

EMPLOYMENT

FACT SHEET

Oregon's Working Families Need Fair Work Schedules

April 2015

Low wages make it hard for workers to support themselves and their families, but wages are not the only problem. Low-wage jobs are often marked by work scheduling policies and practices that pose particular challenges for workers with significant responsibilities outside of their job, including caregiving, pursuing education and workforce training, or holding down a second job. Some require working nights, weekends, or even overnight, and many offer only part-time work, despite many workers' need for full-time hours.

Women are disproportionately affected by this problem, because women both hold the majority of low-wage jobs and shoulder the majority of caregiving responsibilities.² Nearly 48 percent of women in Oregon over the age of 16 are in the labor force.³ And especially for the nearly 176,100 women in Oregon working in low-wage jobs (earning \$10.10 or less), difficult scheduling practices all too often undermine their best efforts to provide for their families.⁴

A Snapshot of Oregon's Low-Wage Workforce

- Women make up nearly 65 percent of the 234,400 workers in Oregon's low-wage workforce, where difficult scheduling practices are most common.⁵
- Nearly 24 percent of households in Oregon are headed by single mothers—in these families, there is no other parent with whom to share caregiving responsibilities.⁶
- Over 40 percent of female-headed families in Oregon are living in poverty.⁷
- Working women in Oregon are twice as likely to have a low-wage job as a working man.⁸
- Twenty-one percent of women in the workforce in Oregon work in low-wage jobs, as compared to 10.5 percent of men.⁹
- In 2013, there were 978,000 hourly workers in Oregon, 12,000 of which were paid at or below the minimum wage.¹⁰

This fact sheet outlines five of the most common scheduling challenges faced by workers in low-wage jobs and explains their prevalence and detrimental impact on workers and their families.

Common Scheduling Challenges

Lack of Control over Work Schedules

Many workers in low-wage jobs have few opportunities for meaningful input into the timing of the hours that they work, and are unable to make even minor adjustments to their work schedules without suffering a penalty.¹¹ This is true for low-wage workers on both set and variable schedules.¹²

- Overall, less than half of workers have flexibility in the scheduling of their work hours.¹³ More than a third of parents believe they've been "passed over" for a promotion, raise, or a new job due to a need for a flexible work schedule.¹⁴
- About half of low-wage workers report having limited control over the timing of their work hours.¹⁵



- Between two-thirds and three-quarters of full-time low-wage workers report that they are unable to alter the start and end times of their work days.¹⁶
- Between 40 and 50 percent of low-wage workers have no control over when they take breaks.¹⁷

Unpredictable Work Schedules

Some employers adopt "just-in-time scheduling" in an effort to minimize labor costs. Just-in-time scheduling bases workers' schedules on perceived consumer demand and often results in workers being given very little advance notice of their work schedules.¹⁸ Scheduling software is frequently used to schedule workers at the last minute, matching the number of workers as closely as possible to retail traffic or other indicators of consumer demand.¹⁹

- According to research analyzing the work schedules of a representative sample of early-career adults (26-32 years old), over a third (38 percent) of early career employees overall knew their work schedule one week or less in advance.²⁰
- Such short notice was significantly more common among hourly workers (41 percent) than others (33 percent), and among part-time (48 percent) than fulltime workers (35 percent).²¹
- According to a survey of workers in the retail industry by the Retail Action Project, about a fifth of workers receive their schedules only three days beforehand.²²
- In another survey of 6,085 workers employed by a major retailer in 388 stores across the country (referred to as the "CitiSales Study"), workers receive notice of their work schedules only seven days in advance, on average.²³
- Between 19 and 31 percent of low-wage workers are often asked to work extra hours with little or no notice.²⁴ Roughly 40 to 60 percent of full-time, lowwage workers who are asked to work extra hours with little or no notice say they comply with the request to avoid negative consequences.²⁵
- Some retail workers report that they are routinely required to work call-in shifts, which means they must call their employer to find out whether they will be scheduled to work that day, and if they are told to report to work, they often must do so within two

hours.²⁶ In a study of retail workers in New York City, 20 percent of workers surveyed reported that they always or often must be available for call-in shifts.²⁷

Unstable Work Schedules

Many workers in low-wage jobs experience unstable schedules with hours that vary from week to week or month to month, or periodic reductions in work hours when work is slow.

- For early-career adults, hours fluctuate substantially for both hourly and non-hourly workers. For those hourly workers who need more hours, such fluctuations can make it extremely difficult to make ends meet.²⁸
- Workers in low-wage jobs, primarily women, are more likely to experience schedule variations; for example, the average variation in work hours in a single month is 70 percent for food service workers, 50 percent for retail workers, and 40 percent for janitors and housekeepers.²⁹
- According to the Retail Action Project survey of workers in the retail industry, only 17 percent of all workers surveyed and 10 percent of part-time workers had a set schedule.³⁰
- According to the CitiSales Study, for 59 percent of retail employees employed by one major retailer, either the shifts or the days they worked changed each week.³¹
- Between 20 and 30 percent of low-wage workers reported a reduction in hours or a layoff when work was slow.³²

Involuntary Part-Time Work

Workers who want full-time work but are only offered part-time hours—often described as the "underemployed"—struggle to support their families with fewer hours and less pay. The number of workers working part-time involuntarily more than doubled during the recession, growing from 4.4 million prior to 2007 to 8.9 million in 2009, and remains substantially higher than pre-recession levels at 6.8 million workers in 2014.³³

- In 2014, one in five (21 percent) of part-time workers worked part-time involuntarily, including for reasons of slack work or business conditions and because they were unable to find full-time work.³⁴
- Low-wage workers are far more likely to work parttime involuntarily than other workers. In 2013, the rate of involuntary part-time work for employee in lowwage occupations (14 percent) was more than double the rate of involuntary part-time work among employees overall (6 percent).³⁵
- Workers in low-wage occupations made up one-third (33 percent) of all involuntary part-time workers in 2013, despite these low-wage workers only making up 14 percent of all workers.³⁶

Nonstandard Work Schedules

Workers on nonstandard schedules face unique challenges. "Nonstandard" schedules refers to working evenings, nights, weekends, or working on rotating shifts, irregular schedules, or on call.³⁷
Nonstandard work is also called "unsocial work" because nonstandard schedules often conflict with family time and make it difficult to maintain other social ties.³⁸ While the majority of workers on nonstandard schedules do not have these schedules by choice, some workers do choose nonstandard schedules in order to help juggle competing obligations.³⁹

States Respond to the Need for Fair Work Schedules

Between 2014 and 2015 ten states introduced bills to curb difficult scheduling practices: California, Connecticut, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New York and Oregon.⁴⁰ Many of these bills provide:

- A right to request a work schedule change with protection from retaliation for making that request.
- A requirement that employers provide a schedule and give employees advance notice of their schedules.
- A requirement that employers provide extra pay to workers who are subject to extremely difficult scheduling practices. For example, many of the bills provide extra pay for schedules that are changed after the schedule is posted, including for workers who are sent home without being paid for their scheduled shifts, assigned to call-in shifts, or whose shifts are cancelled, reduced, or otherwise changed. Some of the bills also provide extra pay for split shifts.

The Fallout from Difficult Work Schedules

Impact on caregiving responsibilities. Workers in lowwage jobs often face extreme demands at home and work. These workers are more likely to be single parents,41 more likely to have children with special needs, 42 and more likely to care for elderly or sick relatives.⁴³ They also have higher rates of illness themselves.44 At the same time, they have fewer resources to pay for child and elder care than other workers, and they are far less likely to have paid sick and vacation days, or job-protected leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act.⁴⁵ For some workers in low-wage jobs who have little to no control over their work schedules, being able to plan for or respond to the exigencies of daily life—for example, ending a shift on time to pick up a child from school or scheduling an afternoon off to take an elderly parent to a doctor's appointment—is simply not an option.

Impact on child care. Low-wage workers' ability to access quality, affordable, and stable child care is often compromised by challenging work schedules.46 With work schedules and incomes that fluctuate from week to week, many workers have no choice but to cobble together child care at the last minute.⁴⁷ Because many centers require care givers to pay a weekly or monthly fee, regardless of how often the child attends, holding a spot in a child care center is often infeasible for workers who do not know when, or even if, they will work that week. Further, workers with unstable schedules may not qualify for child care subsidies due to fluctuations in income and work hours.⁴⁸ Relying on family, friends, and neighbors to provide child care—as most workers in low-wage jobs must do—is complicated by the fact that their child care providers may also be balancing an unpredictable part-time work schedule at their own jobs with providing child care. When workers are unable to find child care or child care falls through, sometimes workers must miss work and lose pay. In one study, 40 to 60 percent of workers who reported missing work due to child care problems also reported losing pay or benefits, or being penalized in some way.⁴⁹

Impact on marriage. Working nonstandard hours has been shown to have negative outcomes for marriages and for children. Research has linked nonstandard hours to higher levels of divorce, less time together as a couple, and lower relationship satisfaction. Although some two-parent families in low-wage jobs cope with the child care problems outlined above by "tag teaming"—working on opposite schedules so that one parent is available to provide child care—this results in

even less time together as a couple.⁵²

Impact on children. Workers on nonstandard schedules spend less time with their children,⁵³ and their children tend to score lower on cognitive tests, have more behavioral problems and poorer mental health.⁵⁴ Lesser parental involvement in children's education has consequences for children from low-income families who are three times more likely to drop out of school than children from middle class families.⁵⁵

Impact on education and workforce training.

Challenging work schedules can make it nearly impossible to pursue further education or training while holding down a job. One of the most commonly cited challenges to completing a college degree is the inability to balance work and school.⁵⁶ Both male and female lowwage workers report a lack of opportunities to pursue additional education and training.⁵⁷ In a set of focus groups of students enrolled in community colleges, students identified employers' lack of flexibility with work schedules as a major barrier to pursuing their education.⁵⁸

Impact on transportation. Just-in-time scheduling often complicates transportation for low-wage workers, who may be relying on friends or family to provide a ride to and from work, or public transportation that may run infrequently or erratically.⁵⁹ Workers may spend hours and precious resources commuting to and from work, to work a shift lasting only a few hours, or to be sent home unexpectedly when work is slow.⁶⁰

Impact on family economic security. Challenging work schedules make it more difficult to pay the bills. An unexpected reduction in hours means a loss of pay, and it can mean the loss of employer or government benefits that are tied to work hours, including paid and unpaid time off, health insurance, unemployment insurance, public assistance, and work supports. Women working part-time involuntarily are more likely to live in poverty (more than 25 percent) than their counterparts who worked part-time voluntarily (12 percent) or worked

full-time (5 percent).⁶² Involuntary part-time workers are more likely to have been unemployed for a substantial portion of the previous year (more than 13 weeks)⁶³ and are less likely to have health care or pension coverage;64 and part-time positions typically offer less pay pro rata and less job security than full-time positions. 65 Workers report that scheduling and family conflicts are a major reason why they intend to leave their jobs.66 And spells of unemployment can have disastrous financial consequences for low-income families. In fact, low-wage workers are 2.5 times more likely to be out of work than other workers, but only half as likely to receive unemployment insurance.⁶⁷ Workers' inability to pursue or complete education and workforce training programs as a result of work schedule conflict also makes it much more difficult for workers to move up into higher-paying jobs.⁶⁸

Conclusion

The fallout from low-wage jobs characterized by unpredictability, instability, workers having little say in their work schedules, nonstandard schedules, and involuntary part-time work is considerable.⁶⁹ These challenging work schedules have a cascade of negative consequences for both workers in low-wage jobs and their children.

In contrast, fairer work schedules benefit employees and employers alike. Low-wage workers report that more job autonomy and involvement in management decision-making led to less negative spillover from work to their non-work life. Employees with flexible workplaces are less stressed and have better physical and mental well-being. Less negative spillover from work also leads to greater productivity and job retention: low-wage workers with flexibility are 30 percent less likely than other workers to intend to leave their positions within two years.

For all of these reasons, worker protections to curb difficult scheduling practices are crucial to giving workers and their families a fair shot at achieving economic security.

¹ See generally, National Women's Law Center (NWLC), Collateral Damage: Scheduling Challenges for Workers in Low-Wage Jobs and Their Consequences (Apr. 2014), available at http://www.nwlc.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/collateral-damage-scheduling-fact-sheet.pdf.

³ NWLC calculations based on U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2013, *available at* http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_13_1YR_DP03&prodType=table.

⁴ National Women's Law Center ("NWLC"), Women in the Low-Wage Workforce by State: Women are Overrepresented in the Low-Wage Workforce in Every State 1 (2014), available at http://www.nwlc.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/pv_fs_low_wage_state_tables.pdf; NWLC, Interactive Map: Women and Poverty, State by State (Sept. 2014), available at http://www.nwlc.org/resource/women-and-poverty-state-state.

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- ⁵NWLC, Women and Poverty, State by State (Sept. 2014), available at http://www.nwlc.org/resource/women-and-poverty-state-state.
- 6 *Id*.
- ⁷ NWLC, supra, note 4.
- 8 Id.
- 9 Id.
- ¹⁰ BLS Reports, Characteristics of Minimum Wage Workers, 2013 (March 2014), available at http://www.bls.gov/cps/minwage2013.pdf.
- ¹¹ LIZ WATSON & JENNIFER E. SWANBERG, FLEXIBLE WORKPLACE SOLUTIONS FOR LOW-WAGE HOURLY WORKERS: A FRAMEWORK FOR A NATIONAL CONVERSA-TION 6 (Workplace Flexibility 2010, May 2011), available at http://workplaceflexibility2010.org/images/uploads/whatsnew/Flexible%20Workplace%20Solutions%20 for%20Low-Wage%20Hourly%20Workers.pdf.
- ¹² In this section, "low-wage workers" are defined as those working an hourly job that pays less than two-thirds the median wage for men, unless stated otherwise. This definition of "low-wage" is based on WATSON & SWANBERG. Using 2008 National Study of the Changing Workforce data, the sample included workers paid \$15.41 or less per hour.
- ¹³ White House Council of Economic Advisers, *Nine Facts about American Families And Work* 4 (June 2014), *available at* http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/nine-facts-about family and work real final.pdf.
- 14 Id
- ¹⁵ WATSON & SWANBERG, supra note 11, at 19-20.
- ¹⁶ *Id*.
- ¹⁷ Id.
- ¹⁸ See generally, NANCY C. CAUTHEN, SCHEDULING HOURLY WORKERS: HOW LAST MINUTE, JUST-IN-TIME SCHEDULING PRACTICES ARE BAD FOR WORKERS, FAMILIES AND BUSINESS (Demos 2011), available at http://www.demos.org/publication/scheduling-hourly-workers-how-last-minute-just-time-scheduling-practices-are-bad-workers.
- ¹⁹ WATSON & SWANBERG, supra note 11, at 13.
- ²⁰ SUSAN J. LAMBERT, PETER J. FUGIEL, AND JULIA R. HENLY, PRECARIOUS WORK SCHEDULES AMONG EARLY-CAREER EMPLOYEES IN THE US: A NATIONAL SNAP-SHOT 6 (Aug. 2014), available at http://ssascholars.uchicago.edu/work-scheduling-study/files/lambert.fugiel.henly_precarious_work_schedules.august2014.pdf.

 ²¹ Id
- ²² STEPHANIE LUCE & NAOKI FUJITA, DISCOUNTED JOBS: HOW RETAILERS SELL WORKERS SHORT 8 (Retail Action Project, 2012), available at http://retailactionproject.org/2012/01/discounted-jobs-how-retailers-sell-workers-short-executive-summary/.
- ²³ Jennifer Swanberg, et al., Introduction to the CitiSales Study 4 (2009), available at http://www.uky.edu/Centers/iwin/citisales/hourly-ib1_intro.html.
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- 25 Id
- ²⁶ LUCE & FUJITA, supra note 22, at 13.
- ²⁷ Id.
- ²⁸ LAMBERT, FUGIEL, HENLY, supra note 20, Table 7.
- ²⁹ See Schedules That Work Act, H.R. 113th Cong. (2014) (from Sec. 1 Short Title & Findings, based on an analysis of the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth by Susan Lambert), available at https://www.congress.gov/bill/113th-congress/house-bill/5159/text.
- ³⁰ LUCE & FUJITA, supra note 22, at 13.
- ³¹ Swanberg, et al., supra note 23, at 4 ("However, only 41% of employees indicate that they have schedule consistency i.e., working the same days and the same shift each week.").
- ³² WATSON & SWANBERG, *supra* note 11, at 22. With the exception of full-time low-wage workers with standard hours, for whom less than 20 percent reported this problem.
- ³³ NWLC calculations based on Miriam King et. al, Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, CPS: Version 3.0 (IPUMS-CPS). Data are from the Current Population Survey, ASEC 2013, which refers to the reason for working part-time during the week prior to the reference week of the survey. Median hourly wages are from Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), Occupational Employment Statistics (OES), May 2013 National Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates (Low-wage occupations are defined here as those typically paying \$10.10 per hour or less), available at http://www.bls.gov/oes_nat.htm.
- ³⁴ *Id.* Other reasons for working part-time involuntarily include season work (3 percent of all involuntarily part-time workers) and job started or ended during the week (1 percent of involuntarily part-time workers).
- 35 *Id*.
- ³⁶ *Id*.
- ³⁷ Maria E. Enchautegui, Nonstandard Work Schedules and the Well-Being of Low-Income Families, Low –Income Working Families paper 26 1 (Urban Inst, July, 2013), available at http://www.urban.org/publications/904597.html.
- ³⁸ JOAN C. WILLIAMS & HEATHER BOUSHEY, THE THREE FACES OF WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT: THE POOR, THE PROFESSIONALS, AND THE MISSING MIDDLE 25 (CTR. FOR AMERICAN PROGRESS Jan. 2010), available at https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/labor/report/2010/01/25/7194/the-three-faces-of-work-family-conflict/.
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- ⁴⁰ San Francisco Ordinance No. 241-14 (Nov. 8, 2014); S. Bill 1112, The Employee Scheduling Accommodation Act (Mich. 2014); Assembly Bill No. 357, Fair Schedule and Pay Act (Cal. Feb. 17, 2015); General Assembly Bill No. 6933, An Act Concerning Predictable Scheduling for Employees (Ct. Jan. 2015); Illinois House Bill 3554 (2015; Senate Bill No. 416, 119th General Assembly Employee's Right to Scheduled Employment (In. 2015); H.R. 969, S.B. 688, Fair Scheduling Act (Md. 2015); S.F. No. 1330, Fair Scheduling Act, State of Minnesota 89th Session (2015); S. 52 & A 261 (N.Y. 2015); H.R. 2010, 78th Leg. Assembly (Or. 2015).
- ⁴¹ WILLIAMS & BOUSHEY, supra note 38, at 12.
- ⁴² Lisa Dodson et al. Keeping Jobs and Raising Families in Low-Income America: It Just Doesn't Work (2002) Radcliffe Public Policy Center and 9to5 National Association of Working Women, at 1.
- ⁴³ ANNA DANZIGER & SHELLEY WATERS BOOTS, LOWER-WAGE WORKERS AND FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS, Workplace Flexibility 2010 on behalf of the Urban Institute 3 (Georgetown Univ. July 10, 2008).
- ⁴⁴ Ellen Galinsky, James T. Bond & Eve Tahmincioglu, What if Employers Put Women at the Center of Their Workplace Policies? When Businesses Design Workplaces that Support their Employees, Both the Businesses and the Employees Benefit, in THE SHRIVER REPORT: A WOMAN'S NATION PUSHES BACK FROM THE BRINK (Shriver Center 2014).

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- ⁴⁶ See generally RESTAURANT OPPORTUNITIES CENTER UNITED, supra note 3; LIZ BEN-ISHAI, HANNAH MATTHEWS, & JODIE LEVIN-EPSTEIN, SCRAMBLING FOR STABILITY: THE CHALLENGES OF JOB SCHEDULE VOLATILITY AND CHILD CARE (Ctr. for Law and Soc. Policy Mar. 2014), available at http://www.clasp.org/resources-and-publications/publication-1/2014-03-27-Scrambling-for-Stability-The-Challenges-of-Job-Schedule-Volat-.pdf.
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- 48 See generally, KAREN SCHULMAN & HELEN BLANK, PIVOT POINT: STATE CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE POLICIES 2013 (Nat'l Women's Law Ctr. 2013).
- ⁴⁹ WATSON & SWANBERG, supra note 11, at 8.
- ⁵⁰ See Enchautegui, supra note 37, at 3-4.
- ⁵¹ Maureen Perry-Jenkins et al., Shift Work, Role Overload, and the Transition to Parenthood, 69 J. of Marriage & Family Vol. 1, 123-38 (2007).
- ⁵² HEATHER BOUSHEY, TAG-TEAM PARENTING 3 (Ctr, for Econ. & Policy Research Aug. 2005), available at http://www.cepr.net/documents/work-schedules-2006-08.pdf.
- ⁵³ See Julia R. Henly, Luke Shaefer & Elaine Waxman, Nonstandard workschedules: Employer- and employee-driven flexibility in retail jobs, 80 SOCIAL SERVICE REVIEW 609-34 (Dec. 2006).
- ⁵⁴ Jane Waldfogel and Sara McLanahan, Work and Family, FUTURE OF CHILDREN 21 NO. 2 (Fall 2011).
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- ⁵⁹ JOAN C. WILLIAMS & PENELOPE HUANG, IMPROVING WORK-LIFE FIT IN HOURLY JOBS: AN UNDERUTILIZED COST-CUTTING STRATEGY IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD 13, 15, 57, (Ctr. for Work Life Law 2011); Cauthen, *supra* note 14, at 7.
- 60 Cauthen, supra note 18, at 1, 7.
- ⁶¹ Susan J. Lambert and Julia R. Henly. *Scheduling in Hourly Jobs: Promising Practices for the Twenty-First Century Economy* 9-10 (The Mobility Agenda 2009), *available at* http://ssascholars.uchicago.edu/work-scheduling-study/files/lambert_and_henly_scheduling_policy_brief.pdf; CTR. FOR LAW & SOC. POLICY (CLASP), RETAIL ACTION PROJECT, & WOMEN EMPLOYED, TACKLING UNSTABLE AND UNPREDICTABLE WORK SCHEDULES: A POLICY BRIEF ON GUARANTEED MINIMUM HOURS AND REPORTING PAY POLICIES 4-5 (Mar. 2014), *available at* http://retailactionproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Tackling-Unstable-and-Unpredictable-Work-Schedules-3-7-2014-FINAL.pdf.
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- ⁶⁴ H. Luke Shaefer, *Part-Time Workers*: Some Key Differences Between Primary and Secondary Earners, National Poverty Center Working Paper Seiries #09-16 3 (Oct. 2009), available at http://npc.umich.edu/publications/u/working_paper09-16.pdf.
- 65 Rebecca Glauber, supra note 62, at 5.
- 66 Lisa Dodson, et.al, supra note 42, at 16.
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- ⁶⁹ See generally Dodson, supra note 42 (describing in detail the ways having parents in low-wage jobs negatively impacts youth.).
- ⁷⁰ James T. Bond and Ellen Galinsky, *How Can Employers Increase the Productivity and Retention of Entry-Level, Hourly Employees?*, Families and Work Institute 12 (Nov. 2006), *available at* <a href="http://www.familiesandwork.org/how-can-employers-increase-the-productivity-and-retention-of-entry-level-hourly-employees-brief-2/; see also Galinsky, Bond & Tahmincioglu, supra note 43 ("Overall, 55 percent of low-income mothers surveyed said it would be "extremely important" to "have the flexibility I need to manage my work and personal or family life...No one surveyed said it was 'not important.").
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