

WORK-LIFE BALANCE

MNCs offer staff part-time option — for lower pay, of course

Anjali Prayag*Bangalore, Jan. 7*

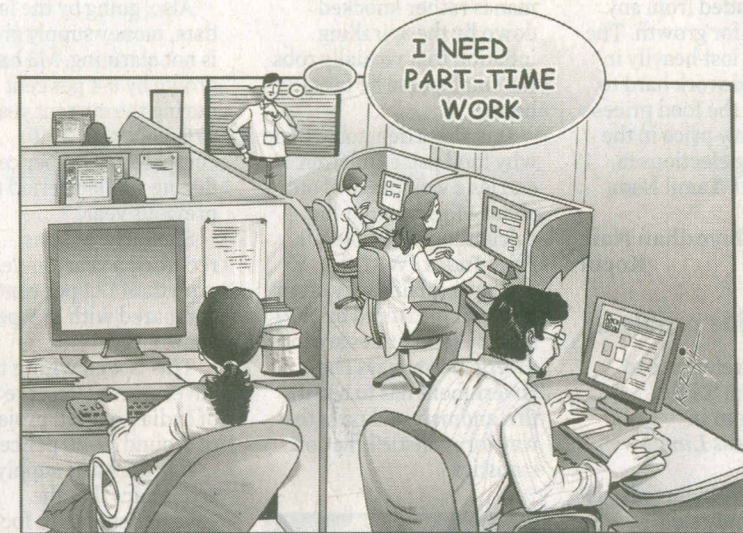
After offering flexi hours and work-from-home option, tech MNCs are now giving their employees a larger work-life balance choice through part-time work, that is., work for half of a week or choose to work for fewer hours during the entire week.

Starting January 1, SAP Labs India rolled out this new initiative for its employees: they could either choose a four-hour per day work week or decide to work full day for just three or four days in a week.

Terming this as 'another step to provide a meaningful work life balance' for its employees, Mr Bhuvaneshwar Naik, Vice-President, HR, SAP India, said that the salary would decrease in proportion to the option chosen.

REDUCING WORKLOAD

Global tech major GE-Jack F Welch Technology Centre too offers its employees the 'part-time option' where employees can reduce their workload and consequently decrease work days to fewer than the standard work week days, with a corresponding adjustment in compensation and benefits. Compensation and benefits such as leave, provident fund and gratuity will be reduced to reflect the



reduced work schedule, says Mr Raj Raghavan, HR Leader at GE-JFWTC.

Accenture has gone one step ahead and has 'institutionalised' the flexibility in teams and groups where flexible work options were difficult to operationalise. Through Project Santulan, it has identified those specific roles and 'flexidised' and 'unbundled' them.

"We looked into every role and identified components of it which

could be done flexibly. Interestingly, the roles we identified belong to job families that potentially impact over two thousand people in the organisation," says Mr Prithvi Shergill, Human Resources Lead, Accenture India.

Honeywell Technology Solutions does offer part-time working option to employees, including women employees immediately after their statutory maternity leave and employees taking care of special

short-term situations at home involving families.

They are also allowed to work part-time either to complete higher studies or for health reasons on a case-to-case basis for periods of time as agreed to with their immediate managers, says Mr Uday Tulapurkar, Director and HR Head India, Honeywell Technology Solutions.

FLEXI VARIANTS

Ms Saundarya Rajesh, Founder-President, Avtar Career Creators, a recruitment firm that helps people find flexi jobs, says that with over a dozen variants of flexi-working in the Indian workplace, which are proven and tested in terms of efficiency and productivity, companies are surely waking up to the fact that it is better to provide legitimised flexibility than manage absenteeism and low performance and in the case of a woman, even a break in career.

"All large cities are magnets of talent but commuting is a challenge with infrastructure not quite keeping pace with development. Today's lifestyle and the double-income family also impose unique demands on time — for both the man and woman and such options are useful," she says.