Center for Wellbeing at Work

TIP SHEET: Giving Employees Control

To cultivate a workplace that supports autonomy, consider being more flexible with HOW, WHEN, and WHERE staff work. Offering staff some measure of control in this way can build trust, enthusiasm, and engagement in the workforce. Times have changed, and if you haven't already re-evaluated this level of flexibility, you should. There are three main areas where staff can and should have some degree of control over their work:

1. How tasks are completed (where the order and timing are not critical)
2. How challenges and problems are tackled
3. The pace of an individual's work

Examine work structures that can be adjusted to allow for greater employee autonomy:

- ✓ **SCHEDULES**—Competitive companies offer options for flexible scheduling. If possible, let employees choose when and how work is accomplished. Consider the use of a scheduling app to address shift coverage gaps while giving employees more control of their schedules.

- ✓ **COMMUNICATION**—Employees want transparency. Be sure you are communicating how and why decisions are made, and involve them in the decision-making process as much as possible.

- ✓ **WORKFLOWS**—Redundant, ineffective processes can bog employees down, causing undue stress. Invite them to help redesign workflows.

- ✓ **DEVELOPMENT**—Competitive companies keep employees engaged, motivated, and stimulated. Give staff the opportunity to learn, grow, and work on things they feel passionate about.

- ✓ **EMPLOYEE VOICE**—Employees want to be included. Find ways for individuals to have input on decisions that impact their day-to-day work and broader strategic planning, policies, and procedures. Consider using quality circles to involve your employees more in decision-making and shift the organization toward a more participative culture.

- ✓ **FEEDBACK LOOPS**—Employees want to know you care. When you solicit their thoughts and input, be sure to circle back and let them know how you have taken their feedback into account.

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