WORK-LIFE BALANCE

UQTR

Université du Québec
à Trois-Rivières

INRPME
INSTITUT DE RECHERCHE SUR LES PME

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A brief biography…

Professor Jamal Ben Mansour (*M.Sc, Ph.D., CRHA*) is a professor in the HRM Department at the École de gestion de l'UQTR and a regular researcher with the INRPME (small and medium-sized business research institute). He has acquired more than eight years of professional experience as a consultant in various fields (public administration, the banking sector, SME) prior to earning a joint interuniversity doctorate (UQAM, HEC, Concordia and McGill) in human resources management. He teaches leadership, human capital management, HR analytics and research methodology courses at the graduate and undergraduate levels and has cutting-edge expertise in qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods, particularly longitudinal specifications. He deals with matters on issues relating to the entry into an organization (talent management, the commitment process at work, attitude change over time, the organizational and professional socialization of newly hired employees, plural leadership) along with very successful HRM practices. His research findings have been published in scientific publications for the layperson (e.g. *Attirer, Retenir, et Fidéliser les Ressources Humaines* ; *L'entrée Organisationnelle des Jeunes Diplômés* ; *Les PME, d'Hier à Demain* ; *Comportement Organisationnel V3*), dans différentes revues savantes (e.g., *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* ; *Journal of Human Resources Management and Labor Studies*), and press releases in several national and international conventions (*e.g., AIPTLF* ; *ASAC* ; *EAWOP* , *Conference on Commitment* ; *Academy of Management Conference*).
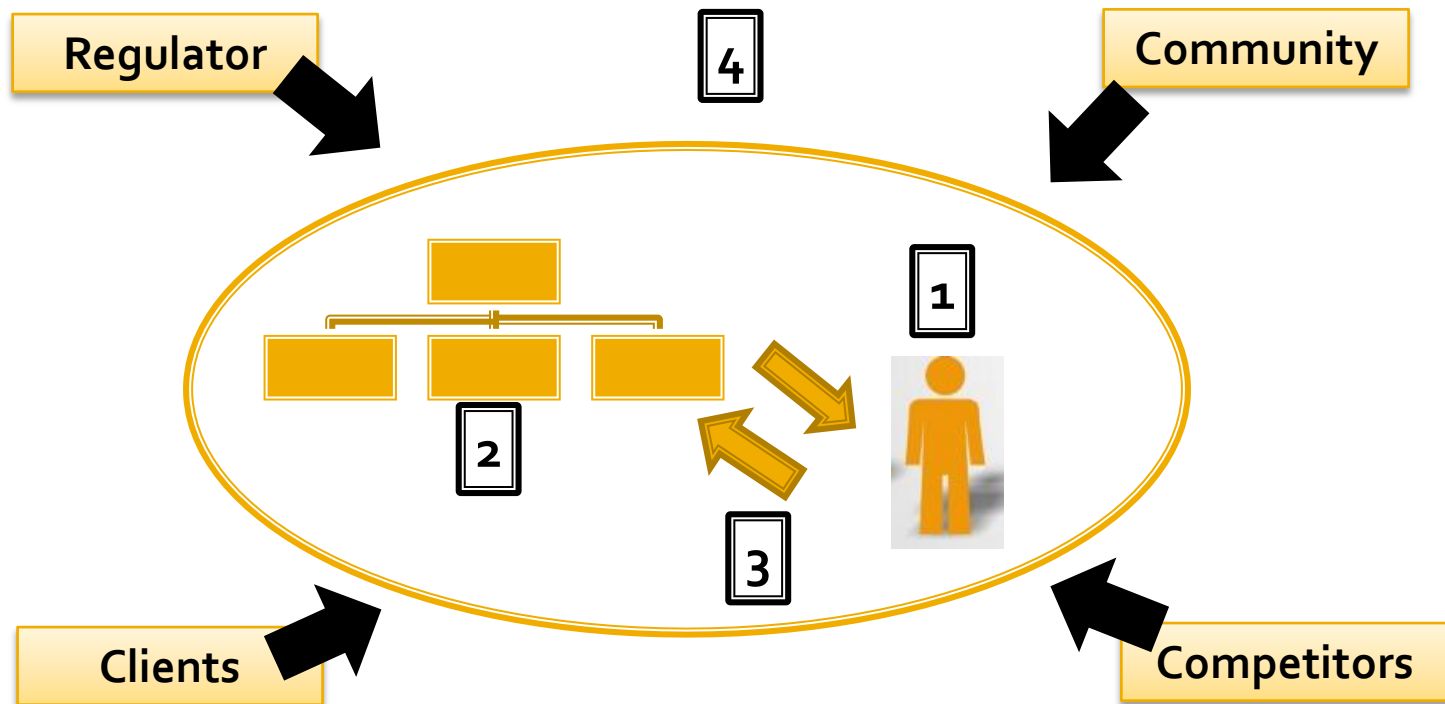
Workshop plan

1. Zooming in on the employment relationship and HR practices

2. LWB in action, the ABC case...

3. Self-evaluation: your WLB profile
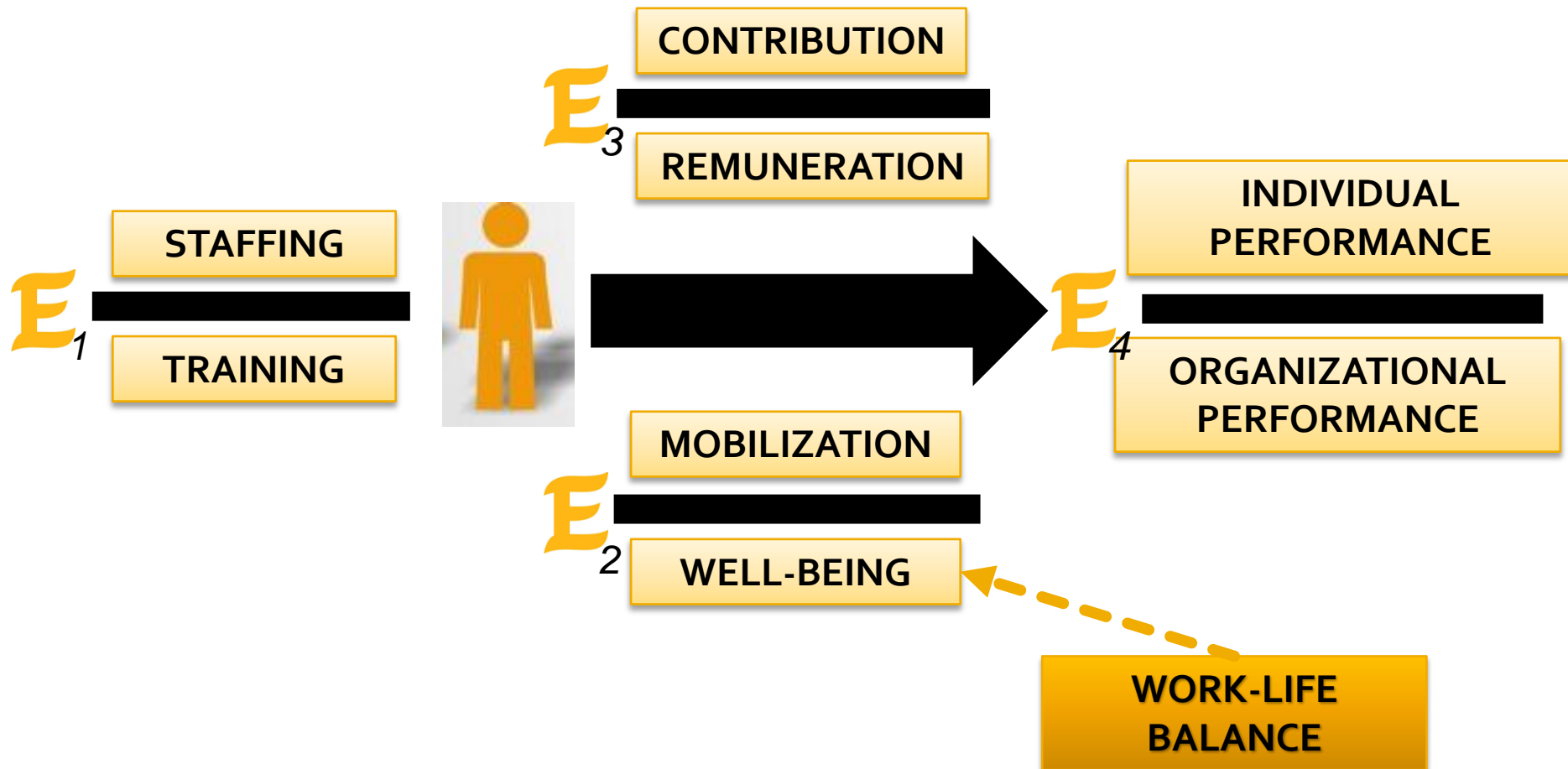
4. Understanding WLB

5. Levels of intervention

Introduction

Introduction 1/2

Introduction 2/2

CONTRIBUTION

E₃

REMUNERATION

STAFFING

E₁

TRAINING

INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCE

E₄

ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

MOBILIZATION

E₂

WELL-BEING

WORK-LIFE BALANCE

THE IMPORTANCE OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE

The importance of WLB... (1/3)

- **Work-life balance – how the concept took shape ...**

  1. **60s-70s** – **WLB** was mainly considered an issue for working mothers, trying to balance the demands of their jobs with raising children.

  2. **80s** - **Arrangements in the workplace** were added/changed to support WLB (maternity leave, EAPs, flextime, etc.). Also in the 80s, men began to be concerned about their own work life.

  3. **90s** – **WLB** became an issue vital for everyone (men, women, singles, couples, parents, non-parents, etc.) and their own work-life issues.

  4. **2000s** – More challenging than ever. **Workload** predicts other **stressors**. For society, WLB became an issue of well-being!

Source : J. Fleetwood (Indiana University)

The importance of WLB…(2/3)

- **Why are we talking about WLB?**

  1. 72% of **absenteeism** is due to childcare-related issues.

  2. 40% of people caring for **elders** also have **childcare** responsibilities.

  3. Of married couples with children, **both** are employed full time 59% of the time.

  4. The more **women** join the work force, the more they have to ask for arrangements to achieve **work-life balance**.

Source : J. Fleetwood (Indiana University)

The importance of WLB… (3/3)

- **Why are we talking about WLB?**
    5. The more **life expectancy** rises (80.8 years for men and 84.5 years for women), the greater the likelihood of workers having to care for their elderly parents.
    6. Modern **technologies** (Internet, email, cell phones) mean that people are exhausted at a younger age and have to devote more time to their job than to their personal life.
    7. Workers are not as **productive** as in certain countries with shorter work weeks (e.g., 30 hours/week in Sweden). People spend more time at work (e.g., 40 hours/week in Quebec) but are not necessarily more productive.

WHAT IS WORK-LIFE BALANCE?

Work-life balance

- **What is work-life balance?**
  - This concept refers to the **RESULT** of an effort of prioritization a person makes to balance their professional life (e.g., career, ambition, etc.) and their personal life (e.g., health, leisure, family, spirituality, etc.).

WLB conflict

- **What is WLB conflict?**

  - This concept refers to the **INTER-ROLE CONFLICT** where pressure arising from one's professional life and personal life are **incompatible** in some respects. In other words, participation in one's professional role (personal responsibility) is made more difficult by having to partake in one's personal role (professional role) (Adapted from Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985, p. 7).
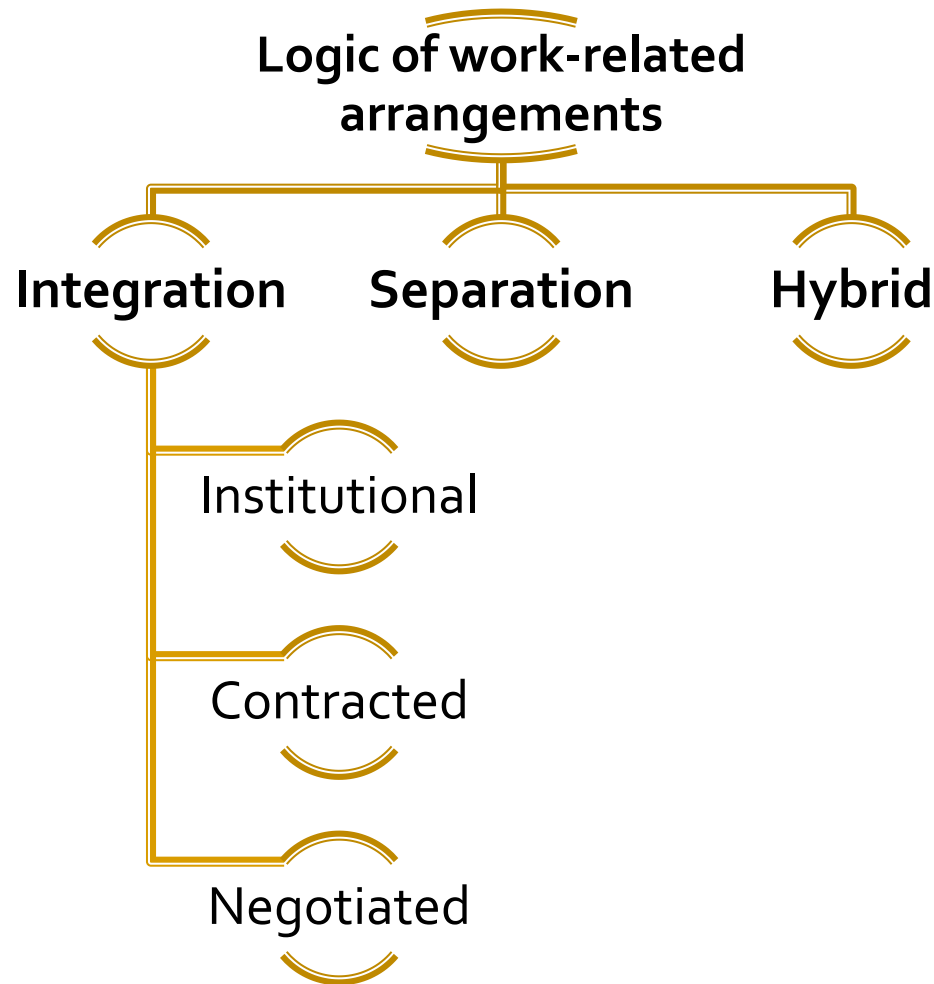
Job flexibility
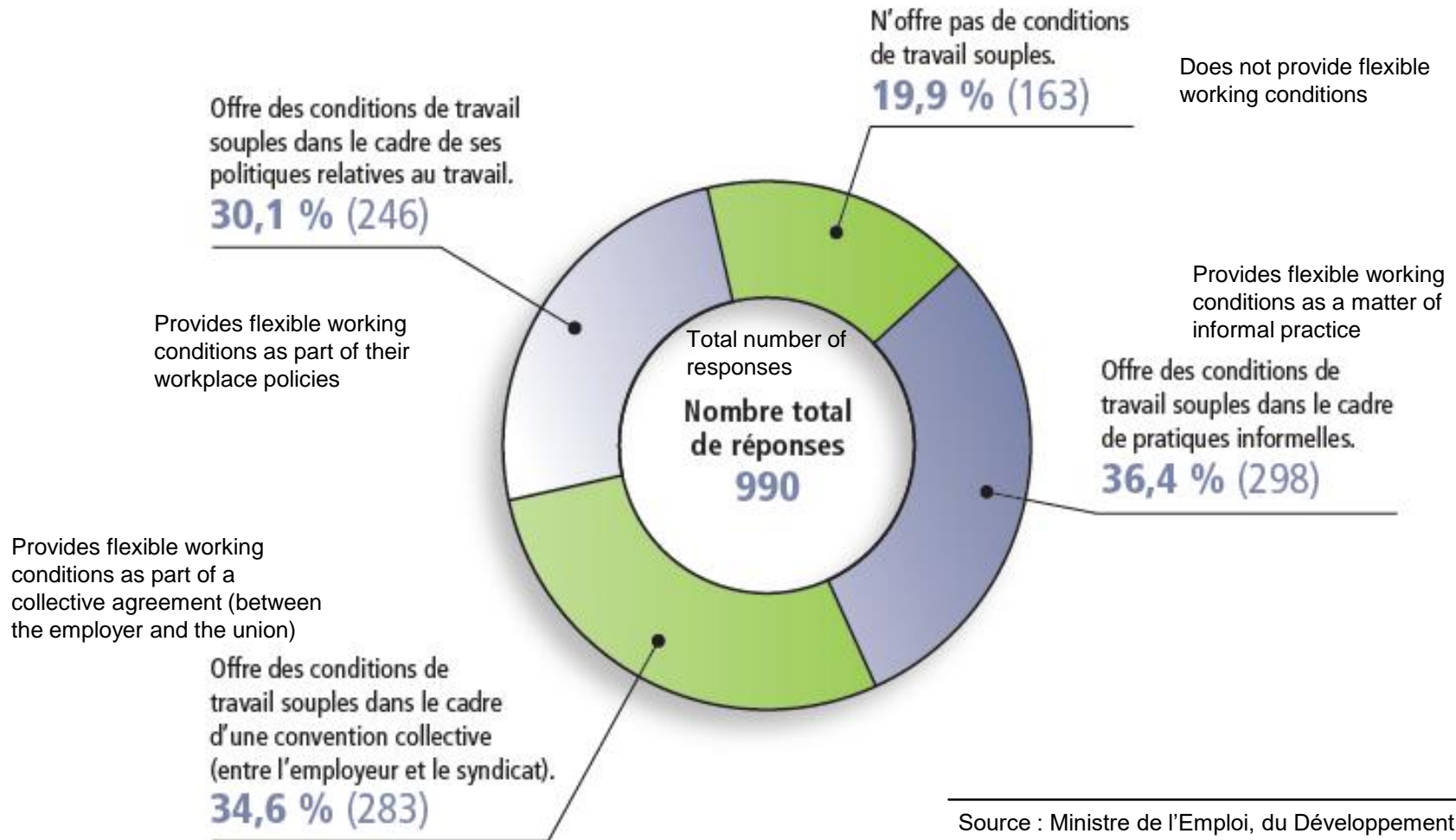
- ## What is job flexibility?

  - *Job flexibility is all of the formal or informal **ARRANGEMENTS** between an employer and an employee, where an employee is permitted to change, either temporarily or permanently, their work schedule, the number of hours worked or their workplace, or to take care of responsibilities outside of work.*

Logic of work-related arrangements

A few statistics on work-related arrangements

N'offre pas de conditions de travail souples.
19,9 % (163)

Does not provide flexible working conditions

Offre des conditions de travail souples dans le cadre de ses politiques relatives au travail.
30,1 % (246)

Provides flexible working conditions as part of their workplace policies

Provides flexible working conditions as a matter of informal practice

Offre des conditions de travail souples dans le cadre de pratiques informelles.
36,4 % (298)

Total number of responses

Nombre total de réponses
990

Provides flexible working conditions as part of a collective agreement (between the employer and the union)

Offre des conditions de travail souples dans le cadre d'une convention collective (entre l'employeur et le syndicat).
34,6 % (283)

Source : Ministre de l'Emploi, du Développement de la main-d'œuvre et du Travail

THE ADVANTAGES OF WORK-RELATED ARRANGEMENTS…

Advantages of work-related arrangements (1/3)

- **The advantages of work-related arrangements:**

  1. A reduction in **absenteeism** and "presenteeism" rates (decreased work performance);

  2. Employees in **better health**, who feel able to be supportive of their family and friends;

  3. A more effective **recruiting and retention** process, particularly regarding the millennial generation, workers who must juggle professional responsibilities and caregiving, and older workers.

- **The advantages of work-related arrangements :**

  4. **Diversified,** inclusive, engaged and healthy working environments;

  5. **Increase presence of employees** with a chronic illness, disorder or mental problems in the labour force;

 6. Increased **productivity** and the use of more innovative and effective work procedures.

Advantages of work-related arrangements (3/3)

- **In short…**
  - The general argument in favour of more balance between personal and professional lives and greater job flexibility is that increased employee satisfaction means less stress, less staff turnover and greater productivity. Persons who have achieved this balance tend to be more motivated and productive, in other words**, HAPPY PEOPLE WORK BETTER.**

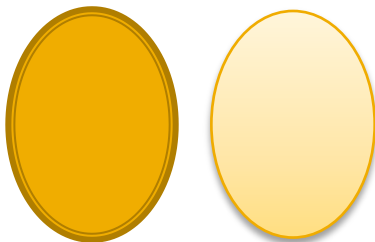# UNDERSTANDING THE DYNAMICS OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE AND CONFLICTS
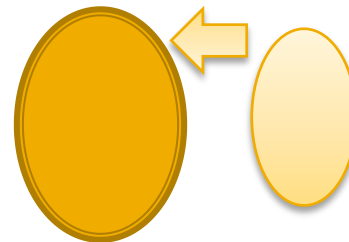
Work-life balance and conflicts (1/4)
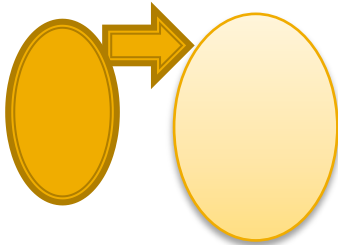
FLEXIBILITY - INFLEXIBILITY
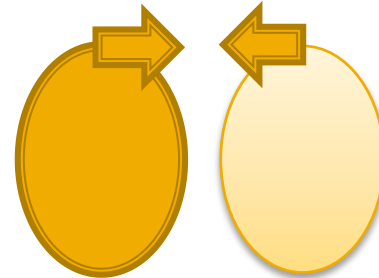
FLEXIBILITY - FLEXIBILITY

INFLEXIBILITY - INFLEXIBILITY

INFLEXIBILITY - FLEXIBILITY

Work-life balance and conflicts (2/4)

- **But …**

  1. **Balance but not equality**. WLB does not necessarily mean that all aspects of a person's life are of equal importance. Instead, it means that the person is successfully managing responsibilities in both their professional and private lives.

  2. **Balance changes over time**. WLB does not remain static but varies over time, depending on the circumstances relating to one's professional and personal lives.

  3. **Idiosyncrasies of balance**. WLB differs from one person to another – there is no one-size-fits-all solution to WLB.

TIME 1 TIME 2 TIME 3
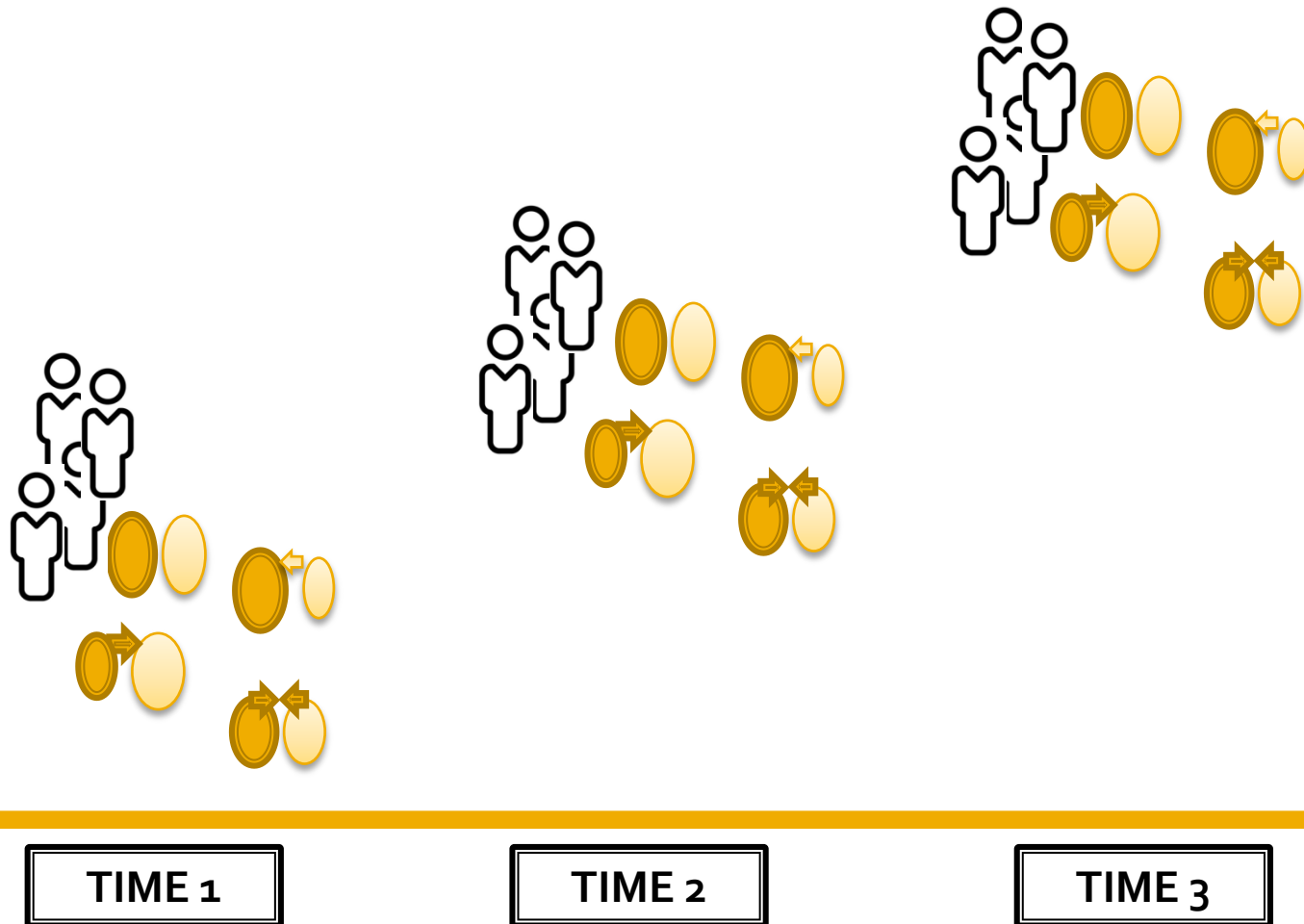
Work-life balance and conflicts (4/4)
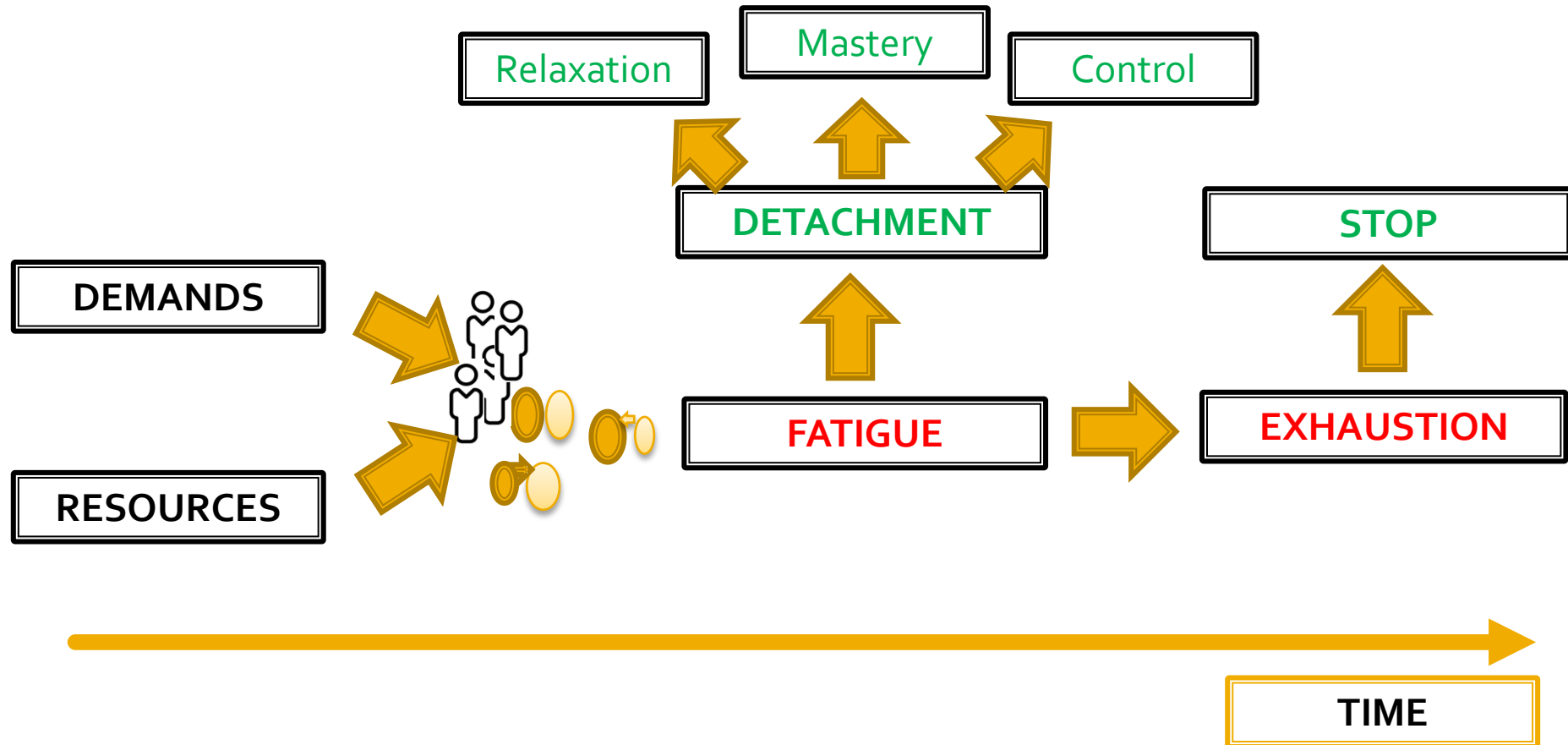
LEVELS OF INTERVENTION

Four levels of intervention

Employee level

Job level

Practical level

Four levels of intervention

Employee level

Job level

Practical level

Action plan

1. Identify and prioritize your values

2. Explore the options available to you

3. Juggle with your professional and personal lives

4. Think of the advantages of interrupting your career

Levels of intervention

Employee level

Job level

Practical level

Teleworking ...

- **Examples of questions**

  1. Do you meet the minimum questions to be eligible for the teleworking program? YES or NO

  2. Describe your work (e.g., task, role, responsibility)

  4. Answer the following questions with **(É – M - F)**
     - .... The need for supervision and feedback on your work
     - .... The importance of your colleagues' input to do your work
     - .... Discipline with respect to work
     - .... The need to be surrounded by people
     - .... More cognitive work (knowledge workers)
     - .... Job quality

Levels of intervention

Employee level

Job level

Practical level

Job flexibility or WLB arrangement practices

Flexibility practices(1/8)

- ## Flextime

  - **Flextime**: An employee works a fixed number of hours but can choose when to start and stop working each day, subject to certain agreed-upon limits.

  - **Compressed workweek**: An employee works longer hours each day or shifts during a given period in return for a day off.

  - **Time switch**: An employee requests time off for personal reasons in return for working longer another day.

  - **Split shift**: An employee splits their daily work schedule into two or more parts within a pre-determined period (e.g., 12 hours).

Source : Ministre de l'Emploi, du Développement de la main-d'œuvre et du Travail

Flexibility practices (2/8)

- **Flextime**

  - **Compensatory time off**: Overtime can be compensated by leave periods equivalent to one and a half hours per overtime hour worked.

  - **Right to refuse to work overtime**: An employee can refuse to work overtime.

  - **Shift change notice**: The employer is required to give notice in writing at least 24 hours prior to a shift change.

Source : Ministre de l'Emploi, du Développement de la main-d'œuvre et du Travail

Flexibility practices (3/8)

- **Flexibility as to the number of hours worked**

  - **Reduced hours/Part-time work**: The employee's work week is shorter than a traditional work week.

  - **Job sharing**: Two employees share the same full-time job, along with the responsibilities and working hours.

  - **Part-time leave**: The employee works a reduced schedule on a temporary basis.

  - **Progressive retirement**: An older employee reduces their number of hours worked over a certain period to facilitate their transition over to retirement.

Source : Ministre de l'Emploi, du Développement de la main-d'œuvre et du Travail

Flexibility practices (4/8)

- **Flexible leave**

  - **Short-term family responsibility leave**: The employee takes leave to fulfill short-term family obligations (e.g., take care of a sick child).

  - **Long-term family responsibility leave**: The employee takes leave for an extended period to look after a seriously ill family member.

  - **Short-term sick leave**: The employee takes leave to recover from an illness or a short-term injury.

  - **Bereavement leave**: The employee obtains both the time and flexibility needed to attend a funeral, a commemorative service or a burial.

Source : Ministre de l'Emploi, du Développement de la main-d'œuvre et du Travail

Flexibility practices (5/8)

- **Flexible leave**

  - **Income averaging leave**: The employee agrees to a reduced salary in return for additional leave periods over a specific time frame.

  - **Leave for victims of family violence**: The employee takes leave to deal with a family violence situation.

  - **Educational leave**: The employee takes leave to begin part-time or full-time courses or to partake in related activities (e.g., complete work or study for an exam).

Source : Ministre de l'Emploi, du Développement de la main-d'œuvre et du Travail

- **Flexible leave**

  - **Leave for court duty**: The employee takes short-term leave to sit on a jury or to appear in court as a witness.

  - **Leave to go fishing, hunting or harvesting**: The employee takes leave to partake in traditional Indigenous activities such as hunting, fishing and harvesting.

Source : Ministre de l'Emploi, du Développement de la main-d'œuvre et du Travail

Flexibility practices (7/8)

- **Flexible rest periods**

  - **Replacement of a statutory holiday with other leave**: The employee replaces a statutory holiday with other leave.

  - **Deferral or interruption of annual leave to take other leave for which the employee is eligible**: The employee has to deal with a situation while on annual leave (e.g., they fall ill or learn that a family member has died) and can defer or interrupt their leave and take the type of leave associated with the situation (e.g., sick leave, bereavement leave).

  - **Splitting of annual leave**: The employee can split up their annual leave into two or several periods (including one-day periods).

Source : Ministre de l'Emploi, du Développement de la main-d'œuvre et du Travail

- **Flexible work place**

  - **Teleworking** is an arrangement where an employee can work at home or in a location outside the traditional work place on a temporary or permanent basis.

    - This arrangement is advantageous in that employees can organize their work days based on their family and personal responsibilities, while tending to their work-related obligations. This is also a response to the needs of handicapped employees who are not able to leave their homes.

The challenges associated with flexibility practices

- **The challenges of work-related arrangements:**

  1. Finding a **set of appropriate measures** to promote flexibility;

  2. The **financial aspects** for both employers and employees;

  3. Work-related practices and **cultures** that exist in the working environment, (e.g., micromanagement);

  4. Some arrangements extend beyond the organization (e.g., **legal framework**).

Source : Ministre de l'Emploi, du Développement de la main-d'œuvre et du Travail

Levels of intervention

Employee level

Job level

Practical level

IMPLEMENTING A 5-STEP WLB PROGRAM

Implementing a WLB program

- **STEP 1 :** UNDERSTANDING THE INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL CONTEXT

- **STEP 2 :** WORK-RELATED ARRANGEMENT AS A TEAM SPORT

- **STEP 3 :** DEVELOPING A COST-EFFECTIVENESS ANALYSIS BUSINESS CASE

- **STEP 4 :** EXPLORING AVAILABLE WORK-RELATED ARRANGEMENT OPTIONS

- **STEP 5 :** LAUNCHNG AN ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE PROJECT

Source : Society for Human Resource Management

CONCLUSION

Conclusion

- **In summary**

  1. WLB is a **contemporary problem** because of how the nature of work and workers have evolved.

  2. WLB **does not mean dividing up all spheres of one's life into equal parts**. It is specific to each person and evolves over time.

  3. WLB has more **pros** than cons.

  4. **Four levels of action** are available to arrive at WLB:
     1. Employees
     2. Work positions
     3. Work-related arrangements practices
     4. Leadership

THANK YOU FOR READING!!!
Contact me for any collaboration or additional information

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