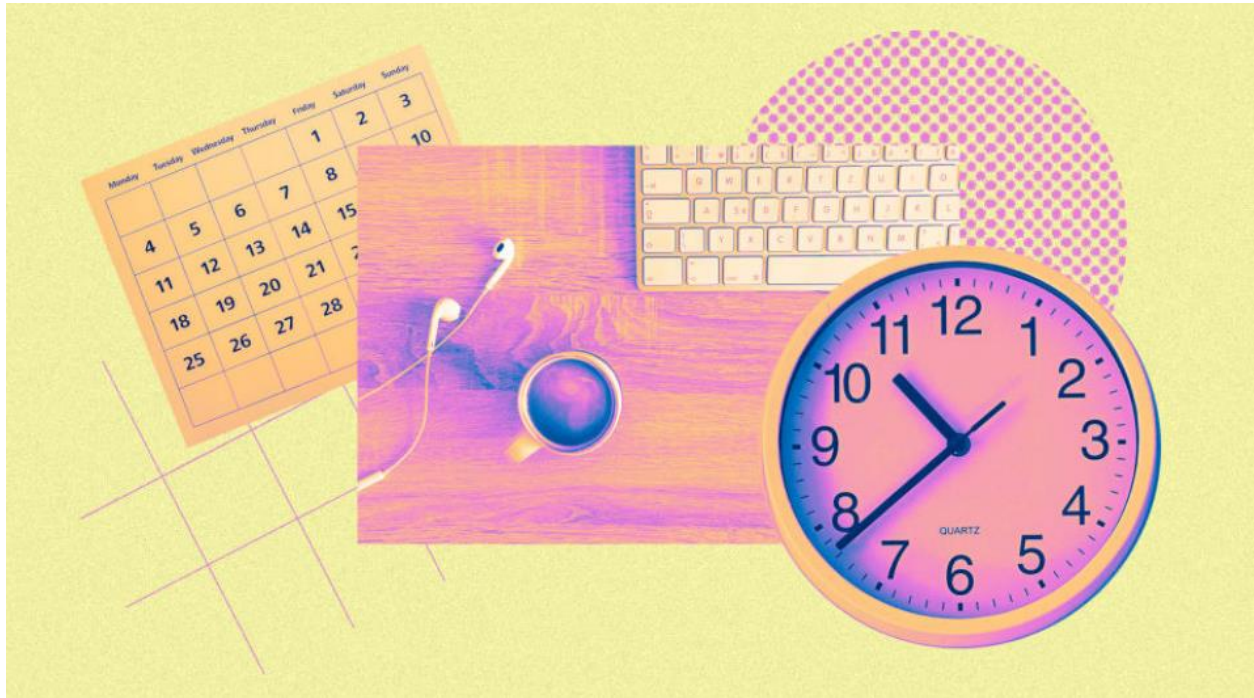


This Benefit Is More Sought After Than Remote Work

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There's no avoiding the fact that many job seekers want to work from home. According to FlexJobs, 65% of people say they want to work remotely full-time, and data from InHerSight, a company reviews platform helping women find companies and jobs, indicates nearly 90% of women are seeking or open to remote work. This headline is likely headache-inducing for many business leaders still locked in the ongoing remote-hybrid-office debate . . . but there's a catch.

While remote work remains a high priority among female job seekers, InHerSight data says that in 2024 women's top must have in the workplace isn't a home office at all. Rather, it's flexible work hours or, as the platform defines it, "the ability to set your schedule as long as you get your work done."

More than 70% of women include this must have in their job search when using InHerSight, meaning that while remote work is highly sought-after, it's not necessarily the only indicator of a job offer's desirability. Even without remote jobs, companies where people feel they can

integrate work and life have an opportunity to attract talent by showcasing their fluid approach to work-life balance.

“Being judged on the quality of your work rather than the number of hours you spend in a chair at the office has always been an important part of employee satisfaction and equity work because such flexibility allows people, women especially, to navigate the sometimes-impossible task of working and building a life,” says Ursula Mead, CEO and cofounder of InHerSight. “Remote work during the pandemic allowed remote workers to exercise that fluidity, and moving forward, instituting flexible work schedules are a way for us to hold onto what we know works while returning to in-office or hybrid schedules.”

In fact, work-life harmony is a growing demand among all job seekers. In 2023, 70% of job seekers were looking for new jobs to accommodate more flexible working arrangements and higher salaries. And in July, when InHerSight spoke to organizational culture and systems workplace expert Tammy Dowley-Blackman about Gen Z, she emphasized the importance of balance to this up-and-coming generation, which currently makes up about a fourth of the workforce.

“This is where Gen Z is different and far more equipped and savvy than prior generations,” Dowley-Blackman said. “They have an understanding that if they don’t seek work-life balance, this world we live in is that much more intense.” Flexibility isn’t about “working less” than prior generations; it’s about reserving time in the day for key survival tools, like therapy and community, in a turbulent post-pandemic world.

To Dowley-Blackman’s point, even year over year, the top must haves among women on InHerSight underline the impact of the pandemic, and everything that followed, on what employees need to thrive at work. In 2019, paid time off, salary satisfaction, having great coworkers, equal opportunities for women and men, and flexible work hours were the top-five essentials among women job seekers—in that order. 2020’s global upheaval of work styles, values, and priorities overhauled those must haves, resulting in the lineup we have today:

The desire to have great coworkers now comes in seventh, and two of the least sought-after metrics—family growth support and maternity and adoptive leave—add a compelling layer to the task of recruiting and retaining women in 2024.

“It means the old tactics for recruiting women talent, like touting maternity leave, don’t work as well anymore,” Mead says. “Paid parental leave is always important and always will be, but saying you offer 12 weeks of paid time is now a baseline benefit. It’s expected. In 2024, women want more.”

And they likely need more than they did before. Amid sky-high bills, a housing crisis, layoffs, and a challenging job market, women’s top must haves reflect their desire to have the time, space, and money to live their lives—while also working.

“This is an opportunity for companies to view their employees as whole people and to reassert their commitment to healthier work styles for all,” Mead says. “That’s a lesson we all learned during the pandemic. Now let it become a core value.”