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FLEXIBLE TIME AND HUMANISTIC PHILOSOPHY

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I INTRODUCTION

I-1 Statement of Purpose

I-2 Literature Survey

I-3 Restatement of Purpose



I-1 Statement of Purpose

3.

The purpose of this project is to expand and integrate research on the concept of flexible time. The study is designed to integrate the findings of previous literature, the many different publications in the English, German, French and Dutch languages. In addition, by means of questionnaires and interviews in the United States of America, Germany and Holland, the project intends to focus on the implications of flexible time on work and human behavior.



I-2 Literature Survey

1. Introduction to the review
2. What is flexible time
3. Historical development
4. Implications of flexible time for the organization and its people and society as a whole
5. Guidelines for the implementation of flexible time in the organization
6. On the meaning, implications and interrelatedness of varieties of time



1. Introduction to the Literature Survey

Research was done in a wide variety of previous publications on the subject of flexible time.

Flexible time is most popular in Western Europe and United States of America. Many different countries have published their findings with flexible time. It is the main objective of this literature survey to integrate the findings of all these publications which appeared in the English, German, French and Dutch language.

The last section of this survey (Section 6) attempts to bring everything in a broader perspective. The section focuses on philosophical implications of changing times and its effect on the spirit of man seen from existentialistic, humanistic and psychoanalytical points of view.



2. What is Flexible Time?

6.

The system of flexible working hours is a way of arranging work time that gives people some freedom in choosing the hours they will work each day.

This idea has been and is designated with several names like Flexi-time, variable working hours, gliding working time, individual working time, all having the common feature of variability in working hours.

Business Week (October 1972) states that the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development listed more than 100 variations in the system.

The U.S. Civil Service Commission (May 1974) gives two examples of possible flexible time arrangements which are shown in figures 1 and 2 on the next page.

For the sake of clarity it is important to categorize the many possible variations of flexible time systems. Elbing, Gadon and Gordon (1974) state that, in general, one can speak about fixed, staggered, flexible or variable working hours. This hierarchy represents an increasing level of working hour arrangements between employees and employers: fixed and staggered hours do not change once established, where flexible and variable hours can change from day to day.

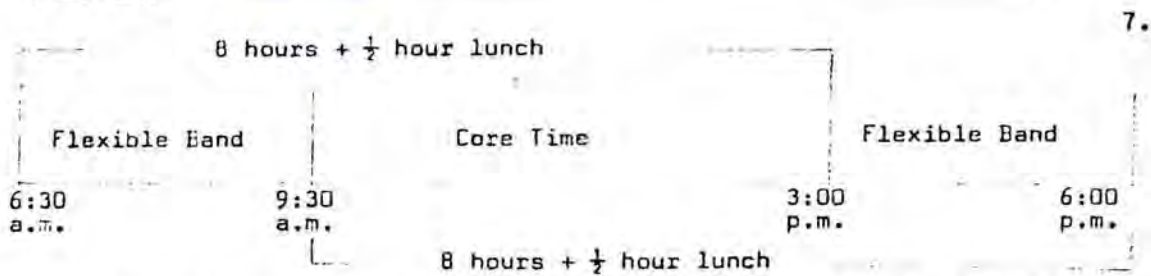
In the case of flexible and variable hours a system of record keeping is necessary so that the numbers of hours worked can be balanced over some time period, usually a week or a month. A more detailed discussion of working time arrangements and record keeping follows. Elbing et al (1974) introduces four categories as described below:

Fixed hours: in general the four-day week used in North America fits into this category, along with the normal five-day work week, where generally no variability in arriving and leaving time is possible.

Staggered hours: this system allows for a certain degree of flexibility. Separate, in advance selected, groups of

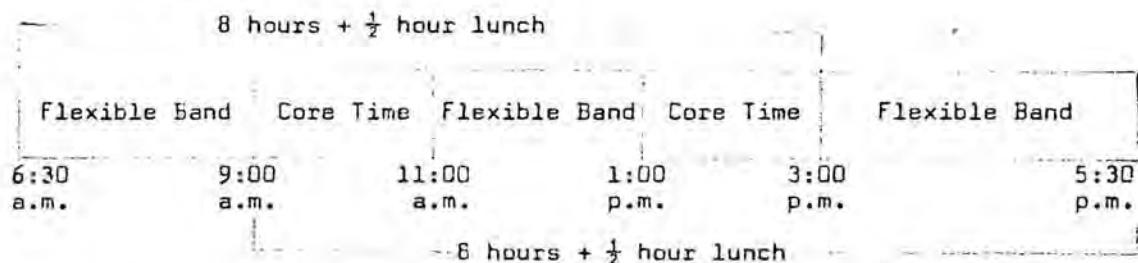


Figure 1



In the above example, the core time has been established at 5 hours to include $\frac{1}{2}$ hour for lunch to be taken at some time within the established core. Flexible time bands extend for 3 hours on either side of the core. An employee, therefore, might come to work at 6:30 am and leave as early as 3:00 pm. Alternatively, he may begin as late as 9:30 am and leave at 6:00 pm. He may however, begin at any other time between 6:30 and 9:30 am and his departure time will be $8\frac{1}{2}$ hours later.

Figure 2.



In the above example, an analysis of the workload revealed a requirement for the entire workforce to be present between the hours of 9 and 11 am and again between 1 and 3 pm.

The major difference between this figure and the first lies in the splitting of the core time. An employee might choose to work straight through 8 hours plus $\frac{1}{2}$ hour for lunch. However, if he wishes, he may take advantage of the center two-hour flexible band for personal business, shopping, a long lunch or luncheon meeting. A $\frac{1}{2}$ hour period within this flexible band is allocated for lunch.



employees arrive at different times, resulting in overlapping schedules, but all must still work a predetermined number of hours during the work day. The flexibility is to be found in the morning where people are allowed to arrive anywhere between two points in time and the width of this span is predetermined by management and can vary say from 7 to 7:30 AM or from 7:30 to 10 AM. 8.

Flexible working hours: this system can have many variations in terms of possible arrival times and length of the core time. The common feature, however, is the presence of a predetermined core time, during which everyone has to be at work.

Variable working hours: this is the most flexible of working arrangements. In contrast to flexible hours the variable hours system does not specify a core time. The employee may work whenever he wishes. He may take time off without specific permission, as long as his function is covered during his absence. Everyone under this system of course has to meet a fixed amount of hours over a period of time, usually a week or a month.

In addition to the four systems just described by Elbing et al (1974), Glickman and Brown (1974) add:

Rational working hours: this system is based on the premise that it is uneconomic to staff departments for peak work loads which occur perhaps one day of each month, or one month of each year. Exceptions apart, it is often possible to predict levels of activity accurately, so contracts of employment provide for more hours to be worked in some periods than in others, or on some days than on others. A



contractually agreed - upon maximum per month or year

9.

must, of course, be observed.

Leibinger (1973) states that the system's core-time and variable hours are set in order to meet the daily frequency of customer visits. All hours during which, according to previous experience, frequent customer visits are observed will be designated as core time, while the less frequent visits during the day will be used as variable hours. This, Leibinger found, is often used in retailing. A typical example is given in Figure 3 on next page.

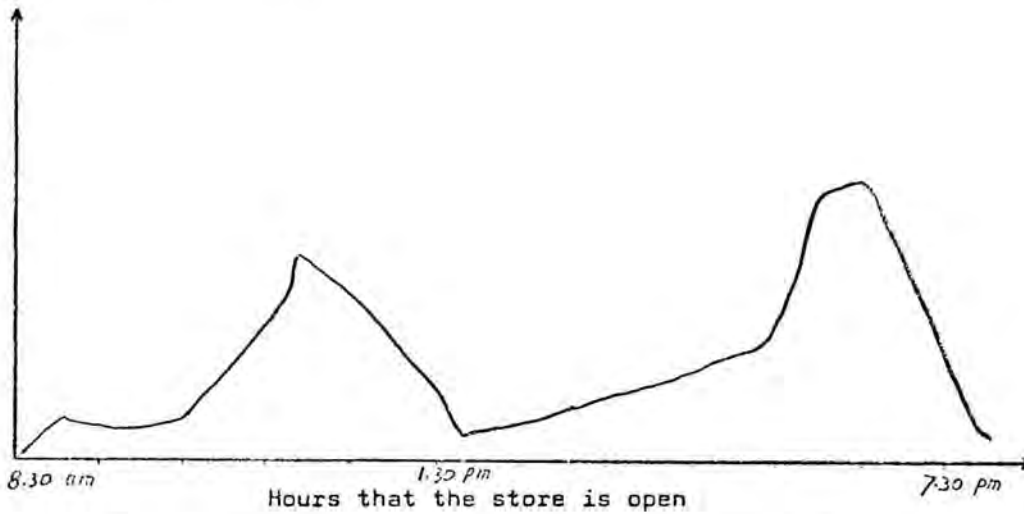
Finally, the U.S. News and World Report (June 1972) reports on another general category:

Individual working time: under this system, the employee each month may choose among several fixed working schedules for his plant or office. Workers, for example, may decide to come to work early and take a long noon break. Or, they may prefer to start late and have a short break.

Elbing et al (1974) mentions a representative example where the employee can carry over a debit or credit balance of 10 hours from month to month. Due to the arrangements of flexible - and core hours an employee may work as little as $5\frac{1}{2}$ hours or as much as $10\frac{1}{2}$ hours in any one day, as little as $27\frac{1}{2}$ hours or as much as $52\frac{1}{2}$ hours in any one week, but he must be present during core times from 9:00 to 11:30 AM and from 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM. Under this kind of an arrangement one could expect that people maintain a debit balance in order to take advantage of the system, but the article states that "companies from which we have information report a credit balance averaging $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours per employee." This result is also found in a case history of the Messerschmidt Bolkow Blohm Company where the majority of the employees had a fairly constant credit of 3 hours and 50 minutes and only 1% of the employees exceeded the 10 hour debit which in most cases was done to emergencies or missing entries on the time cards (Clickman and Brown 1974).

Figure 3

Number of Customers:



Band time	core time	Band time	Core time
-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------

Figure 3 • Translated from Leibinger (1973).

This figure is an example from actual practice. Leibinger indicates that the source cannot be disclosed, but clearly one can discover a trend. Core times are set when the expected frequency of customer visits is high and consequently band times are set when the expected number of customer visits are low.



Variations in record keeping: the necessity of record

11.

keeping under the flexible and variable systems has already been mentioned. This record keeping can be done in several ways, each creating its own implications.

Elbing et al (1974) state that there are at least five different record-keeping methods now in use. The most simple are self recording systems maintained by the individual employee. In one system, the "honor system", the employee keeps his own record and balances it himself. For example, The Swiss Company, Swiss Sandoz Ltd, currently uses it. This break away from the traditional time clock is consistent with efforts by an increasing number of companies to create an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect between workers and management. Personnel Management (October 11, 1972) reports that such a system tends to foster morale and productivity, which actually are the ultimate goals of flexible working time arrangements.

Iron Age (May 31, 1973) reports that Hewlett-Packard is also using the honor system.

A second system is that the employee signs in and out at a central point, but the balance is kept by someone else or it may be computerized.

A third system uses the classic time clock, which mechanically checks and records the employee's punctuality. Iron Age (May 31, 1973) reports that The Hengstler Flextime Corporation is one of the main manufacturers of this electro mechanical counting system, which also permits accrual of debit or credit hours over given accounting periods so that employees can balance their hours through additional time off or make-up overtime. Under this system each employee is provided with an individual key which, when inserted into a master clock unit, records visually by 1/100 of an hour the time spent on the job with a running reading opposite each key slot. When the key is removed after finishing the job, the counter for that employee stops.



A fourth system is the use of a centralized computer. Elbing et al (1974) report that the Nestle headquarters in Switzerland uses one with visual displays located in easily accessible places throughout the office building. Employees can record and check their time at their convenience.

A fifth system uses a special time recording meter which unlike the time clock, is merely an accounting machine that provides the employee with a correct tally but does not store or use the information.

3. Historical Development

13.

The idea of flexible time arrangements started in 1967 in West Germany. Time (July 1971) found that it was begun by the aircraft and electronics firm of Messerschmidt - Bolkow. The company introduced flexible time not so much from the standpoint of human consideration for the employees but for meeting practical organization needs. The overcrowded German autobahns during rush hours caused an increasing level of traffic congestions. Employees of Messerschmidt found that it took them a little longer every day to get to work on time. It looked as if there was no solution to the congestion problems until the employees themselves leveled out the traffic by distributing their arrivals over a lengthier time period.

As it became legitimate in the Messerschmidt company to arrive at an hour of one's choosing, unexpected side benefits occurred. A remarkable drop in sick leave was observed. The initial experience worked so well in fact that it was extended to the entire facility.

Glickman and Brown (1974) report that Messerschmidt now employs 4000 people at the headquarters outside of Munich all of which have a starting time between 7 - 8 AM and finishing time between 4 - 6 PM except Fridays where the finishing time is between 3:30 and 6 PM.

This idea was picked up and then used in countries like Austria, Switzerland, Scandinavia and Holland. From there southward to France, Italy, and Spain and the United Kingdom. Elbing et al (1974) estimate that over one million workers in Germany make use of the flexible time arrangements.

In North America, Wall Street Journal (April 30, 1973) reports, the four-day work week found more popularity. It estimated that by 1973 some 3000 U.S. companies had adopted the four-day week, compared to about 40 in 1970.

The four-day week, however, will not be covered in this article. In France in 1969, Jacques de Chalendar (1971) received an assignment from the



French statesman Chabon-Delmas to investigate the problems of the terrible traffic congestion during rush hours around Paris. de Chalendar's conclusion was simple: we have to stop doing everything at the same time.



4. Implications of flexible time for the organization, its people and society as a whole:

Advantages resulting from the implementation of some form of flexible time are reported by many publications on the subject.

Personnel Journal (October 1970) summarizes:

1. Rush hours have been deactivated
2. Overtime compensation has been considerably reduced
3. Productivity and efficiency levels were reported to have increased between 3 and 5%. Employees arrive more relaxed at work because of reduction of commuting time, traffic tie-ups, etc.
4. Increase in employee morale
5. Reduction in employee absenteeism. Time (July 1971) states as much as 20%
6. Increased self adjustment of work time to work load
7. Improvement in recruitment success
8. Reduced personnel turnover

Schanzenbach (1973) adds:

9. Total working hours can be adapted to one's personal preferences, daily rhythm and needs. In general, he distinguishes between the "morning person" and the "evening person", each having a different curve for the daily willingness to work. Figure 4 on the next page shows a graphical representation of this situation.

Related to this, Schanzenbach states that one should not underestimate the increased possibility of accidents at work. Little sleep for the evening person and consequently tardiness in the early morning might result in a higher probability of accidents at work.

Figure 4

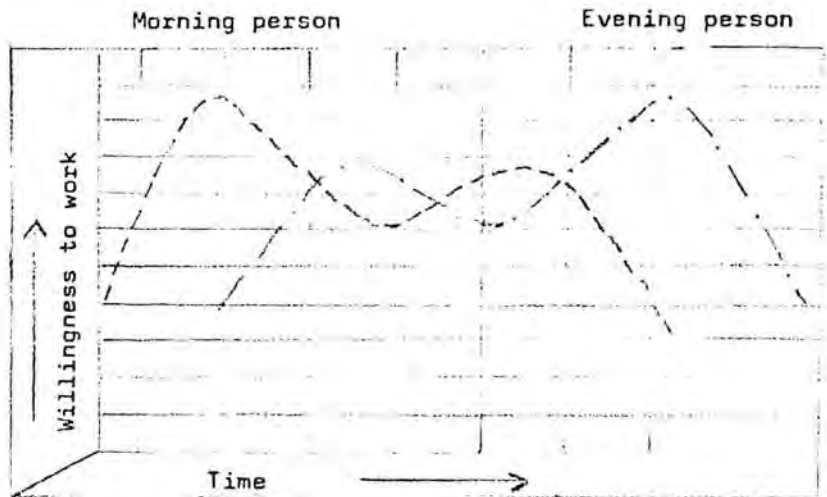


Figure 4. Translated from Schanzenbach (1973).

The figure indicates that as the daily working hours progress one finds a different "willingness to work" curve for the morning and the evening person.

The - - - - line represents the morning person, while the _ _ _ _ line is representative of the evening person.



Glickman and Brown (1974) arrive at the same conclusion regarding this topic.

Under point 1 it was mentioned that rush hours had been deactivated. Keppler (1973) conducted a survey among the employees of the Messerschmidt - Bolkow Company. He posed the question: "With how many minutes did you reduce your daily traveling time to work (back and forth) since you are working on Flexible Time?"

One thousand nine hundred and eighty five employees were surveyed and the results are indicated in Figure 5 on the next page. Of the 1985 people, 775, or 39%, estimated that there was a decrease in traveling time which averaged for this group to about 9 minutes per day. Keppler noticed that the great majority of those who answered "no decrease" resulted from the fact that these people had to travel with company employee buses.

Point 7 above "Improvement in Recruitment success" was investigated by Schmidt (1973). He concludes that for many women Flexible Time is decisive before they can take the job and that for many other workers in different kinds of companies Flexible Time ranks 3rd or 4th in importance, behind salary and social security, in evaluating one's job.

Every "medal" has its bad side and flexible time is no exception. The Dutch "Social Economic Council" (December 1974) has written an extensive report concerning among others the possible negative implications of flexible time. Part of this report is a letter from the "Director-General of Labor" (April 23, 1974) to the commission of labor legislation. The Director discusses the following disadvantages:

1. Many workers have expressed the desire for a longer weekend. Flexible time can result - in case of no limits - in a 4 or 4½ day work week. This could result in undesirable stress during the 9 or 10 hour long

Figure 5

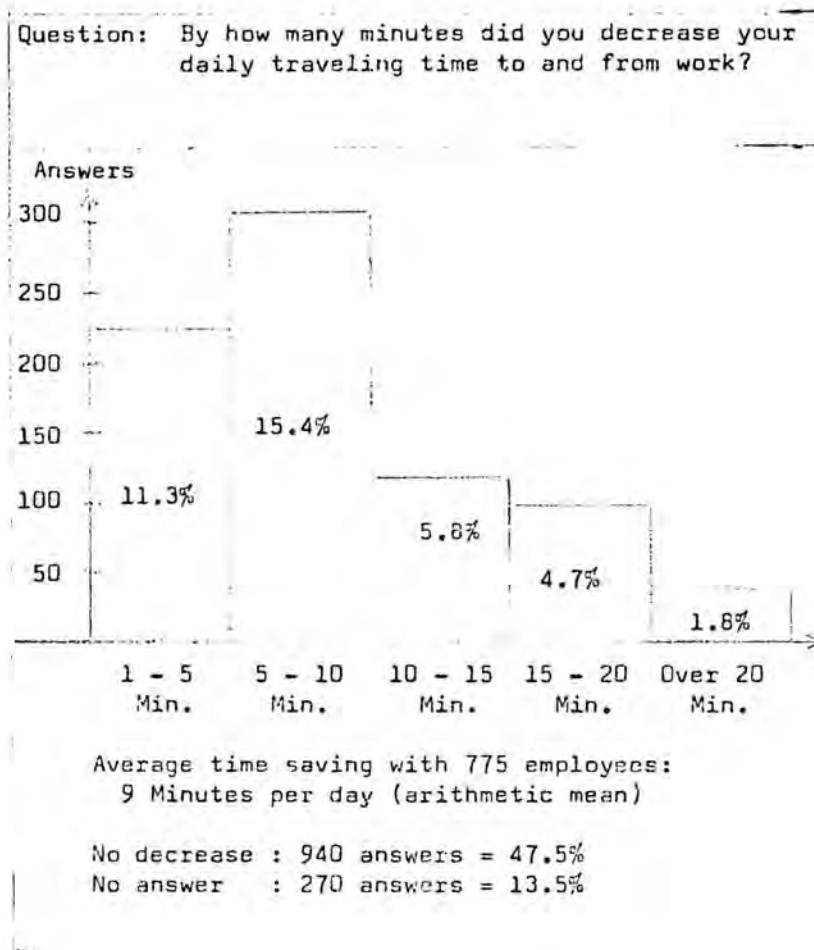


Figure 5. Translated from Keppler (1973).

The figure indicates that about 39% of the 1985 people surveyed found a decrease in their daily traveling time to and from work.

remaining work days and a possible decrease in the productivity per worker per hour.

2. Flexible time is not possible for all jobs. Some companies can, others cannot adopt their organization to the system. Also within the company problems can arise because of jealousy and an increased gap of status difference between those who can and those who cannot make use of flexible time.
3. The interchange of short and long working days can lead to physiological rhythm disturbances and can result in a negative influence on one's motivation.
4. The organized car pooling or collective busing by the company will frustrate possible flexible time arrangements.
5. Variable working hours will result in disquiet on the job during the flexible bands, resulting in a possible decrease in productivity.

- Discussion of flexible times disadvantages:

The problem of organizational limits is a problem one cannot generalize upon. Some organizations can modify their production process in such a way that implementation of flexible time is possible, others cannot. Business Week (October 7, 1972) found that Omega Watch in Switzerland found the solution by building up a "buffer stock" on each point along the line. Omega officials report that production has dropped slightly, but quality has improved substantially enough to produce a net gain. The magazine also found that Salzer Freres, Switzerland's largest builder of machines and pumps, solved its toughest problem, how to apply flexible time to the foundry, where teams of men operate large furnaces, by specifying what each team must "float" as a group. Team members agree on next day's starting time before leaving



work each day. Iron Age (May 31, 1973) confirms that flexible time is easier to install in service organizations, but extensive research done by Elbing et al (1974) reveals that the system has been successfully installed and used in a number of production operations, varying from heavy industrial manufacturing of hydroelectric equipment to assembly lines in the watch industry. Even job-shop applications do not seem beyond the realm of feasibility when one considers that most job-shop operations already involve a significant amount of in-process inventory that tends to buffer individual operations from one another. The additional discrepancies caused by flexible working hours from work center to work center would, therefore, probably have only limited impact on the total amount of in-process inventory required to maintain a smoothly operating shop. On the other hand, when flexible working hours are used in an assembly line operation, the line men have to be redesigned to include larger amounts of in-process inventory so that there is some element of independence among workers. In instances where this has been done, the increase in inventory has been recognized but has not been a determinant.

It has not yet been determined whether there is a net added cost of carrying the additional inventory; a precise cost/benefit analysis will be necessary to settle this question. (In most of the European assemblyline operations that have been observed, the workers generally carried over a credit balance per employee averaging $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours a month. Since this represents labor for which payment has not been made, it is in the company's favor and is an offset against extra inventory carried as a buffer between work stations.) Administrative Management (November, 1973) confirms that the problem in this situation is with the larger inventory and agrees with the point of view of Elbing et al (1974).

One further example, provided by Elbing et al, of the application of flexible working hours, in an apparently low-feasibility production situation,



is its use in shops that are operating on two shifts. One company, Brown Boveri, in Switzerland, has successfully implemented flexible working hours on a two-shift installation; the comings and goings of operators manning the same piece of equipment are coordinated by the two workers themselves.

Most people also seem to feel that flexible working hours would not be a successful system in a service organization, where close interdependencies among individuals working in groups, or interaction between individuals and clients, is essential. Specific examples show, however, that this is not necessarily the case. The following are cases of such examples: (Elbing et al 1974).

A German department store with over 100 salesclerks and a supervisory staff of 3 has all employees coming and going as they wish. The ability to make commissions on sales ensures that there is coverage during peak hours, and informal agreements between the clerks guarantee coverage during the slower early morning and late afternoon hours.

A German insurance company was worried about the personal service which customers expected and which they might miss if employees were not available outside of core-time periods. The company solution was to bring the core times on its letterhead. The employees themselves dealt with the problem another way. There had always been times when agents were unavailable, and client coverage by other agents at those times had been unsatisfactory. With the introduction of flexible working hours and a potential decrease in contact hours between the client and his agent, all the agents assumed responsibility for each other's clients. Customer service and satisfaction actually increased. The client felt that someone was looking after him when his own agent was away, and the agent was better informed when he returned to work.

Certainly there are potential problems with both external and internal communications. The difficulties are not hard to overcome, however, since

members of the organization adjust rather quickly to the new arrangements. First, in most instances, they have approved of flexible working hours and therefore have a stake in making the system work. Second, there are clear benefits to individuals in retaining the system and, therefore, in coping with difficulties it generates. Third, experience reveals that wasted time decreases.

How workers react to flexible hours:

Here are typical comments from Hewlett-Packard employees at its Medical Electronics Division about flexible hours. (Iron Age, May 31, 1973).

"If we don't get in until 7:30 AM we don't have to worry and make all sorts of apologies for being late."

"I always say if you treat people like adults they act like adults and there isn't anything more unadult than to be told when to come and go."

"It sure cuts down the driving tension (by coming in early) when there are no school buses and much less traffic."

"My wife and I both work-she sees the kids off to school in the morning and doesn't get home until late. I, on the other hand, start early and am home to be with the kids in the afternoon."

"I have a young family and the early hours gives me more time to spend with the children."

"However, the most important factor to me is that it makes an individual feel he can be trusted to put in his eight hours."

"During the summer I have more time to enjoy the sun. During the winter I can leave early to avoid the bad traffic problems. Also, on snowy winter mornings you don't have to rush out and shovel like mad. I'm in at 7:30 AM but I like being able to sleep later if I'm tired. Traditionally, a production line manager has had to set the example of earliness. Now I don't feel that



pressure. The big percentage of people come in at 6:30 AM. My own preference is about 7:30 AM. With this schedule the line supervisors get their own things done early and then we get together to discuss any problems. One other benefit is the quiet hour after the early birds have gone. I can really get things cleaned up then. As a purchasing man I can get my day organized and do most of my paper work in the early morning leaving time for vendor visits later."

Erich Bolzer, a metalworker, says: "If I have enough hours on credit I sometimes leave at noon, pack my family in my Ford, and visit the Munich shopping centers and bargain counters of the department stores. I figure that I save 15% to 20% in living costs this way." (Time, July 19, 1971).

Elbing et al (1974) state that perhaps the most surprising use of the system to date is not in Europe but in Japan, where it was first introduced in 1971. Because, it was argued, the system violated Japanese working traditions, quick failure was forecast. On the contrary (and much to the delight of the Japanese Ministry of Trade), the system is still employed and working well. In the crowded cities and paternalistic companies that characterize Japan, the value of flexible working hours is high.



5. Guidelines for the implementation of Flexible Time:

The U. S. Civil Service Commission (May 1974) proposes an approach via three general objectives:

I. Acquaint your organization with the concept of flexible time.

Such an introduction should contain similar information as is covered under Section 2 of this survey, in addition key management should have more comprehensive introduction which is covered under Section 4.

II. Determine the feasibility of flexi-time for the organization.

Knevels and Zehle (1970) propose during this stage to go through the following procedures:

1. Consult the union and key management whether or not they are willing to implement flexible time.
2. Determine in which departments the implementation will be particularly difficult or impossible and consider the possible internal implications when certain groups have to be left out.
3. Decide on which technological material one wishes to depend for recording the respective hours worked.
4. Determine additional investment and operational costs: higher overhead costs because of longer opening hours, investment cost in control and time - measurement machines.
5. Consider legal restrictions in terms of maximum hours of daily work for different age groups, etc.

Legal restrictions differ from country to country and it is not the objective of this study to cover these different legal restrictions. These procedures as described can be very well studied and implemented by a specially assigned study group.

III. Guide the organization in the planning, development and implementation of flexi-time.

1. Set a target date
2. Determine the system to be used in terms of core time, band width, debit - credit arrangements, etc. All this has to be arranged in an official settlement. Unilever N.V., Rotterdam, Netherlands, proposes in an interim report (June 1974) that such a settlement should include:
 1. core and band times
 2. maximum working hours
 3. minimum lunch time
 4. consequences of coming in late
 5. registration procedure in regard to:
 - normal arrival and leaving
 - paid holidays
 - traveling for the company
 - continuing courses
 - doctor visits
 - dentist
 - vacation
 - sick leave
 - national holidays

- overwork
 - catching up with work
 - lunch with guest (s)
 - private business in core and band times
3. Determine a trial period and the respective departments to be involved.
 4. Evaluate the results of the trial period via the following criteria:
 - economic factors
 - employee attitudes, beliefs and motivations
 - tardiness, absenteeism and turnover
 5. Decide whether or not to implement flexible time officially and to extend it to other departments based on the evaluation just mentioned.

This generalized procedure is also proposed by Schanzenbach (1973).



6. On the meaning, implications and interrelatedness of varieties of time: leisure time - flexible time - changing times

- Towards a general perspective of time:

Encyclopedia Britannica (Vol. IX, page 1013) introduces time as a facet of human consciousness felt both in psychic and physical experience, and an aspect of the observed environment metaphorically describable as a one-way flow providing, together with space, the matrix of events. Time can be viewed either as metaphysically ultimate (process philosophy) or as illusory (philosophy of the manifold). For centuries it has been viewed as a significant dimension in the philosophy of history and in the theology of redemption. Time can be measured either as an epoch (the moment of an instantaneous event as marked by a clock) or as the interval of duration of a continuous event, and by reference either to moving bodies or to electromagnetic phenomena (atomic time). Its flow has been found, in contemporary physics, to be relative to the observer's velocity and acceleration perspectives, and, in biology, to be affected by such factors as environmental rhythms, temperature, drugs, and (perhaps) brain rhythms.

Of significance for the scope of this test is the fact that an important aspect of human consciousness is the awareness of time. Man feels the passage of time in his personal, three-dimensional experience (physical, mental and spiritual), and observes it in his environment, in its broadest sense: the universe.

Men feel and think in the time flow. In this sense, one could argue that everything is submitted to the flow of time; when time ceases to exist, probably a situation beyond human comprehension, then necessarily everything submitted to time flow ceases to exist.

Man experiences time in the three usual dimensions of past, present and future. Each of these influences is in some way the four dimensions in which



man's existence can be contemplated upon: the physical, mental, spiritual dimensions together with the totality of his environment: the universe.

Man experiences continual change. The human experience of change in a succession of events is complex and often burdensome for the individual. This burden is experienced through one's awareness in the mental and spiritual dimensions. It is precisely for this reason that so much has been written all over history to provide the individual with a mental - spiritual orientation in order to re-establish harmony with the environment. In this respect, Fromm (1956) refers to existential dichotomies facing the individual, which, for example are: man's awareness of his own short life span, of the fact that without his will he is born and against his will he dies, that he will die before those whom he loves, or they before him, the awareness of his aloneness and separateness, of his helplessness before the forces of nature and of society. All these situations are sources of man's disharmony with his environment.

The Bible is one of the most empirical examples, along with the teachings of Buddha, and nowadays the works of Frankl, Fromm, Rogers and many others to provide the individual with an explanation and a mental-spiritual orientation for overcoming the fear for these dichotomies.

The values attached to work and leisure are changing fast along with our life styles. Empirical studies (Glickman and Brown, 1974) predict some significant occurrence of events that were rated as 50% or higher probability by 1985, such as:

- virtually all business will increase time-off work by at least 25% for civic, political, professional and personal activities; and the full-time work week will decline to 35 hours.

- Education for all workers will rise sharply.
- average vacation time will at least double.

This trend of increasing leisure is a significant one. "Leisure should not be treated as a substitute for living but as a means for better living." (Lens, 1966). "New time can provide men with new meanings, a new philosophy." (Prehoda, 1969). "A responsibility of intellectuals at the present moment is not to erode the distinction between what is and what ought to be, but to ask whether they can define what ought to be while ignoring history, contingency, and the particularities of human interests as they are." (Frankel, 1975)

Work itself should be a significant part of one's sense of meaning in life for the very reason that one spends about 1/3 of his time working between the ages of 20 and 65. As work time decreases and leisure time increases, one automatically might expect a necessary shift in meaningfulness. But free time is not necessarily associated with an increase in self-actualizing behavior, which by Maslow (1943) is recognized as a definite human need. Along the same line, Frankl (1963) points to man's search for meaning as being a primary force and not a secondary rationalization. Man, Frankl continues, is able to live and even to die for the sake of his ideals and of his values. Frankl quotes Nietzsche (page 164) "He who has a why to live for can bear almost any how." Related to this, Fromm in his work "Man for Himself" (1947) states: "Because the need for a system of orientation and devotion is an intrinsic part of human existence we can understand the intensity of this need. Indeed, there is no other more powerful source of energy in man. Man is not free to choose between having or not having "ideals", but he is free to choose between different kinds of ideals, between being devoted to the worship of power and destruction and being devoted to reason and love. All men are idealists and are striving for something beyond the attainment of



physical satisfaction. They differ in the kinds of ideals they believe in. The very best but also the most satanic manifestations of man's mind are expressions not of his flesh but of this "idealism" of his spirit. Therefore, a relativistic view which claims that to have some ideal or some religious feeling is valuable in itself is dangerous and erroneous. We must understand every ideal including those which appear in secular ideologies as expressions of the same human need and we must judge them with respect to their truth, to the extent to which they are conducive to the unfolding of man's powers and to the degree to which they are a real answer to man's need for equilibrium and harmony in his world."

In similar manner Rogers (1967) deals with man's need for and problems with his value orientation. He notices along with Fromm in "Escape of Freedom" (1941) that values offered by tradition are disappearing at a fast pace in the western world. Rogers (1967) states "It is no longer possible, as it was in the not too distant historical past, to settle comfortably into the value system of one's forebears or one's community and live out one's life without ever examining the nature and the assumptions of the system." Freud in "The future of an illusion" (1969) calls such a traditional conformistic attitude "impoverishment of thinking" and potentially dangerous. Man now left without such a traditional orientation wonders whether there are, or can be, any universal values. Before proceeding it is important to consider the fact that value is a term we employ in different ways. Rogers (1967) distinguishes between three types of values:

- "operative values": used to refer to the tendency of any living beings to show preference, in their actions, for one kind of object or objective rather than another. It need not involve any cognitive or conceptual thinking. It is simply the value choice which is indicated behaviorally when the organism selects one object, rejects another.

- Secondly: "conceived values": This is the preference of the individual for a symbolized object, usually with anticipation of the outcome of behavior directed toward such a symbolized object.
- Thirdly and for the purpose of this discussion most significant: "objective value": This form then would be used when we wish to speak of what is objectively preferable, whether or not it is in fact sensed or conceived of as desirable.

Fromm (1947) in this sense refers to the understanding and development of this "Objective value" in terms of "Humanistic Ethics," which he calls "The Applied Science of the Art of Living." To explain the concept of humanistic ethics, Fromm distinguishes between humanistic and authoritarian ethics. Humanistic ethics may be distinguished by formal and material criteria. Formally, it is based on the principle that only man himself can determine the criterion for virtue and sins. Materially, it is based on the principle that "good" is what is good for man and "evil" what is detrimental to man; the sole criterion of ethical value being man's welfare. This concept then recognizes very definitely the individual as a unique entity. This same attitude has been of crucial significance in Rogers' "client centered therapy" and Frankl's "logo therapy".

In authoritarian ethics an "authority" states what is good for man and lays down the laws and norms of conduct. Of central importance is the term authority which Fromm (1947) explains by distinguishing between rational and irrational authority. Rational authority, instead of exploiting, is based on rational grounds. It not only permits but requires constant scrutiny and criticism of those subjected to it; it is always temporary. Irrational authority on the other hand is always power over people, which can be physical or mental, it can be realistic or only relative in terms of

the anxiety and helplessness of the person submitting to this authority. Rogers (1967) in this sense would speak about introjected values resulting in the fact that the source of evaluation on most matters lies outside the individual and that a common aspect of modern life is living with absolutely contradictory values: "We calmly discuss the possibility of dropping a hydrogen bomb on Russia, but then find tears in our eyes when we see headlines about the suffering of one small child". The fundamental discrepancy, Rogers claims, lies in the fact that we have in a very basic way divorced ourselves from ourselves, and this accounts for much of modern strain and insecurity.

Suzuki, (1960) when he describes the fundamental objective of Zen-Buddhism, states: "Zen is the art of understanding the nature of man; it is the road from slavery to freedom; it develops our natural powers; it protects us from insanity and impoverishment; it forces us to bring about the power that we all possess, the power to happiness and love". It again stresses the ultimate importance of the individual and the development of his higher powers.

Humanistic philosophy, such as Zen, assumes that man has the capacity to distinguish between "good" and "evil" and that "the aim of man's life is to be understood as the unfolding of his powers according to the laws of his nature". (Fromm 1947).

The foregoing contemplations are, of course, directly related to the increasing degree of freedom which the western work experiences. This is evidenced by studies cited before. Glickman and Brown (1974) noted a decrease in total time spent on the job. Rogers (1967) indicated an increasing freedom from traditional values and the concept of flexible time is another indication of increasing freedom for the individual.

Freedom for the individual can pose a serious psychological problem. It can result, as Fromm (1941) notices, in conformism, destructivism,



narcissism, in short to necrophilia or the "syndrome of decay" or, in contrast, it can lead to biophilia, love of neighbor, stranger, nature, independence and freedom, which Fromm (1964) called the "syndrome of growth." Actually it is not so much freedom but the increasing degree to which man is confronted with himself, the increasing degree to which he is responsible for his own life and that of others. Each man as Frankl (1963) indicates is constantly questioned by life and he can only answer to life by answering for his own life, "to life he can only respond by being responsible."

The importance of meaning or purpose in life is evidenced by a survey of 7948 students at 48 colleges conducted by social scientists from Johns Hopkins University; asked what they considered "very important" to them now, 16% of the students checked "making a lot of money." Seventy-eight percent said their first goal was "finding a purpose and meaning to my life." (Frankl 1963).

Cyran (May 16, 1973) in a newspaper article in "Frankfurter Allgemeine" concludes that suicide often is the "crisis of inferiority feelings; of self-respect." Cyran found that about every hour a citizen of W. Germany dies as a result of suicide.

Greenberg (1971) found that "the core of neurosis is the basic fear of being worthless, of being helpless and abandoned." He continues that on the basis of the best information available today, neurosis is negligible in approximately 20% of the adult urban population in America. One out of five adults, then, is emotionally healthy. In another 60% of the population, neurosis is mild to moderate. These are people, Greenberg states, who manage to get along in their daily lives, personal and professional, but with some reduced efficiency, with greater stress, and with diminished zest for living. For the remaining 20% neurosis is severe resulting in the fact that these people function under great handicaps; at times, Greenberg concludes, some of them become completely incapacitated.



Fromm (1955) notices that the number of suicides per 100,000 people increases as the standard of living of that country increases.

All of these facts point to two situations: - man's need for meaning, purpose in life, and; - freedom is necessary for the self-actualization of man, but can pose a serious problem.

This section is concluded by presenting a modification of Frankel (August 1, 1975) words which in their original form were presented before (page 29).

The responsibility of every individual at the present moment is not to erode the distinction between what is and what ought to be, but to ask whether they can define what ought to be while ignoring history, contingency, and the particularities of human interests as they are. This would be a starting point but life is not lived according to how we define it. Of crucial importance is the way we actually live it. If man succeeds in "defining what ought to be" is he then necessarily successful in the actual art of living?



I-3 Restatement of purpose:

The purpose of this study can now be more specifically defined. The focus will be to make a cross cultural integration and interpretation of the implications of flexible time. Specifically, flexible time's effect on workers, management, the organization and society as a whole are considered to be of central importance.

Publications on flexible time in the Dutch, English, German and French languages are often not (or not yet) translated in other languages and this study focuses on the integration and interpretation of similarities and differences found in these respective publications.

The field research conducted focuses on crucial areas such as whether or not individuals experience change in job satisfaction, productivity, personal scheduling, job responsibilities since they are working on flexible time. Problems while implementing flexible time are researched as well as why flexible time was introduced into the company.

Finally, the concept of flexible time as related to changing times in a more general perspective is contemplated upon in more philosophical dimensions.



II METHOD

II-1 Description of subjects

II-2 Development of questionnaires

II-3 Procedure for interviews



II-1 Description of Subjects

1. Unilever, Netherlands

- a. Head office for sales located in Rotterdam. About 1300 people on the staggered hours system.
- b. Research laboratories located in Vlaardingen where 900 people are on the system of flexible working hours.
- c. Research laboratories located in Duiven with 300 people on the system of flexible working hours.

Worldwide, the Unilever Corporation employs about 354,000 people with yearly sales of over 10 billion dollars. They are widely diversified but have a very strong position in the food industry.

2. Farbwerke Hoechst A.G. Frankfurt, West Germany.

- a. The Department of Agriculture with 220 people on the system of flexible working hours.
- b. Messer Griesheim G.m.b.H., a subsidiary of Hoechst with 1500 people on the system of flexible working hours.

Worldwide the Hoechst A.G. employs about 130,000 people with yearly sales of about 5.4 billion dollars. They belong to the "big three" in the chemical industry of the world.

3. Röhm G.m.b.H., Darmstadt, West Germany, including the subsidiaries Burnus and Pharma. The Röhm G.m.b.H. has 1212 people on the system of flexible working hours.

The company is one of W. Europe's major producers of plexiglas and is for the major part privately-owned.

4. Hoechst Holland Verkoop, N.V., Amsterdam, Netherlands. 250 people on the system of flexible working hours. Hoechst, Holland, b.v. is a sales company for the products of its owner the Farbwerke Hoechst A.G. Hoechst



Holland Verkoop, employs 432 people.

5. Chemimpo b.v., Amsterdam, Netherlands. All its 26 people on the system of flexible working hours. Chemimpo is privately owned and is agent for a large number of chemical producers throughout the world.

6. Philips Duphar, Amsterdam, Netherlands, with 200 people on the system of flexible working hours. Philips Duphar is a subsidiary of Philips N.V. (headoffice Eindhoven, Holland) a leading electronics manufacturer in the world with more than 400,000 employees and sales of about 8.5 billion dollars. The subsidiary, Philips Duphar, employs about 2000 people and its market is in the chemical products.

7. I.C.I., Rotterdam, Netherlands, with 180 people on the system of staggered hours. I.C.I. is one of the world's leading manufacturers in chemical products. The 180 people in Rotterdam are employed in the head-office for sales for I.C.I. Holland.

8. The First National Bank of Boston, Boston, Massachusetts, U.S.A., with 1500 people on the system of flexible working hours.

9. John Hancock Insurance Company, Boston, Massachusetts, U.S.A., with 900 people on the system of staggered hours.

Table 1 will indicate the frequency, if any, of returned questionnaires for each participant.

Table 1Table Indicating the Number of Questionnaires Returned by the Participants

<u>Company</u>	<u>Questionnaire Type</u>	<u>No. of Questionnaires Returned</u>
1. Unilever	A	1
	B	22
2. Farbwerke Hoechst	A	0
	B	12
3. Messer Giesheim G.m.b.H.	A	1
	B	11
4. Röhm E.m.b.H.	A	1
	B	30
5. Hoechst Holland Verkoop	A	--
	B	--
6. Chemimpo B.V.	A	1
	B	10
7. Philips Duphar	A	--
	B	--
8. I.C.I.	A	--
	B	--
9. The First Nat. Bank of Boston	A	1
	B	2
10. John Hancock Insurance Co.	A	--
	B	--

Totals: 10 companies of which 6 returned questionnaires

5 questionnaires type A

87 questionnaires type B

Questionnaire type A was designed for the personnel manager or chief executive officer of the respective companies. Appendix A shows that the A questionnaire differs from the B questionnaire only because of the second page where four additional questions are asked to the personnel manager only.



II-2 Development of Questionnaires:

40.

The questionnaires were developed for two target groups: the personnel managers (Questionnaire A) and other people working for the company who were willing to participate in the research (Questionnaire B). The questionnaires were translated in three languages: Dutch, English and German (see Appendix A) in order to enable the participants to express themselves in their native language which allows for better precision in expressing oneself. It also excludes the possibility that those unfamiliar with the English language would be excluded from the survey.

Questions 1 through 4 on the "A" questionnaire are directed to the personnel managers in order to allow for background information and to be able to compare results from questions 5 through 11 with the information given in this first part, e.g.; is there any correlation between the way flexible time is used in the company (question 2) and the average respective scores on questions 5 through 8?

Questions 5 through 8 and 11 were developed in order to get the most objective reasons possible under the circumstances for the issues of respectively: job satisfaction, productivity, personal scheduling, job responsibilities and overall attitude since the participants are working with some form of flexible time. The central problem, of course, is the effort to quantify intangibles such as satisfaction, personal scheduling and job responsibilities. Furthermore, the quantification of the measurable entity "productivity" can very often not be executed on an objective basis, since the companies investigated didn't have adequate data available.

Questions 9 and 10 were designed as open ended for the purpose of non-directiveness. This was done because it is important to measure whether or not a particular advantage or disadvantage occurs with some degree of



41.

frequency under a given system. Could such a result be attributed to the system used or is it an expression resulting from other working conditions?



II-3 Procedure for Interviews:

The procedure for the interviews was fairly standard. In all cases an appointment was made with the personnel manager.

Generalities and particularities of the respective companies' systems were discussed and will be referred to in the discussion of the results (section IV). The questionnaires were left behind at the end of the discussion and were mailed back to a central collection point in Holland from where they were sent to the U.S.A. (Babson College).

The participating companies were visited in the following chronological order:

John Hancock Insurance Company
Visit: November 1, 1974
Interview: Miss B. Burgess, assistant to second vice president

The First National Bank of Boston
Visit: November 6, 1974
Interview: Mr. T.J. leGore, vice president personnel

Unilever Research
Visit: December 30, 1974
Interviews: Mr. H. J. deEijll Nachenius, vice president personnel and Mr. P.G.A. de Graaf, vice president personnel of the Research Laboratorium.

Farbwerke Hoechst A.G.
Visit: January 6, 1975
Interviews: Messrs P. Hoffie, Prohaska and Freier, respectively: vice president organization and planning, personnel manager for Messer Griesheim and vice president sales of Agriculture.

Rohm G.m.b.H.
Visit: January 6, 1975
Interview: Mr. Schirmer, vice president personnel

Hoechst Holland Verkoop b.v.
Visit: January 8, 1975
Interview; Mr. Lichthart vice president personnel

Chemimpo b.v.
Visit: January 8, 1975
Interview: Mr. L. Bake, managing director

Philips Duphar
Visit: January 9, 1975
Interview: Mr. Lindthorst, vice president personnel



I.C.I.

Visit: January 10, 1975

Interview: Mr. P. Sintemaartensdijk, vice president
personnel