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THE PROLIFERATION OF CHOICE: THE 24/7 OPPORTUNITY

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From making a customized play list to selecting the just-right benefits package, choices are proliferating, and the sheer number of choices can be overwhelming. With so much incoming information, it can be a challenge to make sense of all the options. But still, based on MARS DRINKS' WORKPLACE VITALITY™ research, one of the most important aspects of well-being is a sense of choice and control over what's important.

In addition to where people work (see our blog on this topic here), another important aspect of choice is when they work. This was according to the companies that we studied. Technology has allowed work to happen everywhere, but it also challenges workers to determine how best to set boundaries. With emails that arrive throughout the day and night, colleagues that reach out regardless of working hours, and global collaboration, our work is literally always-on. There is continuous choice-making about what we'll respond to, which tasks receive immediate follow up...and which don't.

In addition, some organizations are experimenting with offering flexible hours to workers, especially in the summer. This can be a boon for people at work who can adjust their schedules to fit their families or personal commitments, but it can also present challenges for team members who want to stay connected and keep projects on course.

One thing is clear , people are more likely to contribute their discretionary time and invest their best effort when they have a common team goal and feel committed to it.

In our research, MARS DRINKS learned that about teams that are taking steps to ensure that they are productive at the same time they embrace flexibility. They are...

- Setting 'core hours'. Some teams are establishing certain hours when everyone is in the office - for example, Tuesday through Thursday from

10am-3pm. This ensures that even if team members are flexing their hours outside of the core hours, there is consistency in when the team can get together face-to-face and advance the work.

- Paying attention to project cycles. The teams that we talked to are ensuring that they are face-to-face for certain key points in projects, particularly at the very beginning for scoping or kickoff, at key decision points, or points of celebration.
- Considering colleagues. Many of the companies that we studied emphasized the importance of people's relationships with each other. They actively promote coffee chats among colleagues, face-to-face team time, and afternoon teas that encourage cross-sharing of ideas and problem solving.

Ultimately, the glue that holds teams together through variations in where they work and when they work is their relationships with each other and their common goals and commitment to team objectives. Getting together, feeling connected, and building relationships over coffee are important ways to ensure that common goals are promoted even while companies offer increasing flexibility and choice in how people work.

Want to find out more about the Power of Choice at Work,

[download our whitepaper. \(/sitecore/service/notfound.aspx?item=web%3a%7b7AF11702-1C3B-4F73-80BD-BB44C43D6831%7d%40en\)](#)

Want to find out more about how you can create a vibrant, thriving workplace?

Get your customized report by taking our

[WORKPLACE VITALITY Index Survey. \(https://index.marsdrinks.com\)](https://index.marsdrinks.com)

[i]Based on the survey conducted on behalf of MARS DRINKS with 4,000 people in multiple industries, functions, and generations across North America in October 2015.

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