

Brief Summary of the Flexible Work & Well-Being Study

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Preliminaries

- Supported by the National Institutes of Health (National Institute for Child Health & Human Development, Office of Behavioral & Social Science Research)
- Additional support from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation
- Thanks to Best Buy employees and management
- www.flexiblework.umn.edu or flexwork@umn.edu
- See also workfamilyhealthnetwork.org



Flexible Work Arrangements

- Flexibility for whom?
 - Employer-driven vs. Employee-driven
- Often administered in ways that don't increase employees' control
 - Available as “accommodation” or to a favored few
 - Hard to predict who will “get” them, why, how long
 - Assume “trade-offs” or career penalties so don't request or pursue

Control over When & Where You Work

- “Work-time control” as key to real benefits to employees
 - Work-life conflicts or facilitation
 - Health & well-being
- **Workplace Changes → Control → Work-Family Conflict**
- Based in occupational health literature, social psychology, and sociology of work studies
- *Kelly, E.L. & Moen, P. (2007). Advances in Developing Human Resources. 9 (4): 487-506.*

A “Natural Experiment” at Best Buy

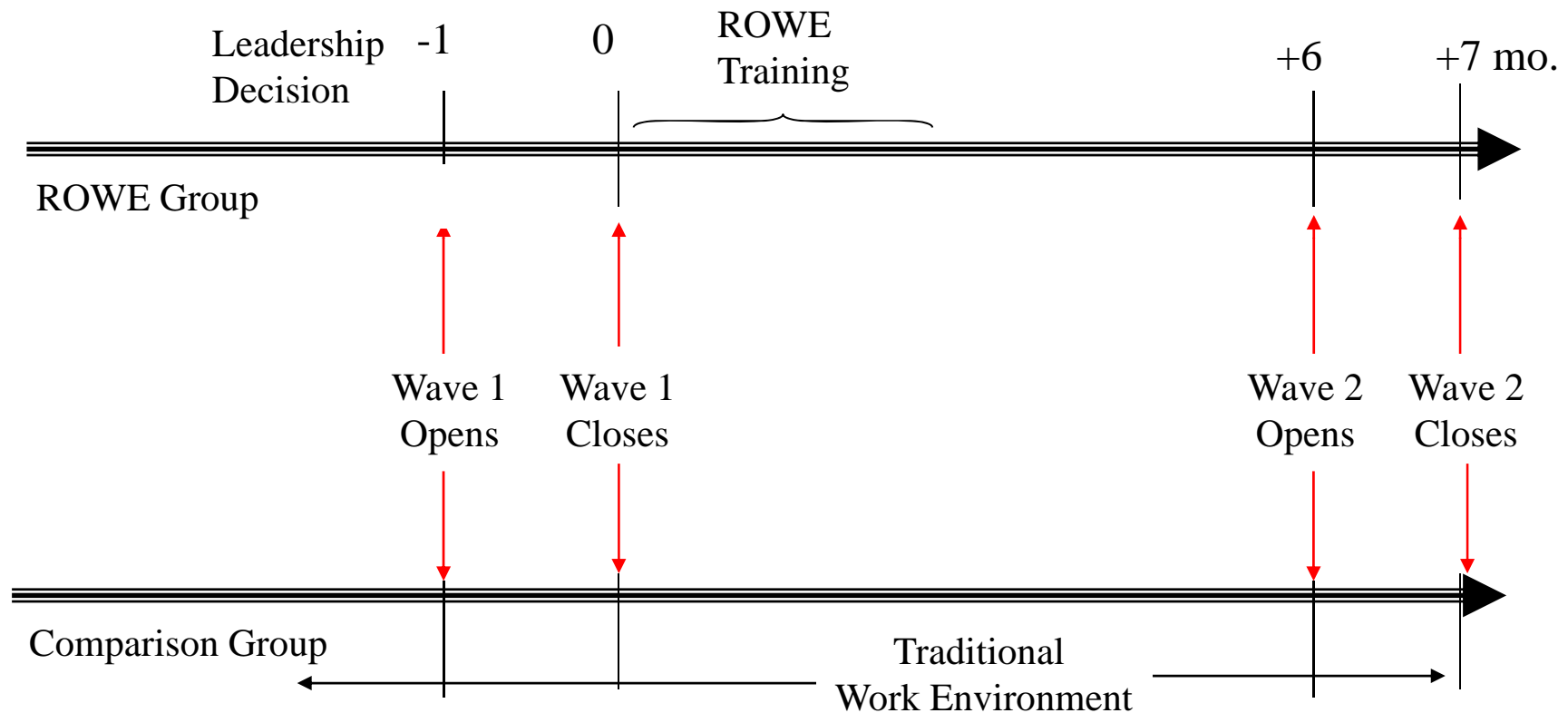
- Fortune 500 Retail Company, HQ initiative
- **ROWE: Results Only Work Environment**
 - Developed by Cali Ressler and Jody Thompson (now Culture Rx)
 - Rolling out slowly → Pre & Post Data
 - Late adopting departments as comparison group
 - ROWE synergy with our claims: Give employees’ more control over when, where, and how they work. This will benefit employees **and** the organization.

ROWE's Distinctiveness

- Explicitly focused on **work-time control**
- Includes critical analysis of current culture
- Implemented through **team sessions** → new norms and expectations (rather than “accommodations” framework for some individuals)
- Highly **participatory sessions**, then experimentation period

- Likely other strategies that would increase employee control over when & where they work...

Web Survey Design (N=659 employees)



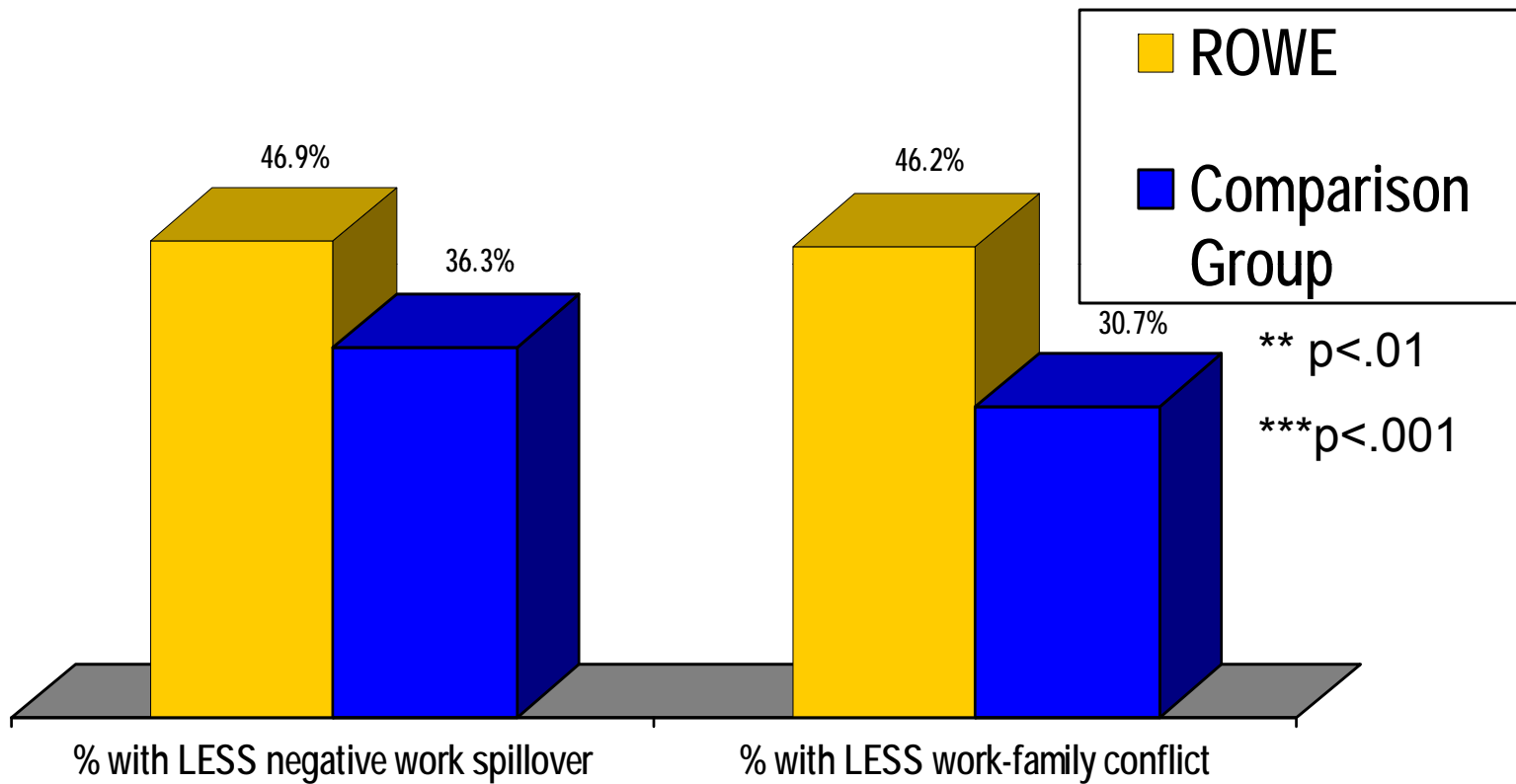
Does ROWE Increase Control over When & Where They Work?

- ROWE increases **perceived control** over when & where they work
 - Significant, moderate effects, even after adjusting for previous level of control and many other work factors
- ROWE increases **working at home / off site**
 - Significant and strong effects, even after adjusting for previous patterns and many other work factors
 - Over 9 times more likely to work off site at all
 - About 7 times more likely to work off site 1+ full day

Does ROWE Affect Work-Family Interface?

- Yes.
- Reduces work-family conflict and negative work-family spillover
- Improves time adequacy and sense of fit between schedule and personal life
- All findings true for women, men, parents, non-parents
- ROWE → perceived control over when and where they work → work-family conflict (etc.)

More ROWE employees have a decrease in negative work-to-home spillover** and work-home conflict***



Summary of Significant Differences

- Control over When I Work
- Control over Where I Work
- Variability in hours each week
- Variability in schedule
- **Work at home**
- **Commute time**
- Negative work spillover
- Negative work-family conflict
- Work schedule fit
- Time adequacy
- Energy
- Sleep quality
- Less like to come to work when sick
- Less likely to skip going to doctor when needed
- Frequent exercise
- Sleeping more than 7 hours
- Interruptions at work
- Unnecessary work
- Turnover intentions
- Turnover
- Job satisfaction
- Organizational commitment
- Family Supportive Culture
- Job security

Some things don't change, however.

- Positive and negative home-to-work spillover
- Family-to-work conflict
- Income adequacy
- Family engagement
- Family involvement
- Family relationship quality
- Satisfaction with division of housework
- Number of dinners with children
- Time spent caring for children
- Time spent on volunteer work
- Sense of Personal Mastery
- Overall assessment of health
- Well-Being scale
- Count of physical symptoms
- Psychosocial job demands scale
- Job control scale (decision authority, skill discretion)
- Have time to reflect and process work
- Individual job performance
- Assessment of team's performance
- Job involvement scale
- Satisfaction with coworkers
- Satisfaction with manager
- Work engagement scale
- Psychological distress
- Emotional exhaustion

Preview of the *Work, Family & Health Network's* Phase II Research Plans

- The *Work, Family & Health Network* has partnered with Culture Rx, a long-term care facility and another Fortune 500, white-collar organization.
- Build on ROWE and other workplace initiatives
- Emphasizes employee control over the time and timing of work again
- Randomized field experiment
- 18 month follow-up
- Improve health and family measures

For More Information

- www.flexiblework.umn.edu
- flexwork@umn.edu
- workfamilyhealthnetwork.org

- Thank you!