# From Science to Practice: Organizational Psychology Bulletin

**Enriching the workplace by scientifically integrating psychology and organizational life**

## Special Issue:
## Workplace Wellbeing, Stress, and Safety

# Contents:

## From the Editors:

Welcome to the special Issue of *From Science to Practice: Organizational Psychology Bulletin (OPB),* on employee wellbeing, stress, and safety.

Core contributors to this bulletin are students enrolled in the Master of Science in Organizational Psychology at Vanguard University of Southern California. The bulletin also welcomes papers from practitioners in the field, and students and emerging scholars from other institutions.

The set of papers selected for this issue reflects our program's commitment to responsible, evidence-based organizational practice, and our respect for both organizational outcomes and employee interests. Employee wellbeing and physical and psychological safety in the workplace are increasingly becoming popular research topics, but there is much that still needs to be explored, and much research-based knowledge awaits practical application.

In this issue, Noorain Chaudry discusses the antecedents and consequences of workplace bullying and offers research-based suggestions for decreasing bullying. Adelina Buonocore explores the potential for negative psychological, emotional, and physical implications of excessive Organizational Citizenship Behavior. Ramina Swanson looks at the impact of conflict in the workplace, highlighting the influential nature of the leader's own conflict management style. Andrew Cowie offers a brief set of suggestions for decreasing possible violent incidents in the workplace. Ryan Shirioshi explores the practice of telecommuting and its potential for increasing both employee performance and wellbeing.

We encourage our readers to participate in conversation about these and other topics in Organizational Psychology. Please see our Call for Proposals for more details. In addition, we would love to hear from you through your letters to the editor.

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**CALL FOR PAPERS:**

*From Science to Practice: Organizational Psychology Bulletin (OPB) welcomes articles* which summarize recent empirical research findings relevant to the field of organizational psychology and suggest practical applications on the basis of research evidence.  Articles must be written in simple, yet professional language, and be accessible and relevant to organizational practitioners and members of the general public interested in improving organizational life.  In addition to 1000-2000 word (not including references) lead articles, we accept brief reports (300-500 words) on current topics in organizational psychology research and application, and 100-300 Letters to the Editor, which may include reflections on our articles or suggestions for further research and article topics. Please submit manuscripts in APA format.  lpraslova@vanguard.edu

# Workplace Bullying and Incivility: More than Meets the Eye

Bullying and incivility occur in organizations all around the world, and it is important to recognize the consequences of these negative workplace behaviors on employees and organizations alike. Bullying and incivility wreak havoc in organizations, leading to higher rates of turnover, burnout, and decreased employee satisfaction and motivation. With such detrimental consequences, it becomes crucial to understand how to prevent organizations from experiencing these negative behaviors and provide practical suggestions that may decrease or reduce the potential risks of bullying and incivility.

Noorain Chaudhry

Workplace bullying and incivility have been a hot topic of research in recent years, which resulted in a wealth of information on the impact that workplace bullying can have on employees. Recent articles published in both academic research and public media outlets discuss the increase in workplace bullying, and how although it seems to be a much *talked-about* issue, not much is being done to address it (Kadilak, 2014). Whether bullying comes from a supervisor or a co-worker, the effects can lead to a number of issues, including disengagement at work, loss of motivation, and even health complications (Vartia, 2001). In a research study conducted by Nielsen, Nielsen, Notelaers, & Einarsen (2015), workplace bullying was shown to lead to an increase in suicidal thoughts. With such disturbing recent findings, workplace bullying becomes an even more pressing issue. The researchers found a significant difference in those who work in hostile environments opposed to those who do not, with the victims experiencing an increase in suicidal ideations after the bullying exposure at work.

In a study by Einarsen, Hoel, and Notelaers (2009), the Negative Acts Questionnaire-Revised—an instrument that focuses on measuring exposure to bullying, was distributed to employees in 70 different organizations in the private, public and voluntary sectors of Great Britain. A total of 5,288 respondents reported employee perceptions of psychosocial work environment (job satisfaction, job commitment, and job climate), absenteeism and intent to leave, mental health concerns, and impact of leadership. The researchers described workplace bullying as "the persistent exposure to internal aggression and mistreatment from colleagues, superiors, or subordinates" (Einarsen, Hoel, & Notelaers, 2009, p.24). The study concluded that victims of bullying experienced higher levels of sickness and health issues, accompanied by absenteeism, poor performance, as well as intentions to leave their current work environment. The targets of bullying also rated their superiors as exhibiting abusive leadership qualities, and their workplace environment quality as poor.

## Causes of Bullying

With such devastating consequences occurring for both organizations and employees due to workplace bullying, recent research has focused

on identifying underlying causes of bullying and where bullying originates from within the organization. Better understanding of origins of bullying should help employers create better workplace environments for their employees. In a study published in the Journal of Managerial Issues, Rousseau, Eddleston, Patel, and Kellermanns (2014) investigate the influence of organizational resources and demands on workplace bullying. Rousseau et al. (2014) explain how most research has identified individual differences among targets and victims in their relations to bullying, overlooking the importance of organizational factors. Interestingly, research suggests that the organizational environment plays a more significant role and provides many more factors that contribute to workplace bullying than individual differences. Organizational resources are framed as trust in management, and work demands are described as role overload (when an employee has too many tasks to attend to, and not enough support or resources to complete them).

Rousseau et al. (2014) hypothesized that trust in management, when low, increases perceptions of bullying, and role overload, when experienced, causes an employee to perceive themselves as a target of bullying. They also hypothesized that more job autonomy and employee participation and voicing their concerns moderates the relationship between perceived bullying and both organizational resources and work demands. Results concluded that less trust in management led to increased perception of workplace bullying, and that higher levels of job autonomy did moderate this effect.

**Causes of Incivility**

Workplace incivility is negative workplace behavior that is less severe than bullying, but occurs more frequently, and has a major impact on both employees and organizations. In a study published in the Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, Beattie and Griffin (2014) observed employee behavioral responses to workplace incivility. The researchers describe incivility as "a form of interpersonal mistreatment…low-intensity behavior with ambiguous intent to harm…includes incidents that range from what is perceived as a mild slight to general rudeness or disrespect" (Beattie & Griffin, 2014). They discuss how incivility, much like bullying, is associated with an array of negative individual and organizational consequences like psychological distress, depression, anxiety, low creativity and performance, mental and physical illness, higher absenteeism and turnover rates, increased job stress and job withdrawal, and much more. Beattie & Griffin's conducted a diary study among 323 employees of a security company. Of the 323, 92 successfully completed all eight diary studies the researchers had requested to complete. The employees were asked to complete eight daily surveys that measured exposure to incivility and the reactions the employees had towards it.

The results were that the most common response to critical incidents of incivility was to ignore or avoid the instigator (72% of participants chose this option) and that the least common reaction was to react negatively to someone other than the instigator. About 43% of the critical incidents led to a negative reaction to the actual instigator of the incivility. The findings also suggested that victims of incivility seek support to decrease their

negative feelings. These results are important to take note of considering incivility at work is common and can become a daily hassle for employees and supervisors alike.

**Bullying and Incivility on the Rise**

With such strong scientific evidence of detrimental consequences of workplace bullying and incivility on organizations and employees, why is it that the rates of bullying and incivility continue to increase? Workplace bullying is very costly for employers, leading to higher turnover, lower productivity, and potential lawsuits. With such growing concerns for organizations, one would assume organizations are doing more to address this prevalent issue, but research shows that these phenomena often go unnoticed and are often ignored or brushed under the rug.

In an article published in the Loudoun Times, Kadilak (2014) discusses that sexual harassment laws are in place in the work environment, yet there are no laws to prevent bullying, which has similar psychological, emotional, and physical consequences on its victims. According to the article, U.S. businesses alone spend around $250 million each year due to the costs of consequences like retraining employees after high turnover rates have occurred, healthcare issues, litigation and legal issues, and many more incidents that may occur due to bullying and its effects. In most instances, bullying is not taken seriously and may occur for years, even up to decades, without anything being done about it. The consequences usually include the employee leaving because nothing is being done to change or address the bullying exposure.

**Suggestions to Decrease Bullying**

- Kadilak (2014) points out that organizations with established rules for facilitating healthy relationships between superiors and employees, emphasis on creative problem solving, and vocalization of employee concerns usually thrive the most and also benefit in cost and productivity due to the healthier work environment.

- Einarsen et al. (2009) demonstrated that the presence of bullying is most strongly correlated with autocratic leadership styles and negative experiences or relationships with co-workers. These findings suggest social support is necessary for employees to succeed in their workplace, and creating organizational environments that prevent and/or minimize autocratic and negative co-worker behaviors may decrease damaging behaviors like absenteeism, turnover, and low performance.

- Rousseau et al. (2014) suggested that having the option to participate more in the delegation of tasks lessened the effect of bullying and work demands. These findings are crucial to organizations because they provide specific recommendations and suggestions on how to lessen workplace bullying effects by using measures that are reasonably within an organization's control.

As research on workplace bullying expands, a variety of further suggestions to prevent its occurrence will become available to organizations. Providing employees with proper resources and attention may be all it takes to

avoid the devastating consequences that accompany negative workplace treatment.

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# Too Much of One Good Thing… From Organizational Citizenship Behavior to Citizenship Fatigue: Where do we Draw the Line?

In almost every organization, we can find a person who is involved in every club, assists in everything possible, and goes above and beyond the call of duty. These individuals engage in Organizational Citizenship Behavior, and although they might be regarded as highly effective and productive, there are some downfalls in engaging in too much Organizational Citizenship Behavior.

Adelina Buonocore

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) can be defined as employee behavior that is more discretionary, is less likely to be formally linked with organizational rewards, and contributes to the organization by promoting a positive social and psychological climate (Organ, 1997; Takecuhi, Bolino, & Lin, 2015). Does this sound like someone you know in your organization? Does this sound like you? There may be some research-based warnings regarding the too much of a good thing.

## What motivates Organizational Citizenship Behavior?

There may be many motivators for engaging in OCB, but three main motivators that have been the focus of recent research are *prosocial values, organizational concern, and impression management. Prosocial Values* (PV) motives refer to employee's desire to help others and connect with them; *Organizational Concern* (OC) motives describe a desire to help and be fully involved with the organization; *Impression Management* (IM) reflects the desire to been seen positively and avoiding being seen negatively (Rioux and Penner, 2001; Takeuchi, Bolino, & Lin, 2015). In addition, career advancement may be another motivator for engaging in OCB (Bergeron, Ostroff, Schroeder & Block, 2014). These different motivators can prompt individuals to not only perform OCBs, but under some circumstances may lead individuals to stretch themselves too thin, resulting in stress and negative social and psychological climate, which may counter the positive effects of OCB.

## Outcomes of Organizational Citizenship Behavior

There are positive outcomes and correlates of OCB, such as work passion (Astakhova, 2015), likelihood of higher performance ratings (Oh, Chen, & Sun, 2015), higher job satisfaction, and having a good attitude (Schleicher, Smith, Casper, Watt, & Greguras, 2015). However, too much of a good thing can be bad. On the negative side, OCB may cause stress to everyday work life by adding more duties (Eatough, Chang, Miloslavic, & Johnson, 2011). Additional duties may create *role overload,* which then becomes a work related stressor that may be detrimental to an individual's health, productivity, and work-life balance. Studies have also suggested that OCB does not always result in individuals advancing with their organizations, even if they go above and beyond the call of duty (Bergeron, Ostroff, Schroeder, & Block, 2014).

### Citizenship Fatigue

An atmosphere of "going above and beyond" may help the organization, but at what cost? Individuals that actively engage in OCB have varying experiences due to different personalities, jobs, and other factors. Some highly engaged in OCB individuals may experience *Citizenship fatigue* which is defined as "a state which employees feel worn out, tired, or on edge attributed to engaging in OCB" (Bolino, Hsiung, Harvey, & LePine, 2015). Bolino et al., (2015) continues by saying that Citizenship fatigue may entail "a feeling of being worn out, tired or on edge, as well as a belief that it going beyond the call of duty or engaging in discretionary behaviors that is contributing to these feelings" (2015). Having these emotions is something that may not only erode productivity, but may also seep into the personal life of an employee.

Understanding the cost of too much OCB, organizations and individuals should work together to create a better workplace, increasing positive outcomes such as higher productivity, while making sure that employees do not develop citizenship fatigue.

### Steps that may decrease Citizenship Fatigue

While there may be many strategies to decrease the chances of citizenship fatigue from OCB, three suggestions may help to create a healthier way of engaging in OCB.

1.  Some individuals tend to take on more responsibility than others for creating a better environment for themselves and their co-workers. Taking the time to talk to peers may decrease the perception that one must individually create positive change within the organization. Interacting with co-workers may lead other individuals within the organization to assist in the cause of creating a more positive environment or climate. This also allows an individual to manage the stress of added roles on their job (Park, O'Rourke, & O'Brien, 2014).

2.  Supervisory support may lessen the likelihood of emotional exhaustion in highly engaged employees (Lloyd, Boer, Keller, & Voelpel, 2015). Employees who feel heard, recognized, and understood are able to contribute more without suffering negative consequences.

3.  Having a clear understanding of roles and boundaries within an organization. Creating and communicating expectations and boundaries not only may increase the effectiveness of OCB, but also decrease the likelihood of citizenship fatigue.

### Conclusion

OCB in itself is not a compilation of behaviors that will bring stress, emotional exhaustion, and citizenship fatigue. Yet, excessive engagement in otherwise positive behaviors can be harmful, and individuals need to be aware of where to draw the line. Organizational leaders should also be aware of where the limits are for their employees. As employees pour themselves into their companies to make the environment better, leaders should be investing in and supporting their employees. OCB can be a great factor in creating a positive emotional and psychological climate, change, and productivity, however it is

wise to keep in mind that there are limits to everything, even limits in helping.

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# Some Predictors of Workplace Violence

Violence is a part of life that everyone will either prepare for, or suffer the consequences for being unprepared. While violence can be observed at bars or nightclubs on a regular basis, some may consider it shocking that violence could ever occur at the workplace. This short commentary highlights the role stress plays in acts of violence in the workplace and emotional signals of potential violence. It also emphasizes the importance of employee training on workplace violence to mitigate the risk.

Andrew K. Cowie

According to David and Ella Van Fleet (2007) *in "Preventing Workplace Violence: The Violence Volcano Metaphor",* a person's emotional wellness plays a significant role in one's aptitude to commit an act of violence. The authors say that negative emotions can build up like a volcano, and advocate that if organizational members understand the warning signs and are equipped to intervene, the risks of workplace violence can be mitigated. However, most managers and employees do not know how to recognize early warning signs of possible violence.

There are physical signs that can show a person's emotional state. When people are sad they may be frowning or crying, or even may be just quiet or not very willing to talk. These physical expressions are signs that a person may be upset about something. These are only a few indicators that co-workers, supervisors and managers can look for, and when observed, can take measures to speak with whoever is showing such signs, to prevent their emotional state from becoming worse (Kansagra, et al., 2008).

Other significant signs that can be observed are emotional distress, stress in general, and a significant inability to fit in with one's social group (Christine, 1994). Employees suffering from discrimination, hostility, or ostracism by coworkers should be of particular interest to supervisors and managers looking to prevent workplace violence. When employees make any type of complaint or grievance against another employee, such matters should be addressed immediately and without delay. Instituting an open door communication policy where employees can freely talk with their supervisor or manager without reservation or fear of punishment is critical to relieve the stress caused by coworker hostility or ostracism (Reilly, 2010).

People experience stress and react to stressful situations differently. Despite significant differences in how people choose to deal with stress, there are a few things that many people agree are common stressors in their lives such as work, finances, relationships, and role conflict or role ambiguity at work. Understanding common stressors among people and recognizing stressful indicators can help managers and supervisors in possibly preventing employees from becoming over stressed. It can also be important for managers and supervisors to be aware of how their subordinates are performing; too much stress can lead to a drop or decrease in performance. When managers observe a drop in performance on an individual or group level, the

group or employee may be struggling with stress. This information can be used by businesses to formulate plans to reduce stress in the work environment and thereby decrease the possibility of workplace violence (Aamodt 2010).

Employers can implement measures in attempts to deter workplace violence such as conducting background checks on newly hired employees, establishing a zero tolerance workplace violence policy, and educating managers, supervisors and employees about the warning signs of workplace violence. Information and education can often be the most effective tool for preventing workplace violence. Many employees may not be aware that violence could manifest itself anywhere. Such information need not to be given in a way to scare employees but rather to inform employees that violence, in most occasions, does not spontaneously occur but rather follows clear signs of emotional trouble or turmoil. Educating employees about violence in the workplace will enable employees to better understand the warning signs. Despite what education and training employers may give to employees, employers bear a larger responsibility to ensure that employees have a safe working environment that is also free of any form of discrimination (Dillenberger 2010).

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# Stop, Collaborate and Listen… The Cost of Conflict in the Workplace

Conflict is inevitable; employers are faced with conflict in the workplace every day. Conflict that is not addressed in a timely manner can create a slew of organizational problems such as stress in the workplace, which leads to low productivity and high turnover. Research indicates leaders can shape conflict cultures within their organization and have the ability to influence positive conflict outcomes. Leaders should be cognizant of their own conflict handling style, learn how to create a collaborative organizational culture, and receive conflict management training.

Ramina Swanson

In today's workplace, organizations need diverse personalities and ideation to be creative and thrive. When individuals with differing viewpoints and opinions work together, conflict will likely occur. Some conflict in organizations is beneficial as it can provide a diverse and productive work environment. However, in order for conflict to be productive, leaders must have the confidence and skills to create a collaborative environment when approaching and resolving conflict. Organizations can empower their leaders through conflict management training to encourage collaborative and effective conflict resolution skills (Oore, Leiter, and LeBlanc, 2015).

Employees are often expected to work cohesively with their coworkers, and although it is unrealistic to expect every employee to be compatible, it is realistic to expect employees to be respectful and amicable.  Although conflict for the most part is perceived as negative, some conflict is healthy for an organization as it can encourage individuals to develop capabilities to understand interpersonal differences (Oore, Leiter, and LeBlanc, 2015).  Healthy or positive conflict can promote and foster professional and personal growth and bring forth positive change.  Conflict becomes negative when there is a strong resistance to change.

Conflict in the workplace is inherent, but identifying it early on and facilitating effective conflict management strategies can help empower employees and establish organizations with a productive conflict culture. A majority of research indicates that leaders hold much power to create and shape organizational culture, but very little research has explored the concept of a leader's impact on conflict cultures (Gefland, Leslie, Keller and de Dreu, 2012). So the question arises, does a leader hold the same power to establish organizational norms regarding how conflict should be handled within an organization? To further investigate the impact of leader-based conflict culture and resolution, Gefland, Leslie, Keller and de Dreu (2012) conducted their own research using data from a large bank in the mid-Atlantic United States.

**Do Leaders Set the Tone for Conflict Culture?**

To assess a leader's impact on conflict culture, the researchers surveyed 743 employees and their leaders (across 131 branches) within the banking industry by adapting the Dutch Test for Conflict Handling.  The survey findings revealed that a leader's collaborative, avoidant, or dominating conflict behavior did in fact establish a conflict culture; the leader's conflict style directly related

to the employee's method of conflict handling. For example, branch leaders who demonstrated avoidant or dominating conflict methods were associated with a low quality of branch creativity and customer service. Leaders who modeled collaborative conflict style created a culture in which employees worked together more cohesively and had lower burnout compared to those with dominating and avoidant leaders, thus showing that collaboration is highly effective and desirable when compared to dominating and avoidant conflict cultures.

Leaders must be aware of their own conflict style and understand the impact it has on their organization's culture. Ignoring the importance of addressing and resolving conflict can increase conflict and create a plethora of costly organizational problems (Dijkstra, Beersma, and Leeuwen, 2014). Leaders should also be properly trained in conflict management since negative conflict is costly.

**Nip Conflict it in the Bud**

Conflict is costly, especially when it is not handled appropriately or it is left unresolved. Nixon, Mazzola, Bauer, Krueger, and Spector (2011), found "the annual cost of employee stress, including costs for missed wages due to absenteeism and reduced productivity and health care costs, have been estimated to be $200-350 billion in the United States" (p.1). When conflict is not resolved it could expand quickly and this can be very costly for an organization, both economically and in relation to an employee's health (Sonnentag, Unger and Nägel, 2013). Conflict can create office gossip, which can take time away from doing actual work and can create a toxic work environment (Dijkstra, Beersma, and Leeuwen, 2014).

**Set Leaders Up for Success**

Since research has found a direct link between leadership and the culture of conflict resolution, one suggestion to successfully handle workplace conflict is to assess the effectiveness of the leader's conflict handling style. Organizations can benefit greatly by ensuring their leaders are equipped with appropriate education to understand their conflict style (Gefland, Leslie, Keller and de Dreu, 2012). Another suggestion is for organizations to invest in conflict management training that promotes collaboration. Investing in leaders is critical to organizational culture and can have positive effects on the organizational conflict handling capabilities (Sinha, 2011). Leaders would benefit from being educated on creating collaborative conflict cultures in order to bolster employee motivation, increase engagement and productivity, and decrease employee burnout.

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# Why Leave Your Home to Work When You Can Bring Your Work Home? The Positive Impact of Telecommuting on Employee Wellbeing

Organizations are continuously searching for ways to maximize the productivity of their employees without pushing them to the point of burnout due to work overload.  Constantly juggling between the demands of work and life at home, working individuals with families are fighting to stay afloat the responsibilities that life throws their way.  What can employers do to help their employees cope with this struggle while still protecting (or even increasing) the productivity of their employees?  Recent research has shown that telework could be the solution.

Ryan Shirioshi

Telework, or telecommuting is defined as "working outside the conventional workplace and communicating with it by way of telecommunications or computer-based technology" (Greer & Payne, 2014).  With the advancement of technology and the changing of organizational business models, telework continues to be a prevalent alternative to working a traditional 9 to 5 hour job in an office cubicle, especially with the rapid emergence of a new generational workforce—the Millennials.  In 2012, the Bureau of Labor Statistics showed that about 23% of employees in the U.S. participated in some form of teleworking; this percentage was even higher (38%) among employees with a Bachelor's degree or higher level of education (as cited in Greer & Payne, 2014).  Multiple studies found that telework is implemented within organizations in order to promote business effectiveness as well as support employee well-being at work and at home (Greer & Payne, 2014).  Looking into role overload and strain will help paint a picture of what individuals are experiencing at work and at home.

**Overload**

Many of us have experienced what it's like to be "under the gun" or under a "time crunch" due to excessive work responsibilities, family obligations and the like within a certain amount of time.  When the pressures of life exceed the tolerance that people have for any given stressor, the results are role overload which has been increasing over the past decade.  This has been attributed to increases in time spent at the office, new communication technology—including laptops and smart phones—which allow constant access to work responsibilities, and organizational norms that reward long hours rather than or more than performance (Duxbury & Halinski, 2014).

What effects can role overload have on work performance?  Studies have shown that overload often results in lower levels of organizational commitment, higher rates of absenteeism, increased turnover intention, poorer mental and physical health, and lower levels of work performance (Duxbury & Halinski, 2014).  Overload has also been shown to negatively affect individuals' role with their families which can result in increased levels of anxiety, burnout, fatigue, depression, and emotional and physiological stress (Duxbury & Halinski, 2014).

## Work-Life Balance

Another approach to work strain can be seen through Karasek's demand-control model which was originally established in 1979 and has since been studied as one of the most utilized models of occupational stress (Kain & Jex, 2010). This model states that workplace stress is dependent on how demanding individual's job is and how much control they have over the accomplishments of those demands. In other words, employees who have low levels of control over their job are more likely to be subject to higher levels of job strain. Also, research has shown that when job demands are too high, energy levels and time resources are depleted which results in strain (Duxbury & Halinski, 2014). In order to minimize role overload and strain, employees need to have more control over their work—especially the time that they work—and the ability to balance work and family demands. The question stands: Can the implementation of teleworking in organizations help solve this?

## Better for the Organization

In 2011, Lister and Harnish (2011) proposed that flexible work arrangements were considered to benefit society due to fewer drivers being on the road, resulting in less traffic and air pollution. Research within the past five years now shows that there are many benefits that telework offers at the employee level *and* the organizational level. The organizational benefits include: telework being used to attract and retain top talent and a diverse workforce, access talented individuals outside of immediate geographic location, greater productivity of employees, less absenteeism, lower turnover, improved organizational performance, greater

organizational commitment, reduced overhead costs, lower utility costs, lower real estate costs, and circumventing possible sickness outbreaks with fewer employees at the office (Greer & Payne, 2014).

## Better for the Individual

The benefits at the employee level include better work-life balance, less overload and strain, higher job satisfaction rates, more flexibility over day-to-day schedule, zero commute time (which leads to a more efficient daily schedule), fewer distractions at the office and an increase in autonomy (Greer & Payne, 2014). Also, a study conducted by Kelliher and Anderson in 2010 showed that when employees worked from home they considered it a privilege in which they would feel indebted to their organization which resulted in a sense of obligation to exert greater effort in attempt to repay their organization. This is consistent with the social exchange theory (Greer & Payne, 2014). The social exchange theory within an organizational context suggests that employees who believe they benefit from the option to telecommute will feel obligated to reciprocate an increased work effort by performing behaviors that benefit the organization (Jones, 2010). How synergetic and advantageous!

## Negative Side

Nevertheless, the negative aspects of telework can't be ignored. These include employees being physically separated from the main office resulting in fewer growth opportunities, employees potentially feeling isolated from their coworkers, disengagement from their job, and a heavy reliance on telecommunication tools that aren't always 100% dependable (Greer & Payne,

2014). Relying on technology as a form of communication can result in less effective communication and also could harm the cohesiveness of team collaboration. Additionally, research has shown that a common challenge amongst supervisors of telecommuters is that it can be difficult to manage the work performance of these employees due to the fact that they aren't always in the office. Out of sight, out of mind.

## What Millenials Want

The millennial generation has now taken over as having the highest number of individuals within the workforce at an estimated 82 million people. The Millennials are individuals born from the 1980s through the early 2000s are changing the way organizations do things. For example, millennials enjoy having flexibility, autonomy, and control over their jobs and many organizations seek to come up with ways to help satisfy their desires. If millennials can't find workplaces that are consistent with their personal values, they will look elsewhere for employment, which costs the organization time and money spent training and replacing those that left (McLeigh & Boberiene, 2014). In fact, many millennials are starting their own businesses in order to get all it is that they want in their work lives (McLeigh & Boberiene, 2014). Therefore, it is important that organizations are trained on the tendencies of their workforce in order to minimize dissatisfaction and turnover rates as much as possible.

## Clear Expectations Key

For telecommuting to work, both the organization and the employee need to be on the same page.

As long as expectations of the employee are clear from the supervisor, the employee can be held accountable for his or her work performance whether in the office, at home, or at a local *Starbucks*. It is also important to note that if expectations are set too high, employee dissatisfaction and possible turnover intentions will be higher, whether telecommuting or not.

The flexibility of teleworking has been gaining ground over the past decade. With the new generation of employees desiring this flexibility and job control, the number of organizations utilizing teleworking is increasing. With more employees and organizations adopting the mentality of "if you scratch my back, then I'll scratch yours", employers are helping their employees cope with heavy work demands, and employees are feeling grateful and responding to the kind gesture with increased effort and work performance. When the expectations are clear and being met, yielding both positive results for the company and better work-life balance and higher satisfaction for employees, the question is asked even more often: why leave your home to work, when you can bring your work home?

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