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Is It Good For Your Staff To Leave Early on Fridays?

My co-workers know I look forward to leaving early on Fridays between Memorial Day and Labor Day. I even have an unofficial countdown for the following year starting after Labor Day. I always tell them they enjoy it just as much as I do, I just express it more. With the unofficial end of Summer upon us, I thought it would be interesting to see if other companies have some sort of “Summer Friday” arrangement and how it can affect staff.

According to an article written by Jena McGregor in the LA Times, a 2017 survey of Fortune 1000 companies conducted by CEB, a research and consulting firm in Arlington, Virginia, showed that 42% of companies (up from 21% in 2015) now start the weekend early during the summer with some sort of modified work schedule. Examples of a modified work schedule or alternative work schedule could include:

- Flextime: where an employee works eight hours per day but there is flexibility with start and stop times. This is a great alternative for family obligations or for those who just prefer to start earlier or later in the day.
- Four day workweeks: working four 10-hour days allowing the employee to have a three day weekend each week.
- Job sharing: job sharing allows an employer to have two part-time employees working together to accomplish the duties of one full-time employee.

Leaving early or working longer days during the week and having Fridays off is an extra benefit a company can usually afford to give their employees. It is seen by some companies as another way to engage their employees. It does not cost them much and employees enjoy it. Companies are not always able to provide big raises, bonuses, or endless opportunities for advancement. A flexible work schedule,

including leaving early on Fridays, is a way for companies to give their employees additional benefits at little cost. A company can easily remove this type of benefit if needed when a business falters or if there is a need to return to a normal schedule.

A flexible work schedule, a shortened work week, or just leaving early on Fridays can do wonders for an employer as well as the employee. An employer could experience benefits such as an increased employee morale, increased employee engagement, reduced absenteeism, reduced turnover, and the ability to recruit exceptional employees. A flexible work schedule or a shortened work week is also good for the employee. An employee will have increased flexibility to meet family or personal obligations, reduced burnout, and an overall better feeling of work-life balance.

Although many manufacturing companies are not able to allow their production workers to leave early, there is an increasing number who are trying a modified work schedule during the week. This is one way to alleviate the benefit divide that sometimes exists between the office workers and the production workers.

Having a flexible work schedule or leaving early just one day a week can make an employee feel appreciated while an employer can benefit from positive morale and increased productivity. It may not seem like a lot but it can have a larger impact than expected.

Have thoughts on this topic? Please send them to me directly at pclark@macny.org.

Sources for the article:

<http://www.latimes.com/business/la-fi-summer-job-perks-20170615-story.html>

https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/tools-and-samples/policies/pages/cms_000593.aspx

<https://www.thebalance.com/advantages-and-disadvantages-of-flexible-work-schedules-1917964>

Hot Off The Line

Q - We are preparing for the Paid Family Leave that becomes effective January 1, 2018 and began deducting from our employee's paycheck on July 1, 2017. An employee has given their notice and will be leaving the company as of 9/15/17. Am I required to refund any of the money we have deducted from her paycheck up to that point for the Paid Family Leave?

A - According to the most current regulations, an employer is not required to refund any of the money that was deducted for the Paid Family Leave when an employee leaves the company.

HR Stats & Facts

- 15% of the air you breathe in a metro station is human skin. *Source: www.metro.us*
- In a recent survey, 71% of office workers stopped on the street agreed to give up their computer passwords in exchange for a chocolate bar. *Source: www.owlcation.com*
- Unfair compensation (41%), unreasonable workload (32%), and too much overtime/after-hours work (32%) are the top three contributors to employee burnout. *Source: www.kronos.com*

DID YOU KNOW?

If you are a first-tier government contractor with \$50,000 or more in federal government contracts and 50 or more employees at one location; or, a second-tier government contractor (supplies to a first-tier contractor) with \$50,000 or more in contracts and 50 or more employees at one location you are required to have an Affirmative Action Plan. MACNY can audit your plan, rewrite it, or create one for you as well as complete your Adverse Impact. If you are interested in receiving a quote or would like additional information please contact Patty Clark, HR Services Manager at 315-474-4201 x 10 or pclark@macny.org.

CPI

Wage/Clerical	June	May	Pt. Chg. (Mo.)	% Chg. (Mo.)	% Chg. (Yr.)
1967=100	711.4	710.7	0.7	0.1%	1.5%
1982-84=100	238.8	238.6	0.2	0.1%	1.5%
Urban					
1967=100	733.8	733.1	0.7	0.1%	1.6%
1982-84=100	245.0	244.7	0.3	0.1%	1.6%
Unemployment Rates					
June - Onondaga County: 4.7; Metropolitan Syracuse Area (MSA): 5					