



MINDING THE GAP

Columbus Chamber of Commerce Thought Leadership Series

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One of my greatest joys has always been traveling, and I have been incredibly privileged to see many parts of this country and the world through either pleasure or business trips. London is a favorite destination, with the convenience of hopping aboard the Underground to get about the city with ease and efficiency that I often take for granted.

Settling into a seat for a longer commute, or holding tightly to an overhead strap for a short connection, I rarely think about how “all of this” works. I assume that the train and engine are well maintained and being guided by proficient and safety-conscious drivers. It never occurs to me to inspect the tracks (what would I even be looking for?). Over the years, I have become vaguely aware of the recorded warning that encourages the passengers to “mind the gap” when entering and exiting the car.

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PARENTS*

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AND RETENTION TOOL***

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*YOU'LL BE HEARING FROM
US SOON*

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FLEXIBILITY AS RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION TOOL

The term “flexibility” is not definitive on its own and can be implemented differently depending on role, department, corporation or industry. To some, it describes the location of where work activity takes place. In industries where onsite participation is necessary (production lines in a distribution center, for example), offering a remote option is clearly not feasible.

Many of us have become accustomed to workplaces that are hybrid in nature...combining a work from home and an onsite participation approach. This allowance has helped offset some of the childcare and transportation barriers that workers often face.

As we prepare for 2022 and the continuation of safety protocols at work, expect that hybrid workforce solutions will be here for the foreseeable future. A March 2021, Mercer survey of more than 700 U.S. employers reports that 87 percent of employers will embrace greater flexibility post-pandemic, with most planning a hybrid onsite/remote-work model.



Business leaders and employees alike indicate they value the productivity, work/life balance and overall better health and wellness that can come from remote work. That said, both also indicate that networking, promotion opportunities and workplace culture can all suffer with prolonged time away from one another. What are you doing to balance the positive sides of remote or hybrid workplaces with the potential downsides?

With job seekers looking for flexible work environments, it is critical to analyze your workplace and determine which (if any) positions can be done off site or asynchronously. Changes in schedule and job sharing solutions may be ways to offer both employee benefits and meet desired corporate outcomes. Survey your incumbent workforce and your job candidates to determine what they are looking for as they choose to either stay with you or join your team.

“If you are going to recruit from different talent pipelines, it is really important to try to be flexible when you can and where it is appropriate. Develop rapport to better understand the needs. Poll your employees with questions like ‘do you have a best friend at work?’ how can we help you?”

-Opal Brant

Workforce Development Board of Central Ohio

If start and end time are difficult for your employees, consider making changes that can accommodate them and keep the production and service levels high. You may want to add a new shift or change the working hours to meet those needs. Keep in mind that these changes are often necessitated by childcare options, school schedules or public transportation that your workforce relies on to show up to work for you each day.

As we all continue our literal and figurative travels, we will encounter signposts along the way that provide direction and guidance. Let us all pay attention to those that warn us of potential pitfalls ahead; and create pathways and bridges that allow us to “mind the gap” and land safely on the other side.

Contact Kelly Fuller Today

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Reach out to Kelly today to discuss the minding the gap and workforce!



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