 4 being high pressure), measuring the pressure they feel to put in overtime hours. Women (2.16) report slightly more pressure to work overtime than men (2.02). Although this seems to be a small difference, it is statistically significant (p=0.007). Supervisors report more pressure than (2.23) than do non-supervisors (2.05), and exempt employees (2.11) report more pressure for overtime work than do non-exempt (1.77).
Psychosocial Work Environment

Job Demands and Hours

We used questions from the well-known Job Content Questionnaire, developed by Robert Karasek, to measure psychological work demands. Employees score an average of 2.99 on a job demands scale ranging from 1 to 4 (with 1 being low psychological job demands and 4 being high). The questions on this scale include items such as, “My job requires excessive work” and “My job involves conflicting demands.”

Men and women report similar levels of such psychosocial job demands, while supervisors score much higher (3.22) than non-supervisors (2.92). Employees who are married and with children at home (3.03) tend to have the highest job demands, followed by those who are married and not living with children (2.99) and those who are unmarried and without children (2.94). Manager/executives score the highest (3.14) in terms of the degree of psychosocial demands, followed by professionals (2.95) and technical, administrative, and sales employees (2.86). Salaried employees experience higher job demands (3.00) than those non-exempt (2.82).

Demands on the job also vary by age. Those employees in their 40s and 50s report the highest psychosocial job demands (3.08), followed by those in their 30s (3.04), followed by those in their 20s (2.90).

Usual Work Hours

Employees at Streamline work an average of 47.8 hours per week at their jobs, but this varies widely across groups. Men, for example, tend to put in longer hours (49.54) than women (47.67). And supervisors work more hours (51.33) than non-supervisors (47.69). Salaried employees average 48.91 hours per week while hourly employees average several hours less, 44.86 hours per week.

Everyone at Streamline seems to work far more than the standard 40-hour week. Managers typically put in the longest hours (50.77), followed by professionals (48.42) and technical, administrative, and sales employees (45.77). Employees who are in their 40s and 50s work longer (50.27) than employees in their 30s (48.64) and 20s (47.86). Family status and internal/external customer status do not predict work hours.

“Going back to work just 3 months after having a baby seemed way too soon...

My life at home and work has been very chaotic ever since.”
Health & Well-being

Physical Health

Overall Assessment of Health

Employees score an average of 3.69 on an item ranging from 1 to 5 on subjective health assessment (1=Poor, 5=Excellent). Employees who are married or partnered but with no children rate themselves highest on this health “ladder” (3.76), followed by the child-free singles (3.70). Working parents rate themselves lowest on the health ladder (3.61).

Women’s subjective assessment of their health (3.75) is higher than men’s (3.64). Supervisors’ evaluation of their health status (3.71) is higher than that of non-supervisors (3.61). Professionals tend to score highest on the health ladder (3.77), followed by technical, administrative, and sales employees (3.63) and managers (3.60). The 20-something employees typically are the healthiest (3.83), followed by those in their 40s and 50s (3.60), with 30-somethings the least healthy on this self-report measure (3.59). Salaried employees (3.70) score higher than hourly employees (3.48). Employees who work with external customers (3.78) score higher than employees who work with internal customers (3.66) on the self-rating of health.

Health by Family Status

Energy

Employees score an average of 3.52 on an energy scale that ranges from 1 to 6 (6 indicating high energy). Typical scale items are, “How much of the time during the past 4 weeks did you have a lot of energy?” and “How much of the time during the last 4 weeks did you feel worn out?” Employees in their 30s are most likely to work off campus (71.3%), followed by those in their 40s and 50s (60%), with workers in their 20s the least apt to do so (46.2%). We believe that the youngest group of employees is less likely to work off campus because they are less likely to be in managerial or executive positions, but it may also be that these employees enjoy the sociability of working at Streamline headquarters.

“Commuting is a waste of personal and professional time.”

“Work loads are impossible and 40 hour work weeks are history as is lunch ‘hour’ or time off.”
Adult Caregiving

Despite the youthfulness of the workforce, 14% are caring for other adults (most commonly infirm parents). Men are more likely to be engaged in such adult caregiving (59% vs 41% female). Whether employees are married or parents does not predict whether or not they are providing special attention or care for someone in their family (who is elderly, seriously ill or disabled). However, adult care provision is related to employee's age. Among those in their 20s, only 12.2% provide special attention or care for a parent or other adult family member requiring care, while 12.3% in their 30s do, as do 18.3% for those in their 40s or older.

From Work to Home and Back

The average commute for the workers in this survey is 30.3 minutes. Commute time is longest for parents (34.26 minutes each way), followed by employees who are married or partnered but without children, who spend slightly less time in the commute (29.31 minutes). Employees who are neither married nor parents typically have the shortest commute to and from work (25.86 minutes). Commute time also varies by age. Employees in their 30s tend to spend longest time in commute (31.7 minutes), followed by employees in their 40s and 50s (31.0 minutes), and then employees in their 20s (28.7 minutes). Commute time does not vary by gender, occupational type, or supervisory status.

Working from Home

Almost half of the employees in our survey work at home or at another location from time to time. Respondents who supervise others are more apt to do so (74.3%), compared to those who don’t (53.6%). Employees working for internal customers are more prone to work off campus (60.7%) than those working for external customers (51.9%). Managers/executives are far more likely to work off campus (74.1%) than are technical, administrative, or sales employees (54.7%) or professionals (49.8%). Salaried employees are more likely to work at home (59.7%) than hourly employees (45.0%).

In terms of family status, we find those raising children are most likely to work off campus (72.0% work at home or elsewhere), followed by those who are neither married nor parents (50.2%) or else married but child-free (50.8%). There is also an age difference as to work location:

Minor Physical Symptoms

Employees report an average score of 3.33 on a minor physical symptoms scale which can range from 0 to 16 (0 indicating no reported physical symptoms in the last month and 16 indicating reporting all 16 physical symptoms listed in the last month). Examples of physical symptoms include headache, backache, dizziness or sore throat.

Women report on average more physical symptoms than do men (3.68 vs 3.02). Supervisors claim on average less physical symptoms than non-supervisors (3.43 vs 3.03). Employees raising children tend to have more physical symptoms (3.49) than those without a child (3.07). Professionals (3.53) report the most symptoms, followed by technicians (3.36) and managers/executives (3.09). Employees in their 30s report the most physical symptoms (3.70), followed by younger workers in their 20s (3.31) and then those aged 40-60 (2.83). There is no significant difference in reported physical symptoms of survey participants based on their salaried/hourly status or their internal/external customer status.

Emotional Health

Mastery

Employees score an average of 4.80 on a scale measuring their sense of personal mastery on a scale ranging from 1 to 6 where 6 indicates high mastery. Examples of typical items are, 'I have little control over the things that happen to me (reverse labeled),' and 'I can do just about anything I really set my mind to.' Mastery has been shown to predict well-being and those with low mastery are vulnerable to stress.

Supervisors (5.00) tend to have higher mastery levels than non-supervisors (4.74). Managers score highest on personal mastery (4.97), followed by professionals (4.72), and technical, administrative, and sales employees (4.70). There is no statistically significant difference in a sense of personal mastery of employees in this study by their age, gender, family status, salaried/hourly status, and internal/external customer status.
Well-Being Scale

Another scale measures employees' sense of well-being. Employees score an average of 5.02 on a scale from 1 to 6 (6 indicating greater well-being) assessing subjective well-being. A sample question is, “In many ways, I feel disappointed about my achievements in life (reverse labeled).”

Women tend to score higher (5.07) on overall well-being than men (4.97). Supervisors tend to report better overall psychological well-being (5.15) than others (4.98). Salaried employees (5.04) typically score higher than hourly employees (4.69) in terms of their feelings of well-being. Managers also typically have higher well-being (5.12), followed by professionals (5.04) and technical, administrative, and sales employees (4.80). A sense of psychological well-being also varies by age, with those in their 20s scoring highest (5.11), followed by employees in their 30s (4.99), and then those aged 40-60 (4.88). Employees working with external customers tend to report better overall well-being (5.09) than those who work with internal customers (4.99). There is no statistically significant difference in psychological well-being scores of Streamline employees in our sample by their family situation.

Health Related Behaviors

Coming to Work Sick

Employees score on average 2.56 on a scale from 1 to 4 (4 being strongly agree) which measures “the pressure employees feel to come to work when they are sick.” In fact, close to 50% either strongly agree or agree with this statement.

Supervisors as a group tend to experience higher pressure to come to work sick (2.64) than non-supervisors (2.53). Professionals also experience high pressure to come to work sick (2.59), followed by managers (2.58) and technician/administrative/sales (2.43). There is no significant difference in employees' feeling pressure to come to work sick based upon their gender, family status, age, salaried/hourly status, or internal/external customer status.

When I am sick, I still feel obligated to come to work.

(8.9% Strongly Disagree, 34.6% Disagree, 48.3% Agree, 8.1% Strongly Agree)
The Nature of the Workforce

Age, Occupational Category and Tenure

Streamline has a young workforce, even at their headquarters. In fact, half of the employees we surveyed are under age 32. The average (mean) age of this sample is 33.3, although employees who supervise others tend to be a bit older (on average 37.5 years old, compared to 32 years for those without supervisory responsibilities). There are age differences as well by occupational category: Managers and executives tend to be older (36.8 years), followed by technical, administrative, and sales employees (34.2), and professionals (30.4). Note that we group employees in two different ways: by whether they have supervisory responsibilities or not and by the occupational category they report (executive, manager, professional, technical, administrative, sales). These two classification systems overlap – managers and executives are also supervisors – but not perfectly. For example, some technical, administrative, or sales employees may also have some supervisory duties.

Given the youthfulness of this workforce, it is not surprising that their average tenure with Streamline is about four and a half years. Supervisors have been with Streamline the longest, around 6 years, compared to 4.2 years for employees who are not supervisors. Average tenure differs by job category as well: managers’ average tenure is 5.8 years, technical, administrative, and sales employees average 4.4 years employment at Streamline, and professionals have been with the firm around 4.0 years.

Gender Distinctions

This sample is equally divided between men and women. The men we interviewed tend to be a bit older (average age of 34.12 years) than the women (average age of 32.45 years).

There is also a significant difference between men and the women employees in the average time they have worked at Streamline. Men have worked at the company for an average of 4.94 years, while women have been there a slightly shorter time period (4.45 years).

Not Going to Doctor When Needed

About half (49.7%) of employees either agree or strongly agree with the statement that sometimes they are so busy they don’t go to the doctor even when they should. Overall, employees score 2.48 on this item (ranked from 1 to 4) which asks whether the employees feels that, “Sometimes I’m so busy that I don’t go to the doctor even when I should” (4=strongly agree). Supervisors (2.67) are more apt to agree with this statement than are non-supervisor (2.42). Managers report high agreement with this statement (2.59), followed by professionals (2.48) and then technical, administrative, and sales employees (2.30). Employees in their 40s and 50s (2.54) tend to report highest agreement with this statement, followed by those in their 30s (2.52), and younger employees in their 20s (2.41). There is no significant difference in this measure by employees’ gender, family status, salaried/hourly status, and internal/external customer status.

Sleep Quality

Employees score 2.71 on a scale from 1 to 4 (1=very bad and 4=very good) which assesses their overall sleep quality in the past four weeks. Non-supervisors (2.74) tend to have better sleep quality than supervisors (2.61). Salaried employees (2.72) have better sleep quality than hourly employees (2.57). Married or partnered employees with no child at home typically score highest (2.78), followed by the singles with no child (2.73) and then those with a child at home (2.64). Employees in their 20s (2.78) report the best sleep quality, followed by those in their 40s and 50s (2.67), and then employees in their 30s (2.66). There is no significant difference in sleep quality by gender, job category, or internal/external customer status.
Body Mass Index

The Body Mass Index categories (a ratio of weight to height) classify a body mass index of 18.5 or less as underweight, 18.5-24.9 as “normal” weight, 25-29.9 as overweight and 30 or greater as obesity. Employees as a group score 26.08 on this scale of body mass index which is slightly over the “normal” weight category. Men score high (27.35) falling into the overweight range (25-29.9). Women score somewhat lower (24.87) but also tend to fall into the overweight range. Employees with a child at home score highest (26.66), followed by those married without a child (25.84) and those not married without child (25.59). Technical, administrative, and sales employees score high (26.62), followed closely by managers (26.52) and professionals (25.62). Employees above 40 typically have the highest BMI (27.54), followed by the 29-30 age category (26.76), and those in their 20s (24.80). Hourly workers average higher Body Mass Index (28.63) than salaried workers (25.91). There are no significant differences in BMI by supervisory status.
Introduction and Overview of the Flexible Work and Well-Being Study

Purpose of this Study

This report summarizes preliminary findings from an on-going research partnership between the University of Minnesota’s Flexible Work and Well-Being Center and a Fortune 500 retail organization that we call Streamline. This organization is pioneering an innovative culture change initiative to give employees more control over when, where and how they do their work. We call this initiative the Focus on Results for an Effective Work Environment initiative or “FREE.” (A confidentiality agreement precludes us from identifying the company or the specific initiative we are studying.)

The Goals of this Study Are To:

1. Describe the psychosocial work environment at Streamline’s corporate headquarters and investigate the work conditions that promote effectiveness, engagement, satisfaction and commitment to the organization.
2. Describe the personal lives and family experiences of employees at Streamline’s corporate headquarters and investigate how the work environment affects personal life and vice versa.
3. Describe the health and well-being of employees at Streamline’s corporate headquarters and investigate how the work environment affects health and health behaviors.
4. Investigate the ways in which the Focus on Results for an Effective Work Environment (“FREE”) initiative attempts to change the work environment, as well as any actual changes that may occur among employees participating in the “FREE” initiative.
5. Investigate whether and in what ways any changes produced by the “FREE” initiative affect employees’ effectiveness, engagement, satisfaction, commitment, personal lives (including work-family conflict), health and well-being.

Data Included in this Report

With Streamline’s cooperation, we are conducting a multi-method study of the work environment and “FREE.” The study involves surveys...

Smoking

Most Streamline employees do not smoke. In fact, 8 out of 10 employees do not smoke at all and only 5.7% of employees smoke every day or almost every day. Hourly employees are more apt to smoke than salaried employees. 72.4% of hourly employees and 85.6% of salaried employees do not smoke at all. Only 5.5% of salaried employees smoke everyday, while 15.5% of hourly employees do so. There is no significant difference in smoking by employees’ gender, age, family status, supervision status, job category, and internal/external customer status.

Alcohol Consumption

Over three-fourths (76.1%) of employees only drink alcoholic beverage 1-2 days a week or less, with only 7.7% of employees having an alcoholic beverage every day or almost every day. In general, men drink alcoholic beverages a little more frequently than women (mean of 2.98 vs. 2.57 on a scale of drinking frequency from 1 to 6, 6 = everyday and 1 = not at all). Single employees tend to consume alcohol more than others (2.96), followed by married or partnered employees raising children (2.72), and married (or partnered) employees who are child free (2.71). Salaried employees (2.80) drink more than hourly employees (2.48). There is no significant difference in this measure of alcohol consumption by age, supervision status, job category, and internal/external customer status.
Exercise

Around half of this sample reports exercising 3-5 days a week or more, and only 11.2% of employees do not exercise at all. In general, non-supervisors (3.20) exercise more often than supervisors (2.89). Single employees without children exercise most frequently (3.36), followed by married employees without children (3.17), and those with a child at home exercise the least (2.92). Professionals exercise the most (3.26), followed by technicians/administrative/sales (3.04), and then managers (2.99). Age matters here again. Employees in their 20s exercise most frequently (3.42), followed by those between 40 and 60 (2.96) and employees in their 30s (2.90). Employees who work with external customers (3.45) exercise more than employees who work with internal customers (3.07). There is no significant difference in this measure by gender, and exempt status.

“The time I spent working outside of the office is my most productive work time.”
Health

- **Healthy Workforce.** Overall, the Streamline employees are quite a healthy group. Employees report both good physical and emotional health and have good health-related behaviors. This is partly expected because of their young age.

- **Parents Have More Health Problems.** Parents rank the lowest on self-reports of their overall health. Parents have more minor health problems (such as headaches and sore throats) and report the poorest quality sleep. They are also less likely to exercise and tend to have the highest body-mass index.

- **Time Pressures Highest for Working Parents and Managers.** In a series of questions asking whether employees have adequate time to take care of themselves, be involved in the community, be with their families, etc., parents and managers report the greatest lack of time in their lives.

Time Adequacy and Pressures

We asked employees whether they have enough time for various personal care and community activities. The scores range from 0 to 10 with a greater score indicating greater feelings of having adequate time to do these activities. (10 is having plenty of time and 0 is having none.) The employees in our survey score a little low, an average of 4.98 on the “Time Adequacy” scale for activities such as preparing or eating healthy meals, keeping in shape, socializing, being by themselves, getting enough sleep/rest, nurturing their spiritual and/or creative side, completing housework and chores, participating in civic groups or being active in their community.
Flexible Work and Well-Being

The lowest report of enough time is for participating in civic groups or being active in their community (3.85). Respondents report the highest “Enough Time Score” for socializing (5.75) which is still low on the 0-10 scale.

Assessments about having enough time differ by people’s age, family status, job category, and by their supervisory status. The age group scoring the highest on the “Time Adequacy Scale” are those in their 20s (5.30), followed by employees 40 to 60 (5.03), and then those 30-39 years (4.63). Not surprisingly, single employees with no children rank highest on the “Time Adequacy Scale” (5.70), followed by married employees with no children (5.15), and then employees with a child at home (4.33).

Evaluating Work

- **Good Job Assessments.** Most Streamline employees rate their own job performance as high. In fact, Streamline employees rate high in individual and team job performance, job involvement, organizational commitment, work engagement, satisfaction with job, coworkers, and managers. Employees typically have low intentions of turnover.

- **Team Performance is High.** Employees tend to rate their teams’ performance as high. Those with external clients have higher ratings of both their own and their teams’ job performance than those whose clients are internal. Hourly employees score their teams’ performance higher than do salaried employees.

- **High Satisfaction.** Most Streamline employees report being satisfied or very satisfied with their jobs, coworkers, and managers. They score high on work engagement as well.

- **Burnout Differs by Age.** Most employees experience emotional exhaustion, a component of burnout, at least monthly. Employees in their 20s are more committed to the organization but slightly less engaged. They are also more likely to report burnout.

Work-Family Conflict and Enhancement

- **Some Work-Family Conflict.** Our study reveals that respondents are more likely to experience interference from work to family life than the other way around. Most employees we interviewed report some work-family conflicts. But they also tend to have fairly high family engagement and involvement.

- **Parents Report More Work-Family Conflict.** As we would expect, employees with children report the highest levels of work-family conflict, followed by those who are married (or partnered) but child-free and then by single employees.

- **Gender Differences.** Men report slight— but statistically significantly higher work-family conflict than women. Managers and executives report the highest levels of work-family conflict. Supervisors are more likely to report job spillover with their jobs affecting their personal lives in both positive and negative ways.
Introduction to Study

This preliminary report summarizes the findings from the Flexible Work and Well-Being Study. We conducted a survey of 923 employees at the headquarters of a national retail organization that we call Streamline. This report describes the work experiences, personal lives, and health and well-being of employees, as part of a larger study to understand the connections between work, family, and health. We will be re-interviewing this same sample six months later to capture any changes in their work environment, health, and well-being.

Nature of the Workforce

The Streamline employees are young compared to other white-collar workplaces, and about evenly divided between men and women. One-third are single, one-third are married or partnered (but do not have children), and one-third are parents. 14% provide care to an adult relative and 24.7% of the parents in this study have a child with a chronic health condition or a disability.

Work Environment

• Hard Work. The Streamline employees are a hardworking group! On average, they report putting in 47.8 hours per week on their Streamline jobs.

• High Job Demands but also High Control. We examine employees’ perceptions of control over their work (including how, when, and where they do their work) because previous research has shown that “job control” is closely related to work effectiveness and to health and well-being. Streamline employees report high psychological job demands, as well as high control at work. This suggests a climate of high involvement in their jobs.

• High Schedule Control by Some. Employees at higher ranks in the organization tend to have more schedule control over when and where they work. Parents score higher on some aspects of job control, but this difference may reflect the fact that parents are also older than other employees and so more likely to have moved up in the organization, achieving jobs with higher autonomy.

• Ideal-Real Work Hours Gap. The average gap between actual and ideal work hours in our study is 7.5 hours. Employees’ ideal work hours average 41.1 hours per week. Women, supervisors, and managers are among those who want, in an ideal world, to reduce work hours most.

Managers experience the lowest scores on the “Time Adequacy Scale” (4.65), followed by professionals (5.06), and then technical, administrative, and sales employees (5.31). Supervisors have a lower average score (4.40) on the scale than non-supervisors (5.17). Ratings on the “Time Adequacy” scale do not differ by gender. Neither do they differ by employees’ exempt status (salaried/hourly) or whether employees have internal or external clients.
Employees who have children with a disability or chronic condition

Having a family places many types of challenges on an individual employee. Having a child with a disability or chronic condition is a unique type of family challenge. This survey investigates who has a child with special needs, what conditions or disabilities they have, and how the family manages these challenges. This survey asks about physical, mental, and emotional disabilities and how they affect the child’s play activities, school work or arrangements at school. We also ask if these employees have children with a chronic condition that requires them to follow a special diet, attend therapy, take prescribed medicines, see a doctor regularly, or have been hospitalized for their condition.

9.3% of employees have a child with a disability or chronic condition. Counting only those with children, 24.7% have a child with a disability or a chronic condition. These workers are overwhelmingly in the exempt category (94.6%). Most of the employees who are parenting a child with a disability or chronic condition are typically managers (51.6%), followed by professional (28.6%), technical positions (6.5%), executives (4.4%) and then administrative or clerical positions (3.3%). There is about an equal split between those who supervise others and those who don’t (47.3% vs. 52.7% respectively).

There are slightly more men with children with a disability or chronic health condition (52.7%) and most of these workers are married (90.3%). Most of the workers who have children with a disability or chronic condition are between the ages of 29 and 39 (52.7%), 39.8% are 40 to 60 and only 7.5% are 29 or younger. Slightly less than half of this population report that they themselves are in excellent or very good health (47.8%), 31.7% report good health and 7.2% report fair or poor health. Most of these workers have either a bachelor or graduate degree (70%). As with the Streamline headquarters employees overall, most are white (89.2%).

Despite the family challenges of raising children with disabilities and chronic conditions, 98% of these employees say “no” when we ask if they plan to leave the workforce to devote more time to caring for children. (This was a question asked of all parents.) This is particularly notable because 86.2% of this sample works more than 40 hours per week with 27% working 55 hours or more per week.

“There should be more flexible hours. Start time and finish time put me right in the middle of rush hour. I waste a lot of my life sitting in traffic, and I hold my job accountable for that.”
These employees are not more likely than others in our survey to report that family interferes with their work responsibilities. Instead, we suspect this group may do all that they need for their families and at work, but not make the time to take care of themselves. They score quite low on a measure of having enough time to take care of themselves. 66.3% report scores between "sometimes having enough time" and "never having enough time" to get enough sleep. 71.7% agree that they only "sometimes" or "do not at all" have enough time to be by themselves, 75% do not have enough time to exercise and keep in shape and 80% do not have enough time to be active in their community.

“I am able to better balance my work and personal life because of amenities provided to me by Streamline on the job (i.e. workout facility, banking, cafeteria, pharmacy, etc.).”
Appendix

The Flexible Work and Well-Being Center is part of a national network, the Work, Family & Health Network, sponsored by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The goals of this initiative are to “conduct interdisciplinary evidence-based research on work and family programs and policies in multiple workplace settings.” The Flexible Work and Well-Being Center in particular investigates how organizations can adapt their policies and practices in ways that promote the health of employees and their families. The Flexible Work and Well-Being Study is a multi-method research study. The research design includes conducting in-depth interviews, observations of teams, observations of the change process, analyses of health care claims data, focus groups and surveys. This summary report contains information from the Wave I survey component of the study.

Eligibility Criteria

Eligibility for being in the study was employment at the company headquarters. People excluded were those who had already gone through the initiative and contingency workers.

Recruitment

The Flexible Work and Well-Being Center sent out an email inviting respondents to complete the web-based survey. Each employee had a unique code and password so we could ensure that each person completed only one survey and so we can send reminders and gift cards to the appropriate people. It was explained that survey responses were confidential, that the survey would take about 45 minutes to complete, and that a $25.00 gift card would be awarded to those who completed the survey. The Wave IA survey was opened to respondents in February and March of 2006. Wave IB was opened in June, 2006 and Wave IC was opened in August, 2006. Respondents were given about 4 weeks to complete the survey.

Sample

1,243 employees were invited to participate in the survey. 993 began it and 923 completed it 100% of the way through, for a total response rate of 75%. 506 of those invited were in teams that would start the “FREE” initiative in the next year. 386 of them completed it, for a 76% response rate. We invited 731 employees from “traditional” teams that were not scheduled to participate in “FREE”. A total of 544 completed the survey for a 74% response rate.

This research project has been undertaken in affiliation with the Life Course Center and the Minnesota Population Center at the University of Minnesota.

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Research Design

Both “FREE” and traditional groups were surveyed. The “FREE” groups were surveyed approximately 3-4 weeks before they began their initiative and a comparative traditional group was surveyed at the same time. The groups will be surveyed again (Wave II) approximately 6-7 months later.