



For Immediate Release

February 6, 2014

**Family Day: A good time to think about
the rising importance of work-life balance in BC**

Vancouver, BC: Family Day was created to provide BC families with an extra day together, and recognize their hard work. Although one extra day off a year won't fix all our troubles, BC Human Resources Management Association (HRMA) does see providing extra family time as one part of the overall formula employers should consider in addressing the rising importance of work-life balance in BC.

The matter of more flexible working conditions is emerging as one of the main factors considered by today's managerial candidates when looking at new job possibilities.

The Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) says 58 per cent of Canadians report 'overload' associated with their many roles – work, home and family, friends, physical health, volunteer and community service.

A Canadian study released last year by Carleton University found that an increasing number of Generation X and baby boomer employees are providing care for children, or elderly parents, or both - and need more support from employers and governments. Up to 35 per cent of some 25,000 employees surveyed belong to this 'sandwich' generation, and are trying to balance work with caregiving and/or childcare. They reported lower levels of health, higher levels of stress, and a drop in productivity on the job.

Another factor affecting employee retention is that Generation X and Y candidates tend to exhibit different employment behaviours than their predecessors. They have less of a tendency to stay in a company position long term, they aren't afraid to sidestep larger organizations and go into business on their own, and have grown up using 24/7 communications technology which has greatly reduced the need to be anchored to a desk.

Thus, companies that facilitate more flexible working conditions, and recognize the value of work-life balance for employees, have a better chance of creating a more engaged work group and reducing turnover. This assertion is reflected in a survey of 20,000 workers in 95 countries released last month by worldwide flexible work environment firm Regus. It shows 74 percent of respondents fully believe flexible working conditions improve employee retention rates for companies.

The CMHA says employers can improve work life balance for the employee by investigating options such as:

- Flexible start, end and break times
- Telecommuting from home
- Splitting a full-time job with another employee
- Graduated return – gradually building up to a full-time schedule after a leave

(more)

In addition, the Surrey Board of Trade and the Children’s Partnership of Surrey – White Rock recommended further measures in a 2012 business paper, including:

- Government supported child care subsidies, allowing parents to obtain daycare for \$10 a day, while providing caregivers equity wages and ample funding for daycare resources
- Family-friendly workplaces that include Family Responsibility Leave for employees facing child and elder care challenges

“Helping employees balance work and family responsibilities and pressures is something that businesses across BC handle every day,” says Christian Codrington, Senior Manager, Professional Practice of HRMA. “Human resources professionals along with those business leaders must strive to create the kind of workplace culture that improves work life balance. It takes commitment, creativity, as well as financial resources. Ultimately though, employers who do make the effort and investment generally reap benefits through a committed and focused employee.”

About HRMA

The BC-based Human Resources Management Association is a non-profit organization dedicated to advancing professional people practices through professional development opportunities such as conference, workshops, symposiums, mentorship and volunteer programs.

The association provides leadership to more than 5,500 members and 3,000 affiliates that collectively represent CEOs, directors of HR, consultants, educators, students, HR generalists, and small-business owners. Established in 1942, HRMA is a founding member of the Canadian Council of Human Resources Associations (CCHRA) and the exclusive grantor of the Certified Human Resources Professional (CHRP) designation in British Columbia and Yukon.

www.bchrma.org

-30-

Media contact:

Trevor Pancoust

604-646-3567

tpancoust@pacegroup.com