



Kenexa® Research Institute Finds That When It Comes to Work/Life Balance, Men and Women are Not Created Equal

Research conducted by the Kenexa Research Institute (KRI) evaluated how men and women perceive work/life balance.

The latest research indicates that women are more positive than men in their perceptions of their company's efforts to help them balance work and life responsibilities. Regardless of gender, those who indicated more favorability toward their organization's efforts to support work/life balance also indicated a much lower intent to leave the organization.

Women who are working in small (100-249 employees) and moderately large (5,000-9,999 employees) companies are significantly more satisfied with their companies' ability to allow for work/life balance than men who work in those same sized organizations.

The results also revealed that women in clerical and operative roles are significantly more satisfied about their organization's effort in helping employees manage both work and personal needs than their male counterparts. Though women laborers felt more positive about their organizations' efforts to help them balance work and personal responsibilities than their male counterparts did, those in this job type were the lowest in satisfaction among all surveyed workers.

Women working in light manufacturing, transportation services, accounting/legal, other personal services and education industries felt more positively about their organizations' efforts to help them balance work and personal responsibilities than men did in these same industries.

"The results indicate that there has been a shift in women's perceptions about work/life balance. In the past, women often found it more difficult to maintain balance due to the

competing pressures at work and demands at home. For many employees today, both male and female, their lives are becoming more consumed with a host of family and other personal responsibilities and interests. Therefore, in an effort to retain employees, it is increasingly important for organizations—especially those in knowledge industries—to recognize this need for balance," said Jack W. Wiley, Ph.D., executive director, Kenexa Research Institute.

Database Overview

The Kenexa WorkTrends™ database is a comprehensive normative database of employee survey results with comparisons on topics including leadership, employee engagement and customer orientation.

Study Details

The notion of work life balance has become a popular topic. Many companies are making efforts to help employees better handle the pressures of their jobs as well as their families. The Kenexa Research Institute examined how both men and women felt about their workplaces' efforts to make this tension more bearable.

Survey items were rated using a 5-point Likert-like scale. The % favorable is the percentage of people who chose either of the two most positive answers (typically "strongly agree" or "agree").

Survey Results

- Females were more positive than males in their perceptions of company efforts to help them balance work and life responsibilities.
- Regardless of gender, those who indicated more favorability toward their organization's efforts to support work/life balance also indicated a much lower intent to leave the organization.

Survey Item	Female	Male	Difference
My company supports employees' efforts to balance work and family/personal responsibilities	59	55	4
I am not seriously considering leaving my company within the next 12 months.	60	54	6

Job function

Women are significantly more satisfied with their companies' support of employees' efforts to balance work and family/personal responsibilities than men in clerical and operative roles are.

Employee Type	Female	Male	Difference
Supervisor	58	56	2
Manager	60	58	2
Executive/Senior Manager	66	61	5
Clerical—(e.g., Secretary, Office Machine Operator, Typist)	63	58	5
Sales—(e.g., Retail Salesperson, Cashier, Sales Representative)	54	55	-1
Service—(e.g., Food Service, Cleaning Service, Health)	50	50	0
Crafts/Skilled Trades—(e.g., Mechanics, Machinists, Carpenter)	46	49	-3
Operative—(e.g., Equipment Operators, Drivers, Deliverers)	56	43	13
Laborers—(e.g., Production Worker, Assembly, Packing)	44	42	2
Technical—(e.g., Medical Technician, Computer Programmer)	61	60	1
Professional—(e.g., Teacher, Accountant, Physician, Nurse)	63	63	0
Other—(e.g., Military, Farmer, Forester)	54	51	3

Company Size

Women who are working in small (100-249 employees) and moderately large (5,000-9,999 employees) companies are significantly more satisfied with their companies' ability to allow for work/life balance than men who work in those same sized organizations.

Company Size	Female	Male	Difference
100-249	62	54	6
250-499	60	55	5
500-999	59	61	-2
1,000-4,999	58	55	3
5,000-9,999	60	51	9
10,000 or more	55	55	0

Industry

Women working in light manufacturing, transportation services, accounting/legal, other personal services and education are more satisfied with their companies' support of employees' efforts to balance work and family/personal responsibilities than men in the same jobs are.

Industry Type	Female	Male	Difference
Heavy Manufacturing	50	48	2
Electronics and Computer Manufacturing	62	62	0
Light Manufacturing—Except Electronics and Computers	51	46	5
Construction/Engineering	69	66	3
Restaurant and Eating/Drinking Establishments	54	55	1
Food Industry Retail/Wholesale	50	52	-2
Retail/Wholesale Trade—Except Food	52	51	1
Health Care Services	59	58	1
Health Care Products/Pharmaceuticals	65	62	3
Government/Public Administration	55	52	3
Communication Services/Utilities	55	58	-3
Hotel/Lodging Services	55	56	-1
Transportation Services	53	46	7
Banking Services	64	60	4
Other Financial/Insurance/Real Estate	63	64	-1
Accounting/Legal	69	54	15
Other Personal Services	60	51	9
Business Services	68	65	3
Education	68	61	7
Other/Farming/Forestry/Mining	56	53	3

Age

In general, among older workers, women are more favorable about their organizations support of work/life balance than are men; the difference is most notable among those 65 years and older (a 17 point difference).

Age	Female	Male	Difference
18-24	65	65	0
25-34	64	60	4
35-44	58	57	1
45-54	54	50	4
55-64	56	49	7
65+	73	56	17

When age is re-categorized into standard generational cohorts, female baby boomers and retirees are more favorable about their organization's support of work/life balance than are their male cohort counterparts.

Generations	Female	Male	Difference
Gen Y	65	62	3
Gen X	61	58	3
Baby Boomers	55	50	5
Mature	61	57	4
Retired	73	56	17

Tenure

Women relatively new to their companies (tenure less than one year) and those women having the greatest seniority (tenure over 15 years) are more favorable toward their organization's support of work/life balance than men in these two groups are.

Tenure	Female	Male	Difference
Up to 1 year	70	65	5
1 to 2 years	60	61	-1
3 to 5 years	58	55	3
6 to 10 years	56	55	1
11 to 15 years	50	50	0
More than 15 years	54	48	6

About Kenexa

Kenexa provides business solutions for human resources. We help global organizations multiply business success by identifying the best individuals for every job and fostering optimal work environments for every organization. For more than 20 years, Kenexa has studied human behavior and team dynamics in the workplace, and has developed the software solutions, business processes and expert consulting that help organizations impact positive business outcomes through HR. Kenexa is the only company that offers a comprehensive suite of unified products and services that support the entire employee lifecycle from pre-hire to exit.

Media Contact

Jennifer Meyer, Kenexa
1.800.391.9557
jennifer.meyer@kenexa.com

Kenexa[®]