

WorkAnywhere

HR focus

The new workstyle presents Human Resources Management with particular challenges but also offers many advantages to both the employees and the company as a whole.

Advantages of WorkAnywhere

Advantages for employees:

greater flexibility and satisfaction, better life balance

Advantages for companies:

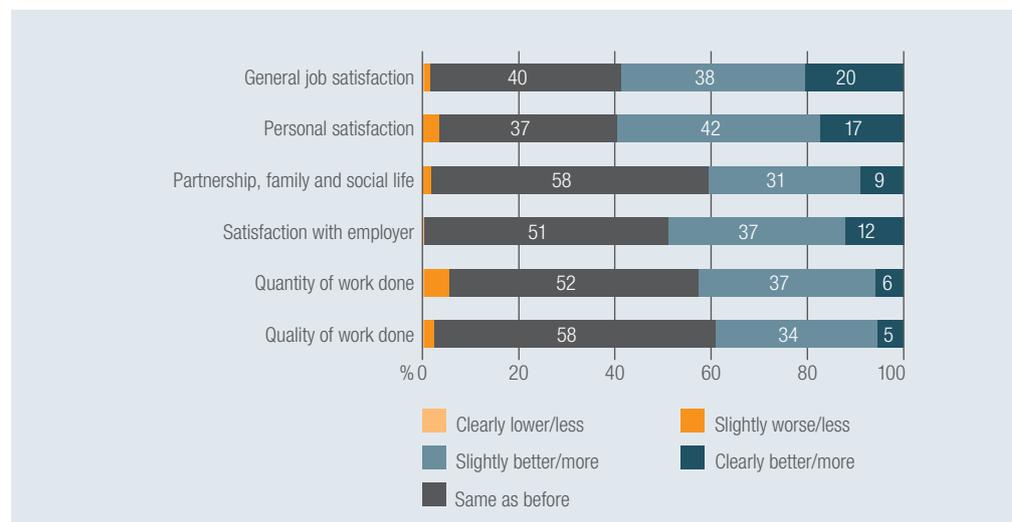
higher productivity and employer attractiveness

The following should be noted:

good technical facilities, a clear commitment and supportive culture as well as empowerment of the employees (in the use of technology but also in self-organisation, for example) are necessary.

Main effects of a flexible workstyle

During the trial, the participants were not only happier with their work but also more productive (also in the view of the managers who were interviewed separately). Detailed comparison of WorkAnywhere period to before:

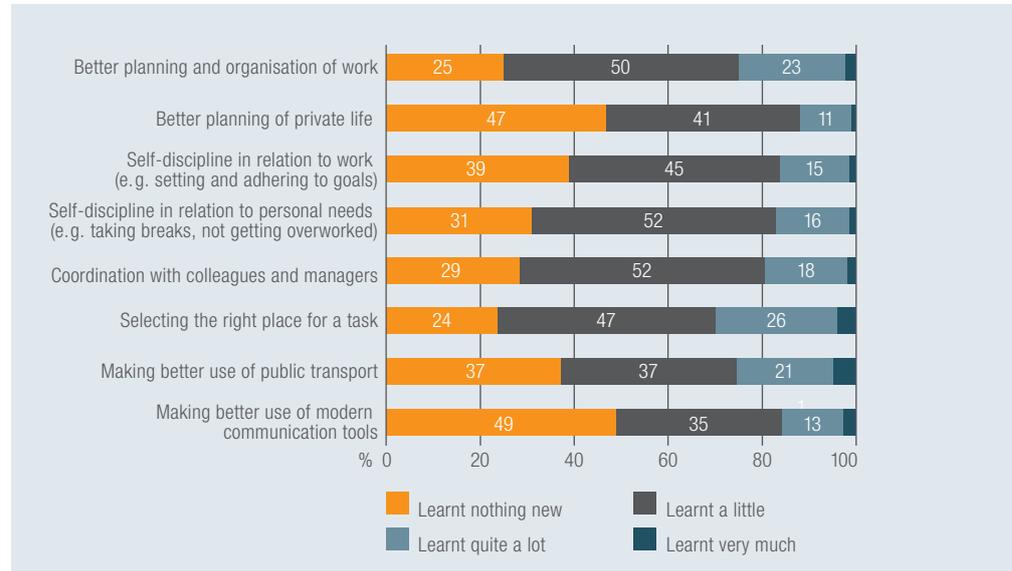


In the course of the “WorkAnywhere” study, employees of SBB and Swisscom performed part of their work from home and while commuting.

During this time, they were not only more satisfied and productive but were also able to shift 66 percent of their commutes to off-peak times thanks to the flexible structure of their working day. In this way they were able to reduce the load on the public transport infrastructure and enjoy a more relaxed commute.

Skills required for flex work

We asked all the participants in which areas they learnt most:



In all areas, approx. 10 to 20 percent of the participants learnt quite a lot or a lot. Approx. 40 to 50 percent indicated that they learnt a little. The greatest growth in learning involved planning and organizing one's own work, selecting the right place for an activity and coordinating with colleagues and line managers.

Support for flex work on the part of management

Even though the participants generally rated their managers' support for flex work as good, women returned slightly lower ratings on this aspect than men. There may be a need for action here. However, the study does not show up exactly what this would entail, as no difference could be discerned between men and women in the main criteria of the study (satisfaction, productivity, life balance etc.).

Support for managers on the part of HR

We asked the 44 participants with a formal management function if they wanted the company to provide more support with the management of mobile and flexible work (e.g. by HR). The respondents felt it was important that support be provided to both management and employees. Several people wrote that in some instances there was still insufficient acceptance of mobile work at management level. Requests were made for supporting rules and guidelines, e.g. in relation to the definition of meeting and presence times. It is clear that HR or company management must define framework conditions for flex work within which the managers and employees can come to specific agreements (even informally).

Excerpts from the interviews:

“A mobile work culture is needed: working from home and during the commute must not only be possible but must be encouraged and be considered normal. This requires a clear commitment right from the top. At some point the advantages will speak for themselves.”

“Support is necessary, whether from a technical point of view (IT) so that we can use the same tools while commuting or at home as we do on the company network, or on the part of HR by consciously supporting these models.”

“To me, commitment from management is crucial.”

Conclusion

When introducing and/or promoting flex work, HR is presented with challenges at various levels:

- Employees must be helped to learn the necessary skills, e. g. self-organisation
- Managers must develop a supportive culture and make workable agreements with their employees. In turn, they may also need to be supported with this
- A solid and clearly defined basis must be established throughout the company

Being able to offer flex work is important, not least in order to be able to position the company as a modern and attractive employer on the job market. There is an increasing demand for flexibility from well-qualified young professionals.