

# What kind of workplaces should startups build for new parents?

*A poll showed that nearly 10 million working mothers in the U.S. suffer from burnout. They also feel employers aren't doing enough to support them. At some point, they had to sacrifice their careers for their kids. This shows why employers need to support working mothers, young parents, or any employee who has to take care of a new child.*

Temps de lecture : minute

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19 October 2022

## Trends impacting the 21st-century workplace

Working parents want a flexible structure in a company that allows them to work outside offices. There are several jobs like web design, email marketing, IT support roles, and video editing that people can do from home. Someone building a landing page doesn't need to visit all 30 days in a month.

40% or more of today's employees are open to telecommuting or working remotely. The pandemic certainly put the pedal on the trend but the idea was on everyone's minds for years.

In addition to working parents, there are also part-time employees who prefer working from home.

A third of employees in the US work from home, and this number will only grow in the future.

To effectively manage all the roles parenting demands, leadership needs

to work on introducing an inclusive culture.

The increasing demand for flexibility also calls for a proper work-life balance. Most companies structure teams based on how well they can focus. This approach however can result in feelings of isolation among employees who want to bring more creativity to the drawing board.

## Organisations must create positive environments for mothers

Most companies desire to create a positive environment for working mothers. Companies often offer maternity leaves for new mothers, but most of them don't know that they can provide them with even more assistance like *health insurance*, for example.

Keeping parents happy will result in a positive Return on Investment in the long term.

According to the *Center for Economic and Policy Research*, just 12% of workers in the private sector get paid leave from their employers. The average maternity paid leaves range from 6 weeks to 14 weeks depending on the State. This isn't always enough to recuperate from childbirth, manage childcare and join the office.

The benefits should empower new mothers to spend time with children without sacrificing their careers. Enough leaves help in career development, reduce turnover rates, and increase retention rates and employee satisfaction.

Workplace models are witnessing a shift thanks to technological advances, new philosophies, and changing leadership styles.

The new models give more control to workers regarding work

relationships producing higher levels of engagement. This means being adaptive to engage employees at all levels of employment.

## Work-life balance is more than the traditional approach to work

Employees need to balance their personal and professional lives.

Research shows that if you provide enough opportunities to parents, they respond by being more engaged, present, and involved in the workplace. They provide better customer service too.

Working mothers with flexible work arrangements are able to better take care of responsibilities at their homes and also do childcare better. This is great for mothers who may be away during a few hours of the day and aren't allowed breaks.

As more employees work outside the traditional office space, employers need to adapt their policies to suit them better.

Work-life balance is critical in today's workplace, as employers struggle to attract and retain talent. The number of women who enter the workforce continues to expand while the number of men continues to go down.

## A more flexible work arrangement might include

Increasing numbers of single-parent families or parents working outside of regular office spaces managing both their work and family responsibilities create fresh challenges for attracting and keeping talent. Organisations must adapt their policies to provide much more flexibility in how teams continue to operate.

The focus has been increasingly on remote work and the *hybrid work*

*force*, rather than simply flexible work arrangements and this can have consequences for parents who aren't given time off for school pick-ups and drop-offs. In addition, why take a meeting in person when you can *speak to someone on Zoom?*

## Additional opportunities

Companies can set up feeding rooms and other relevant forms of support. Parenthood is often an 18-hour job; both men and women participate in the same.

They are biological, adoptive, gay, and straight family structures. Organisations must adapt themselves to this new reality and provide options for all types of family structures.

## Acknowledge and foster peer-to-peer learning

When new parents need advice they turn toward colleagues and their mentors. These are people who they trust within the organisation. Providing these mentors with guidance, and a few talking points acts as training. They know what to talk about when the time comes.

## Focus the resources you do have on key transition points

Welcoming a new child is a transition point in the life of a parent and these critical points can make even the best workers unfocused. That's why offering many benefits during these critical stages can be of great help to new parents.

Companies shouldn't dictate how parents use these leaves for

themselves. Organisations can offer counselling and support for new parents and provide help to get them focused and engage them in the moment.

## Categorise communications

Try and mitigate the impact of work-life and the stresses it brings by limiting communications outside business hours. The pandemic has accelerated the “always-on” culture—emailing and phoning employees at all hours of the day. One great way is to send emails with headers that say one of these things: Not urgent, For Monday, FYI only, or Urgent. These labels let large teams consisting of parents sort through work that needs to be attended to immediately and that which can wait over the weekend and can be done by Monday.

This sorting makes a big difference to work-life balance and doesn't cause productivity to go down at all.

## Make vacation non-negotiable

Chances are employees haven't taken all of their paid allotted vacation time during the last year.

Are there significant rollovers? How many of these are working parents? Professionals that work too much often don't take any leaves for granted to them.

This is bad for working parents, leading to multiple family issues, performance issues, and even attrition in the long term. Managers must develop ways to signal to employees that it's time to take paid time off.

An organisation I know leaves voicemail announcements telling employees they need to plan their summer holidays. Another organisation

for instance includes vacation days taken at the top of an employee's performance review

Being a young parent throws many curveballs. These are not easy to master. As an employer, you can ease out some of these challenges for them by offering paid leaves and transitioning through challenges easily.

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