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Building Trust in Higher Education: An Interview with Dr. Michele Williams

By Lydia Weiss



Dr. Michele Williams

You never know what moment or experience in your life might change your path forever. For Dr. Michele Williams, that moment came early in her career when she was an undergraduate student at Johns Hopkins University. During an internship, she was given the opportunity to observe medical decision-making teams, but instead of simply witnessing decision-making processes like she planned, she gained so much more. “Everybody wanted that patient to get better, yet their differences in beliefs about how that process should happen created a great deal of conflict and frustration,” she said. “There were nurses with knowledge of the patient’s day-to-day reactions to medication, doctors with codified knowledge, social workers, respiratory therapists, and so what I saw was the difference in status, in communication styles and in knowledge and I noticed how difficult it was to share knowledge across boundaries.” This was one of the experiences that led Williams to start asking questions about building trust across boundaries and piqued her curiosity about the emotions that either facilitate or inhibit a person’s ability to build trust.

Dr. Williams is currently an assistant professor in the Department of Management and Organizations at the Henry B. Tippie College of Business, University of Iowa. She started her educational journey in psychology, but discovered the field of organizational behavior during a project she was involved with at Boston University, which eventually led to her PhD in Business Administration from the University of Michigan. This path would guide Williams to become a leading expert on trust and building trusting relationships in the workplace. She has published [several articles](#) around the issues of trust, emotion management, leadership and the role that gender plays in all of these realms.

Although her interest in these topics stemmed from her observations and work within a medical setting, Williams explained that there is a great deal of similarity between medical settings and those found in higher education institutions. She said, “One of the things that is similar in medical hospitals and higher ed is quite rigid status differences between different groups and silos. And there are beliefs – positive and negative – across those silos that make it easier or harder to coordinate. There are also resource structures that are tied to those different silos and status differences.” These status disparities and resource structures can influence the ways that groups

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interact with one another.

Williams gave an example, “Hard sciences usually have more status than the social sciences, because they typically bring in more money and they operate labs. Part of what’s going on with those groups is that there are truly different beliefs in what makes an educated person. So if you take the English department and you take the chemistry department, they have different beliefs, and different epistemology. What is knowledge? How do you find knowledge? What is valuable? Therefore, when you are trying to decide things like what should be required courses for undergraduates, there are usually different opinions, but everybody wants that student to leave and get a good job and contribute to society.” When these different groups can recognize that the goal is, in fact, the same, they are more likely to be able to work collaboratively.

“All of my research has really been about how to reduce the threat of cooperation across these different groups and how to have dialogue to understand the set of assumptions you’re coming to the table with and how that’s impacting your ability to cooperate. I’ve always looked at the emotional piece of this and I think that’s what’s missing from a lot of the trust literature,” she said. One major factor of being able to cooperate is also to begin to understand what is valuable to the other person and “what rewards are in their context so that they can start to build trust” – which has been the major project of Williams’ research.

Strategies for Building Trust

Trust definitionally, is the willingness to rely on someone in a situation where you are vulnerable and so it’s, in a sense, the absence of fear. “The idea that I’m willing to rely on you even though I’m vulnerable, my expectation is that you will do something that’s beneficial and so trust creates that bridge between what I know I can see you do and what I can monitor and what I believe you will do when I can’t monitor you and you’re putting me at risk” said Williams.

According to Williams, the key to building trust in the workplace is perspective taking – the ability to see the



Dr. Michele Williams gives a presentation about building trust.

situation from someone else’s point of view and the necessity to understand other people’s context and their reward system. Williams gave the example of asking someone to do something, but it may make no sense within that person’s context. This could cause conflict; conflict which could be resolved by perspective taking.

Williams said, “One of the most helpful theories to higher ed and to hospitals is something called relational coordination by Jody Hoffer Gittel. A big premise of the theory is that these different people, not the individuals themselves, but the roles and departments, have to understand where interdependence lives – what do I need from you, what do you need from me? What is the reward structure that encompasses you? What makes it easier or harder for you to actually coordinate across your role with me? The more you can understand that, the more you can figure out creative solutions that allow both sides to benefit.” A critical component of this also includes people’s ability and freedom to speak up, and it is much more likely that people will be able to do so in an environment that encompass the three characteristics of a positive culture.

First, there is psychological safety. People can take risks, people are able to speak up, and there is enough information so people know what’s going on. The second quality is equality of speaking, turn taking. If people are not contributing, you cannot assume they agree or have nothing to add. Ideally, those individuals would be encouraged to add their opinions or ideas. Third is the presence of interpersonal sensitivity. People in a workplace are

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generally nice; they treat one another with respect and look out for each other. “When leaders are trying to build a culture that supports innovation, and where they are going to be able to coordinate with other groups – if those three things are present, they have a really good start,” said Williams. If these qualities are not nurtured in the work environment, there is a risk that people will be negative. However, Williams also cautions leaders that if the culture is not one that allows people to speak up, the leader may never really know when problems are occurring. People may simply go along with plans or projects because they do not feel empowered to voice their opinions and you may miss out on new and innovative ideas.

This positive work climate also includes the recognition that “work in the 21st century is emotional. It’s hugely based on customer service, and it’s based on sharing knowledge that has importance to people’s self-esteem,” Williams said. “Emotions are going to be there, so you can choose to ignore them or you can choose to be able to work with them.” Williams described research that she recently conducted about how managers deal with employees’ emotions. There are a few different ways that managers tend to manage emotions: 1) change the situation, for instance, if someone’s workload is too heavy, they change the amount of work; 2) change the way the employee understands the situation, for instance, if an employee does not receive a grant, then the manager helps them see the application for the grant as a positive part of the process and encourage them to try again; 3) no emotions allowed in the workplace. Williams explained that this third way of managing can have negative effects on the workplace. “You’re affecting your bottom line, you’re affecting the way that people will cooperate, will give back to your organization, so it’s no longer really just a choice. [If managers positively manage emotions] you’ll be more productive and more effective and innovative.” Leaders have to be willing to put in the relational work that it takes to create a trusted work environment.

Advice for Work-Life Leaders

Work-life leaders who negotiate, pay attention to gender and build trust are positioned to reap the benefits of a more collaborative culture. Williams

said, “My biggest advice would really be to think about what you’re doing as a negotiation, because that’s what you’re doing every day in all of these situations. You’re trying to negotiate a win-win outcome.” She recommends the use of negotiation planning with constituents and clients, for instance, helping them to consider their goals, their sources of power, and how they can gather information that would be helpful in crafting a mutually beneficial solution to the work-life issue.

Teaching constituents these skills, but also being firm in our own negotiation skills as work-life leaders can help our work. “Negotiation is coming up with the best option for everyone and being tough enough and standing firm enough that you don’t just compromise, but you work to find out what would really make this best for both sides. It’s not really being strategic, it’s being analytical. You need to analyze the situation to be able to come up with the best solutions and it can be a much more formal analytical process than you might think,” said Williams.

Williams also believes it is important not to ignore the “elephant in the room” when it comes to work-life issues and building trust. Williams said, “This is gendered work. It is worthwhile to think about how that’s playing into the decisions that are being made and the negotiations that you have to do. If we had objective ways to evaluate everyone who uses flex time, then this wouldn’t be cast as women who use this or who are more often allowed to use it – they are less penalized than men for taking advantage of some of these things.” This gendered aspect can cause barriers to trust and equity in the workplace.

Work-life leaders can play a key role in building trust in the workplace. Williams explained, “I think of trust as that basis for frequent communication, problem solving, levels of respect, and shared knowledge. The ability to trust allows you to do those things and then those things (in turn) build more trust. It’s really a reciprocal relationship and you can start in any place. You can start by sharing information and that builds trust.” A great deal of these principles are encompassed in the work of work-life leaders, so where will you start?

Update from the CUWFA Board

We are all well into the fall semester, beginning to plan menus for Thanksgiving (and the annual CUWFA Conference in May 2019!), and the holidays and winter break are coming quickly, at a faster pace each year it seems.

On October 22nd, the CUWFA Board had our quarterly meeting, but it was far from our typical model. Usually, we only meet in-person at the annual conference, so gathering in-person for our quarterly meeting



One of the facilities visited by the CUWFA Board members.

was a unique opportunity to have a significant number of us together in the room, hosted by MIT and joined by others on the phone. In conjunction with the board meeting, some of us had the opportunity to visit the Harvard and MIT childcare centers and discuss the childcare challenges being faced on our campuses. Ronnie Mae Weiss and Nancy Costikyan and their teams were gracious hosts – with every detail planned for a brief, but deep, dive into best practices and a great deal of sharing among peers in managing onsite childcare on college and university campuses. The board extends an enormous thank you to these tremendous work-life leaders and their teams.

This fall the CUWFA board and committees have been focused on the following:

- Reviewing current partnerships and looking into other outreach and connection opportunities.
- Planning the 2019 conference in Vancouver being held May 22-24 – an update on programming will be coming soon!
- Planning a CUWFA Conversation on the topic of financial wellness. Save the date and plan to attend on December 6, 2018 <https://cuwfa.memberclicks.net/cuwfa-conversations?servId=1664> (details coming soon!)
- Strategic planning is underway. Our committees reviewed the draft of objectives and provided feedback to the committee on our goals.
- An ad hoc committee met in October to review technology and evaluate ways to streamline information and provide the information members need through vehicles that work best for you.

Soon you'll be hearing from us regarding our annual election and the two positions that are opening on the board. The positions are director-at-large positions – we encourage you to consider this opportunity. 2019 will be a dynamic and exciting year as we will be implementing our strategic plan.

The full board meets four times per year with the first meeting at the annual conference in May and we'll provide more information on the board election soon.

We look forward to connecting with all of you through the listserv, during the CUWFA Conversation, or through one of our committees. It's not too late to join a committee; check out the [CUWFA website](#) to find a committee that fits your interests.

CUWFA Conversation Revisited – REVAMP: An Opportunity for Creativity and Inclusivity

By Elisa Salazar

Over the summer, Elisa Salazar, LMSW, Work Life Consultant at Grand Valley State University, hosted a CUWFA Conversation entitled “REVAMP: An Opportunity for Creativity and Inclusivity.” If you missed this program, or you attended and you’d like

“It is important to consult with many internal resources...Look for inspiration in various spaces.”

—Elisa Salazar

some reminders, here’s what Salazar would like you to know: I have worked at Grand Valley for a little over a year and I have been a CUWFA member for one year. My predecessor (Sue Sloop) was the inaugural Work Life Consultant at Grand Valley and she held this role for 12 years before retiring. My background is as a licensed therapist and I was completely new to the work-life field. I was grateful to have CUWFA available to me as I learned my role.

My predecessor did an amazing job developing a reputation and laying the foundational framework for the work of the Work Life Consultant role. Because of that I was able to think about this work creatively and with an eye on inclusivity as I considered how to make this role fit me. A few of the things I was able to do in the last year include:

- Creating a “[New Parent Bingo](#).” This resource is for single moms, dads, and adoptive parents. Prior to this, the list of resources was all about breastfeeding and the needs of mothers. We wanted to provide resources for all different kinds of new parents. We even intentionally called it “new parents” instead of “baby bingo.” We also intentionally used gender neutral colors on the bingo “card.” For this project, in an effort to be inclusive of various family types, we consulted with our LGBTQ resource center.
- Developing a Work Life brochure and revamping

the work-life webpage so faculty and staff could have a comprehensive space to find support and resources. I added comprehensive resources to all areas of life that connected to internal and external resources: see [Resources for Work and Life](#). I knew this was important because resources can be all over the place and hard to find. I wanted a one-stop shop for people to find what they need in one place. I also added a feature where people can book an appointment with me right there on the webpage.

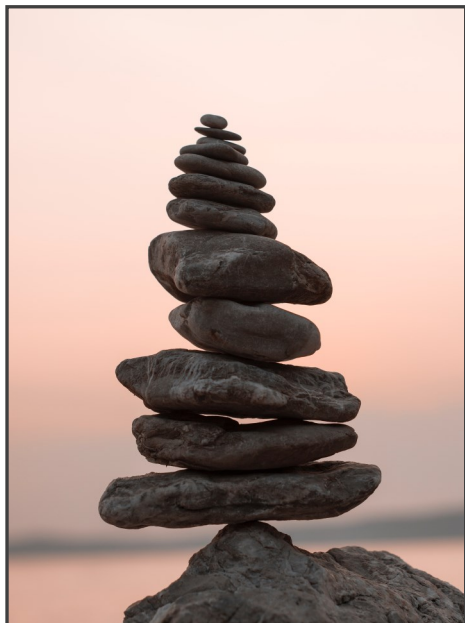
- Rebranding a Parenting Network support group and revamping our protocols for all communities of support whereby individuals are empowered to facilitate groups that are meaningful for them. This led to the creation of a new group for “Pet Parents.” Again, this was developed in an effort to be inclusive around all lifestyles and preferences. Facilitators of the support groups are voluntary and they self-govern in terms of topics,



dates of meetings, times, speakers, etc. The goal is for the community to develop communities of support that people need. We also do a “facilitators appreciation” annually for all the groups so they can be recognized for supporting their community.

Overall, when trying to develop more inclusive practices in work-life, it is important to consult with

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many internal resources. For instance, the Inclusion and Equity Office, parenting groups, Center for Women and Gender Equity, LGBTQ consultants, etc. – these are the groups I consulted with to make sure I was being as inclusive as possible. Ask yourself, “Would all different sorts of families and lifestyles feel like they could access or utilize this service/resource/message?” I learned to pay attention even to the “little things” like the colors you use, symbols and even pictures.

Look for inspiration in various spaces. The bingo game was inspired by something my child brought home. Be open to new ideas and listen to your community. The person who brought up the idea of a Pet Parent Network was embarrassed and I had to really encourage them. Now, it is one of our most popular groups. If you have been doing this work a while, it is really important to make sure you open your eyes to other areas and open yourself up to inspiration from all sorts of places. Never forget that there are so many different lifestyles and we need to hold space and respect for all of them, that is generative.

My goal this year was to create space for people to connect around issues and interests. It has been a busy year and I did not do it alone. Thank you for the support and encouragement CUWFA has given me as I learned this new role!



What Work-Life Leaders Need to Know about Disability in the Workplace

By Paul Artale

As an eternal optimist, I believe that the vast majority of employers a) want to be ability friendly and b) believe they are accommodating employees with disabilities. Although employer intentions may be noble, creating an ability friendly and inclusive environment is complex and requires a healthy mixture of intentionality and flexibility. Addressing this issue is important to the success of an organization given that approximately 25% of the United States population has a disability and employees come into disability as they age. In fact, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 48% of the workforce has a form of disability prior to reaching retirement. It is no surprise then that disability related concerns rank third in complaints to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

In this article I want to share some essential information regarding the national employment landscape for persons with disabilities, ability and personal identity, and how work-life offices can be the catalyst for positive change at colleges and universities. As definitions of disability continue to evolve and as education and advocacy continue to give people the courage to disclose their situation, it is important to have a deep understanding of how we can serve this population at our institutions.

Disability Employment – A Brief Statistical Overview

In order to understand how to help employees with disabilities it is important to first understand what the landscape is on a national level. Understanding these figures and statistics provides a glimpse into the challenges many face and indicates the struggle that simply gaining employment can bring. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the unemployment rate for persons with a disability is 9.2% (as compared to the national average of 4.2%) and 14% of this population obtain a four-year degree. In terms of pay, an employee

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with a disability earns 33% less than their counterparts.

Interestingly, almost half of all persons with disabilities choose to be self-employed. This occurs in part because being one's own boss ensures the flexibility to tend to personal needs as well as avoids some forms of stigma and stereotypes in the workplace. Collectively, these facts are telling us two important truths. First, disability in the workplace is a reality that all organizations must manage well in order to prevent turnover, decrease legal action, and most importantly create an environment that attracts and retains the best talent. Second, there are still great disparities between employees with disabilities and those without and employers should take steps to bridge this gap. This is particularly true in higher education as we are incorporating diversity, equity, and inclusion into both our daily practices and strategic plans.

Understanding Disability as an Identity

From an identity standpoint, disability is unique in that it is not a primary identity for most people. For



example, as someone who is perceived to have a physical disability, I would list my disability on my identity chart as sixth. My identity as a male, my ethnicity, my experience as a college athlete, and my experience as a parent are far more dominant than my "disability." In order to better understand how ability impacts an individual's development, Jennifer Gibson offers a simple framework. In Gibson's model there are three phases to disability identity development:

1. *Passive Awareness.* During this phase, a person is not aware of their disability or is taught to deny it. In some cases, medical needs are not met or even completely known.

2. *Realization.* During this phase, disability is realized and feelings of anger, frustration, and "why me?" may surface.

The Superhero Complex can often emerge during this stage

where the person feels they have to do more or prove others wrong in an attempt to compensate against social stigma.

3. *Acceptance.* At this juncture, the individual has confidence and has accepted their disability, has integrated into society and has a strong acceptance of self.

Identity development in general is linear, with passive awareness beginning in early childhood and acceptance occurring into adulthood. Identity development is important because one can be in the acceptance stage in their personal/social life but may regress into forms of passive awareness or realization stages in the workplace. I can personally attest to this; I was that person. It took years for me to want to be included on diversity committees, be associated with ability initiatives on campus, and generally even recognize my unique look whenever I stepped onto campus. Outside of campus was the complete opposite as I was involved in several disability related charities and openly discussed the issue in my work as a motivational speaker and author. It took the right workplace with the right types of supervision and climate to allow me to feel comfortable and embrace my complete identity at work.

What Work-Life Offices Can Do

Work-life offices can play a pivotal role in creating a disability friendly work-environment in three ways:

1. *By its very nature, flexible work-environments promote and accept difference.* Different ways of doing work and accommodating work lend themselves to employees feeling like they can request accommodations or alternative ways of working. Work-life offices that can effectively educate and

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empower employees to create a job structure that fits their needs while still meeting demands is the best way to create an ability friendly work culture. When alternatives and flexibility are made mainstream, employees are more likely to disclose their needs. Conversely, sometimes employees do not want to disclose their conditions and a flexible work environment may allow them to complete their work and maintain the privacy they desire.

2. *Work-life offices can act as a conduit between employee need, human resources and management.* I understand that the function of work-life offices can vary from institution to institution but often the work-life office is the first stop for someone who is seeking some form of alternative arrangement or accommodation. In some cases, the work-life office is the intermediary between different players in a dispute. A diagnosed disability is not always enough in trying to create an ideal work situation and supervisors that are more restrictive may need the work-life office's recommendations and insights to shift their paradigms.

3. *Keep ergonomics, large restrooms, promoting different assistance programs and software, alternative work arrangements and results-oriented mindsets at the forefront of your initiatives.* Even something as simple as having multiple types of office equipment for employees to choose from can go a long way in



making employees feel welcome, rather than singled out. There is a difference between a culture that says “Do you need a special stapler?” and “We offer several types of staplers here.” Likewise, having dimmer switches or lamps with different light settings available for all will ease concerns of employees who may have autism, epilepsy or general light sensitivity. In short, having options that allow employees the ability to meet their needs without having to disclose is always the better way to go.

Work-life offices are positioned to be the difference makers on our journey towards creating ability friendly work environments. Work-life leaders can take the pulse of the work environment, fight for employee's needs, and ensure that being acclimated to the work environment goes beyond the first 90 days on the job. People's needs and medical conditions change as they age and as their jobs evolve. A positive and flexible work-life culture is the best way to make employees with disabilities feel welcome and puts them in the best position to be successful.

Paul Artale is a motivational speaker, author, and PhD Candidate who studies the benefits that workplace flexibility has on staff retention and performance. He is also the author of “The 2-Year-Old’s Guide to Work-Life Balance.” For more information visit www.paulartale.com or email paul@unleashyourmessage.net.

Sources: Gibson, J. (2006). Disability and clinical competency: An introduction. *The California Psychologist*.39. 6-10.; Artale, P. (2017). Do I want to be recognized? Reflections on my experience with (Dis)Ability working in higher education. Retrieved from: <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/disabl.nr0.htm>; Bureau of Labor Statistics, (2018) <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/disabl.nr0.htm>

A Proposal to Pilot Key Question Protocol for Decision-Making on Employee Requests for Flexibility or Similar Requests

By Barbara Roberts

During the founding of the Michigan State University WorkLife Office, I met with various campus leaders and a common thread during these conversations emerged about the challenges in making fair decisions about different employees' individual work-life circumstances. Leaders reported feeling uncomfortable making different decisions for different people, based on the individual's unique situation. Sometimes the uncertainty about how to handle this results in simply denying requests (flex time or leave), or having universal but ill-fitting practices that are not satisfactory to anyone involved. A protocol that is responsive to individual circumstances, accountable and transparent through consistency, while protecting individual privacy seems to be needed. Such processes build trust and foster teamwork among department members and with leadership. My background in equitable decision-making through consistency of analysis led me to develop a protocol for such administrative decisions.

Background

In my doctoral work, I developed a decision-making protocol to guide decisions about accommodation of students with disabilities in fields like rehabilitation, medicine, nursing, teaching and veterinary medicine. The guiding principle is based on the notion of equity – that treating different people/situations differently is fairer than treating different people/situations exactly the same, and that if different situations are addressed with a *consistent approach*, more unique yet equitable and accountable outcomes can be achieved.



The protocol model provides a consistent analysis of the task/work requirement that yields an accountable and transparent decision, regardless of the individual situation, but nonetheless responsive to it. The questions, referred to in Canadian law as the “three-step test”, are 1) Is the requirement established in good faith? 2) Is the requirement rationally connected to the purpose of the job/task? 3) What is the evidence of the need for the requirement? ([Meiorin, 1999](#))

Support for this idea to be applied in the field of work-life came from three sources. Executive Director of the Boston College Center for Work and Family, Brad Harrington, was the keynote speaker at our launch conference for the MSU WorkLife Office. His Executive Briefing “Creating a Culture of Flexibility” recommends that employers, “Develop a decision-making process for requesting, approving and monitoring flexible work options with a focus on meeting business objectives.” Similarly, Nancy Costikyan, Director of WorkLife at Harvard wrote in the [CUWFA Quarterly Review](#), Winter 2018, “...the [personal] reason behind a flex arrangement proposal shouldn’t drive a manager’s decision. Instead, managers are urged to determine if the proposed arrangement will have a net-neutral or net-positive effect on the business.” And Michigan State University’s College of Education doctoral candidate Paul Artale proposed the following considerations in making decisions about flexible work strategies: “1) What are the key results you need from this job/position? 2) Is there only one way these tasks can be accomplished? 3) What is your concern regarding this proposed arrangement? 4) Would you be willing to try this alternative arrangement for a 30-day period to gauge how well this proposed strategy will work?” ([CUWFA Quarterly Review](#), Winter 2018)

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Themes and Application

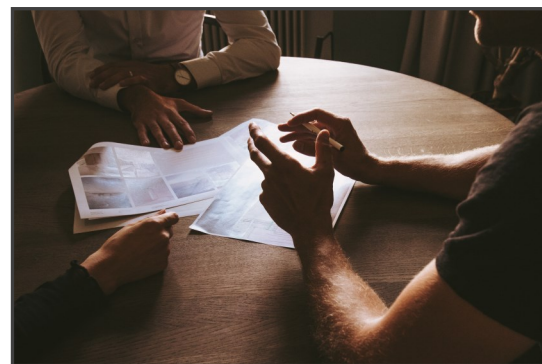
There are three common themes in these approaches: 1) having a credible, consistent approach for decisions based on the consequence to the work/unit; 2) focus on the job/task, not the individual person or reason for the request; and 3) consideration of multiple means to the same end, not a change in the end goal of the work. We can further develop these themes into a usable rubric by asking what principles or questions can be used to make equitable decisions on requests. The rationale for the decision is based on the *consequence to the work/unit*, not on treating individuals identically in an attempt to be “fair”, when individuals are not identical (or worse, treating people differently with no clear rationale, which breeds resentment and mistrust).

Elements of the process include:

- a. Identify the impact and consider various means to the end, explore strategies, and then the decision is made to pilot and problem-solve, or not.
- b. Ensure the process is *consistent* in the considerations applied, responsive to different situations, equitable in outcomes, transparent and accountable while protecting the privacy of individuals’ situations.

The specific questions being proposed for implementation in the work-life arena:

1. Focus on the job/task, not the individual person or reason for the request
 - a. What is the nature of the task/job? Key responsibilities?
 - i. What outputs or indicators of success must be evident?
 - ii. What shows accountability on those indicators? (How do you know the job is done successfully, or well enough?)
 - b. What is the impact [of flexibility] on the work/unit, if any?
 - i. Nature of the impact? Positive? Neutral?
 - ii. Probability of impact?
 - iii. Severity of impact?
 - iv. Scope of impact?
 - c. If impact of being flexible is neutral or positive, why *not be flexible*?
2. Consideration of multiple means to the same end (not a change in the end goal)
 - a. Is there only one way to do this job?
 - b. What is the evidence/reason for the need to do this job in a particular way/time frame/schedule/location?



Thanks to a recent inquiry from a support staff member at Michigan State, we have an employee who is interested in helping to pilot this process, in the context of her request for a flexible work schedule. Her supervisor is interested, and it was discussed among faculty members and myself that we might pilot this process with that unit, and one or two others, along with two or three academic departments, to see how effectively the question set helps make accountable, transparent, and individualized decisions at the unit level. This year, the college involved will lead the way in piloting a more equitable, transparent and trustworthy process for decision-making on employee requests. We’ll keep you posted on how it turns out and what we learn along the way!

Barbara Roberts, M.Sc. OT, PhD, is Executive Director of the WorkLife Office and Senior Advisor to the Provost at MSU, where she also holds an adjunct faculty appointment in the College of Education.

Back to the Future—In the Future

By Ian Reynolds & Meg Stoltzfus

We hope that the future has been everything you envisioned. If you attended the “Back to the Future” closing session from the 2018 CUWFA conference, you hopefully have the pictures you chose on your desk or tacked to a bulletin board in your line of sight. Did you choose a tornado? A winding road? A peaceful nature scene? During the visioning exercise, we asked you to choose a picture representing your current situation and a second photo representing where you hoped you would be by the 2019 CUWFA conference.



It is hard to believe that over half a year has gone by, and we hope that you are using your photo to guide you through the year. If you haven't, it's not too late to get to work on your action plan. Refer back to the post-conference [Quarterly Review](#) to find pictures of everyone in their table groups displaying the photos they chose.

As a reminder of the exercise, the instructions are provided below. For those of you who want to recreate this exercise with a group, we used [Unsplash](#) for the robust selection of photos for the activity.

1. Take a few minutes to write down what you would like to see change/stop/happen. Be as specific as you can. For example, imagine, “When I come to CUWFA next year, _____ is going to be different.”
2. Choose a photo that represents where you are now.

3. Jot down some words that describe your current situation.
4. Share with your tablemates why you chose this picture.
5. Next, choose a picture that visually represents the future when you have achieved this goal.
6. Talk to your tablemates and share the goal and why you chose the picture.
7. Now, how will you get there? Take time to think and write about this action plan.
 - a. Who at CUWFA will hold you accountable?
 - b. How can CUWFA help?
 - c. What research do you need?
 - d. What antagonists do you need to co-opt?
 - e. Can you use a broker to get to a decision-maker?
 - f. What is your sphere of influence?
8. Share your action plan with your tablemates and help one another to flesh them out further.
9. Ask for a few participants to report out to the large group.

This activity can serve as a powerful visual reminder of the goals that we set for ourselves and our vision for the future. We hope these photos can serve as guideposts along your journey and that you continue to work towards the future you envisioned.



Ian Reynolds presenting “Back to the Future” activity at the 2018 CUWFA Conference.

2019 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA

MAY 22-24

Building the Future of Work-Life:
Catalyzing Inclusion

Building the Future of Work-Life: Catalyzing Inclusion

Our workplaces are changing. Demographic shifts mean that there are **multiple generations** in the workplace. Legal and legislative change means that our understanding and **conception of family** is broadening. **Dual career** challenges have moved from a “two-body” problem to a “whole family” opportunity.

As researchers and practitioners in the field of work, life and family, our future lies in responding to and anticipating these changes. The 2019 CUWFA Conference provides an opportunity to dig into the future of work-life, to connect with colleagues and experts, and to frame and re-frame our work as a means to catalyze inclusion in our workplaces.

Join us at the [University of British Columbia](http://www.ubc.ca) in beautiful Vancouver, Canada, May 22-24 for the 2019 CUWFA Conference - *Building the Future of Work/Life: Catalyzing Inclusion*. More information about the conference, travel and accommodations can be found at: <https://www.cuwfa.org/2019-annual-conference>.

Call for Proposals for CUWFA on the Cutting Edge: An Innovations Showcase

CUWFA invites work-life practitioners and researchers to showcase a current initiative, program, or research project on issues related to CUWFA’s mission and goals at the 2019 CUWFA Conference in Vancouver, British Columbia. This showcase, scheduled for Wednesday, May 22, is designed to promote awareness about new research, best practices and innovation in the field of work-life on the college and university campus and to encourage dialogue, connections and engagement amongst peers with likeminded interests and goals.

Presenters should be prepared to provide short summaries of their signature work within a timed “speed networking” format. They must be able to present and engage in Q & A as conference attendees move about the room. Groups will spend no more than 10 minutes at a time with each presenter.

All presenters should include a visual demonstration of the project, research or initiative that is being shared and may utilize a variety of visual examples. These examples may include table top posters, brochures, a website, guides, video or podcast clips, or other creative media, to encourage dialogue during the Q & A periods.

Visit the [2019 CUWFA Conference](http://www.cuwfa.org/2019-annual-conference) webpage for additional details, including criteria for review and submission. Please submit an abstract of no more than 250 words on your topic by January 7, 2019 to lesley.lundeen@northwestern.edu. Questions? Please email lesley.lundeen@northwestern.edu.

CUWFA Member Spotlight: Zenab Pathan



Zenab Pathan

Zenab Pathan is a new member to CUWFA. She said she is excited about the sharing of knowledge and collaboration that happens within the association, and she is already serving on the CUWFA Board! Pathan’s professional role as the Strategic Lead on Immigration and Relocation at Ryerson University is also fairly new. Of this new role and people’s generosity in helping her settle in, she said, “In the course of collaborating with counterparts at other institutions and with various service providers in public and private sectors, I have found such wonderful people and inspiring stories that have contributed immensely to my growth and job satisfaction.”

Pathan said that Ryerson University is “on the path of growth” and it is no doubt that her role in serving the needs of employees, particularly as they relate to relocation, spousal employment, housing, school and childcare options, eldercare and other aspects of living and working in Toronto, Canada will be incredibly important to this state of growth. To read the full Member Spotlight, visit the [CUWFA website](#).



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Editor, Quarterly Review of Work-Life Policy and Practice:
 Lydia Weiss weisslyd@msu.edu

What We're Reading

What We're Reading is a new feature of the CUWFA *Quarterly Review* which will include articles and books that are recommended by fellow CUWFA members.

- ***Dying for a Paycheck*** by Jeffrey Pfeffer – this book offers a unique perspective on stress in the workplace. The book addresses the ways in which work-life conflicts and how organizations respond to those conflicts are an important aspect of the work stress equation.
- ***Under-Vacationed America: An Analysis of the States and Cities that Need to Take a Day*** – Work-life leaders know time away is healthy; check out how your state measures up!