

Toward an Integrated Approach to Workforce Management: Results of Work-Life Evolution Study

Prof. Brad Harrington
Boston College Center for Work & Family
4th Forum in Family-Responsible Companies
IESE Barcelona

Boston College & The Center

- Founded by Jesuits in 1863, currently enrolls 14,500 students
 - University ranked nationally in top 35
 - One of the “New Ivies”
 - Committed to research and social action
- Center founded in 1990
- Part of School of Management
- Focus on corporate partnerships



CWF Mission

The Center for Work & Family is committed to enhancing the success of organizations and the quality of life of today's workforce by providing leadership for the integration of work and life, an essential for individual, organizational and community success.

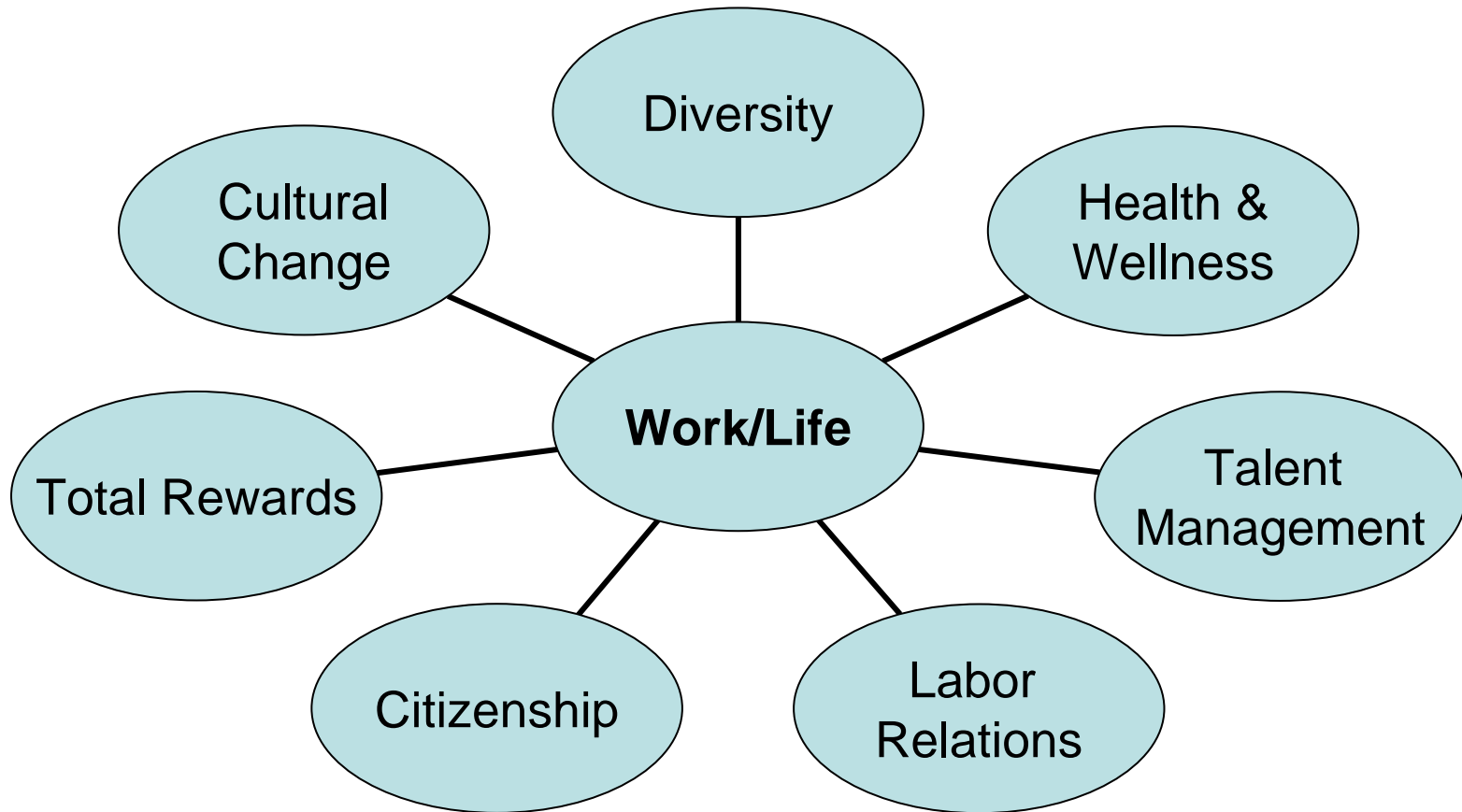
Key differentiator:
**Bridging the worlds of
research and practice.**



A Sample of CWF Members include ...

- IBM
- Merck
- Intel
- Royal Dutch Shell
- Price Waterhouse
- KPMG
- Eli Lilly
- Kraft
- Booz-Allen Hamilton
- Dow
- Marriott
- BP
- Goldman-Sachs
- Prudential Securities
- Hewlett-Packard
- Abbott Laboratories
- American Airlines
- Bristol-Myers Squibb

Work/Life Perspectives



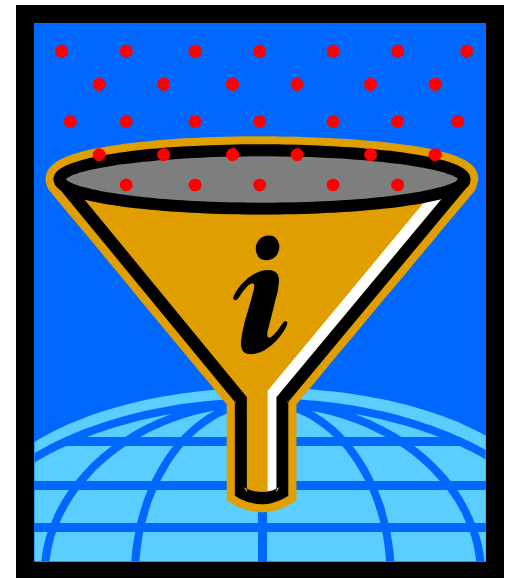
Objectives of the Evolution Study

- Understand how workforce strategies evolved in large companies in response to need for work and family integration over the past 15 years
- Examine the current trends that will impact work-life practices
- Identify the key focus areas / skills needed by work-life practitioners in the future



Methodology and Sources

- *Review of literature on field and its history*
- *Discussions with thought leaders:*
 - *Practitioners*
 - *Researchers*
 - *Founders of the field*
- *Interviews from other studies*
- *Future Search Conference*
- *Survey practitioners and experts on key themes*



Future Search Conference

- Held July 18-19, 2006 at Boston College
- Brought together
 - Practitioners
 - Academics
 - Not-for-profit leaders
- 2 days in conversation, exploration, no presentations
- **Goal: Discuss key trends and begin developing a vision for future of workforce management**



Weighting Priorities: The \$100 Test

- You have \$100 dollars to invest in the issues
- Quick way to pinpoint areas of focus
- Can accomplish three things
 - Identifies priorities
 - Rank orders
 - Relative weightings
- Completed by BC Roundtable members, Future Search participants, leading academics



Trends that will Impact Work-Life

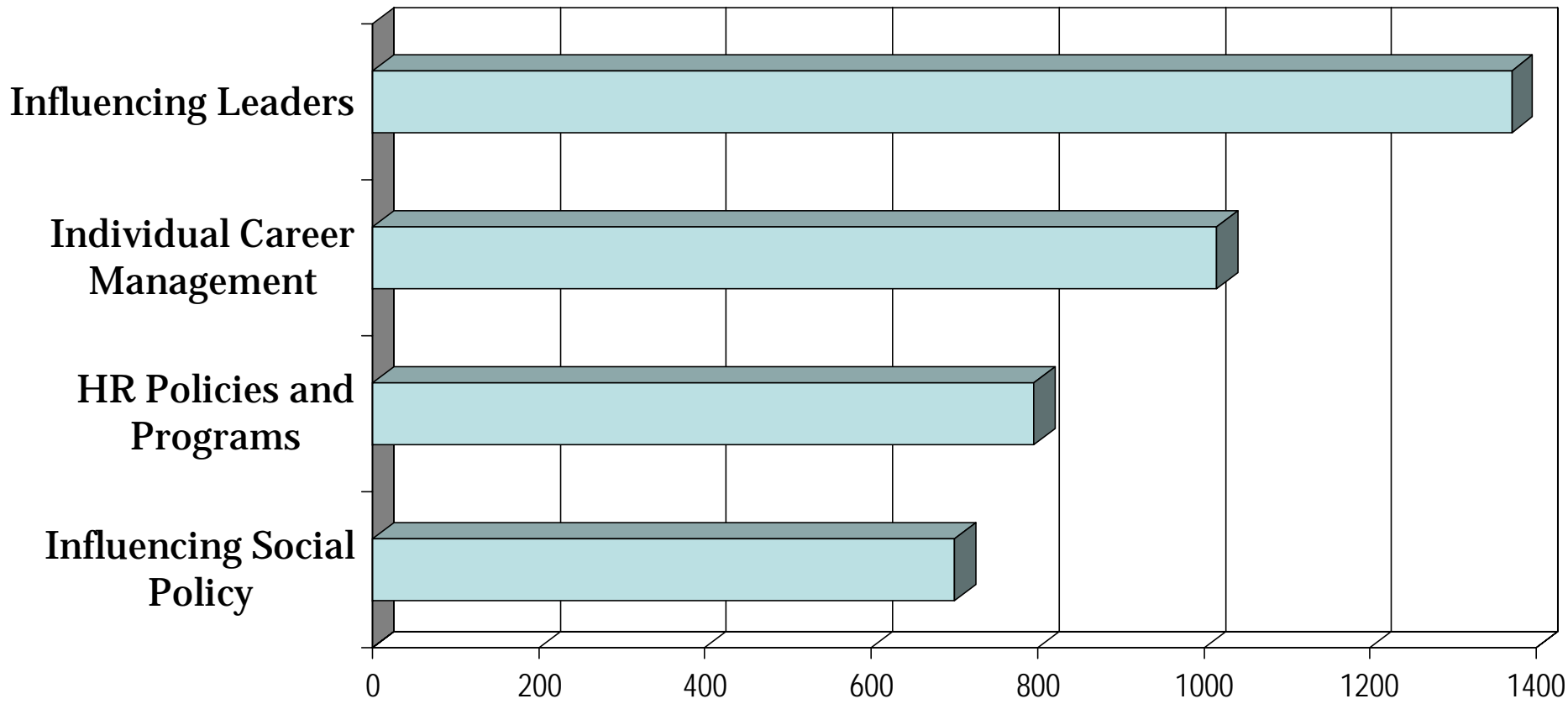
- Aging workforce and generational diversity
- Challenges of working in a more diverse workplace (e.g. gender, race, ethnicity, country of origin, religion)
- Increased stress & overwork
- Globalization, working across cultures, 24x7 workplace
- Pervasive use of technology – can't escape it



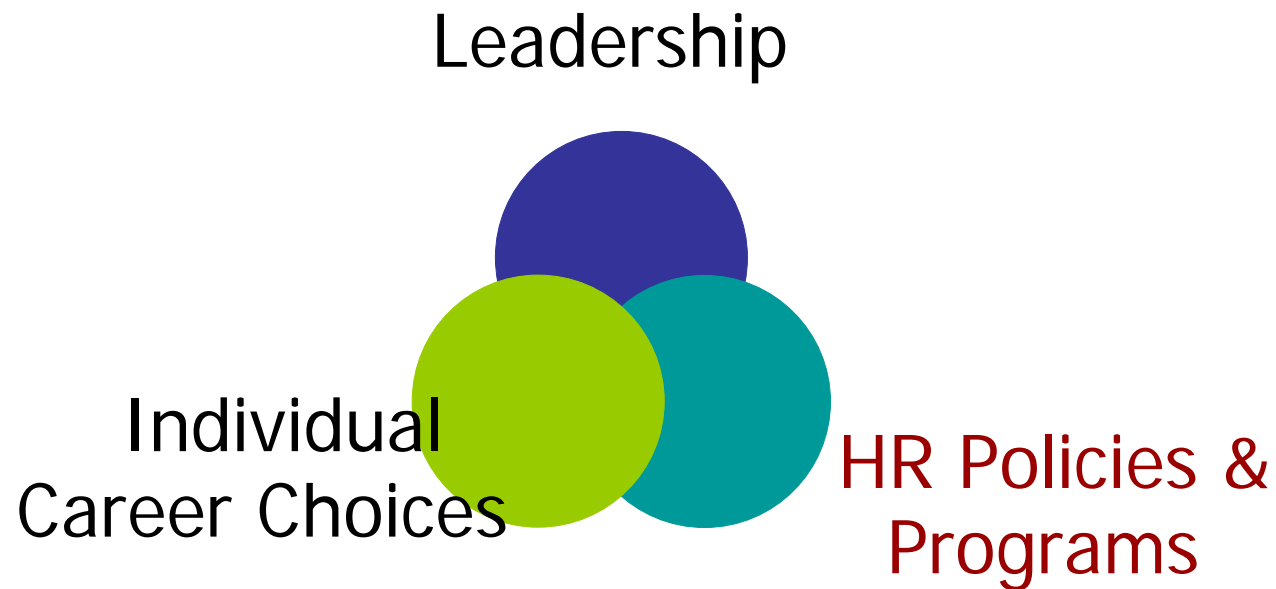
Focus for Work-Life Practitioners

- **HR Policies and Programs:** Develop effective policies & programs that address the broad range of work-life issues
- **Influence Organizational Leaders:** Work in a consultative manner with leaders at all levels to ensure that effective work-life management practices are incorporated into the organization's values, culture, and management behaviors.
- **Help Individuals Make & Negotiate Career Choices:** Provide individual employees with training, consulting, & support to make good choices and pro-actively manage their career and work-life options
- **Influence Social Policy:** Work externally to ensure employees' needs supported through effective social policy

Critical Focus Areas



Changing corporate culture



HR Policies

- Help ensure consistency of implementation
- Help institutionalize the desired change
- Help ensure equity across levels
- Provide guidance for managers and employees
- Necessary but not sufficient
- Help people at the more vulnerable end of the scale

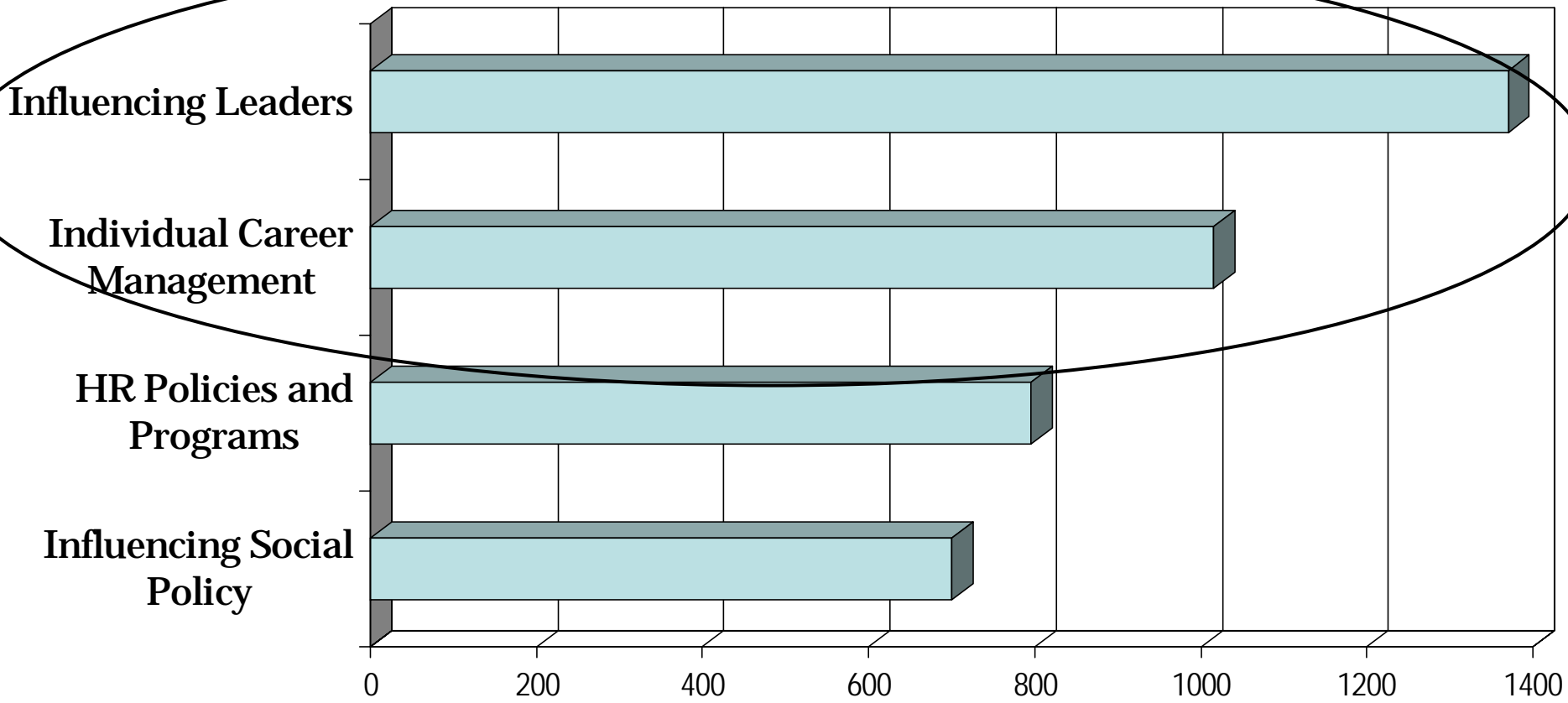


Cultural Change

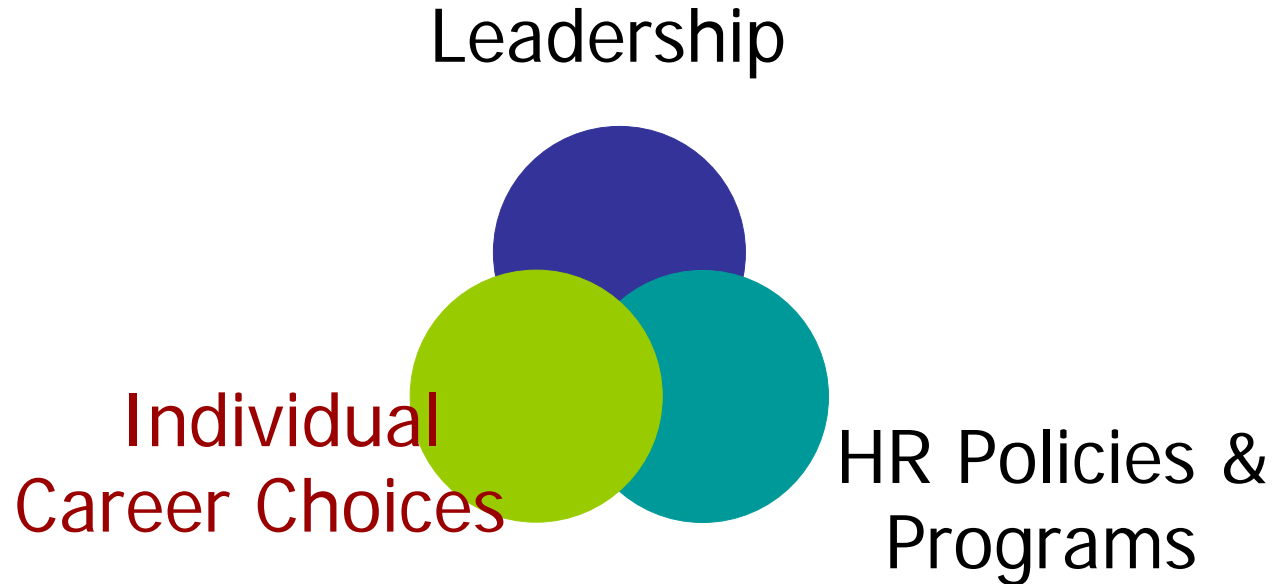
I learned how difficult it is to get organizations to change the way they work, even when they say they want to, and how much people are dependent on policies without understanding that the policies, while necessary (it's the same with legislation), they're totally insufficient because it's their implementation that makes the difference.

Rhona Rapoport

Critical Focus Areas



Changing corporate culture



Work-Life and the individual

The real owners ...

“Most bosses are willing to accommodate work-life challenges if you have earned it with performance. The key word is: if. Even the most accommodating bosses believe that work-life balance is your problem to solve.”

Jack Welch, Former CEO
General Electric

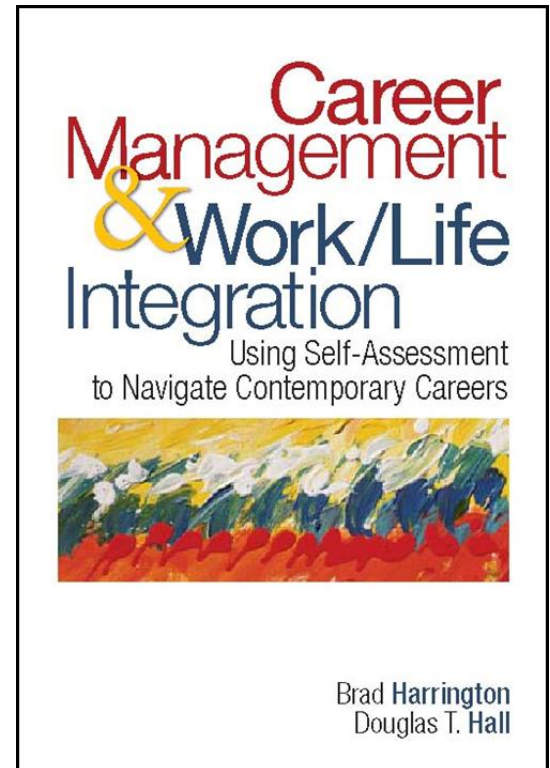
Help Individuals with Career Choices

- Provide individuals with support (coaching, R&R, EAP) through difficult career challenges
- Coach & encourage individuals to work with their managers to create optimal job structure and career path
- Communicate a wide array of success models
- Ensure individuals well versed in available Flexible Work Arrangements
- Train individuals in career management



Career Management Course

- Offered to 2nd Year MBA Students
- Protean Career Concepts
- Career best managed, success best assessed by individual
- Sees career in work / life context
- Focus on critical competencies:
 - **Identity**: clear self concept & self-awareness
 - **Adaptability**: ability to adapt to changing professional and personal circumstances



Identity: Who am I, what am I good at?

- Autobiography (experience)
- Identities Exercise (sub-identities)
- Strong Interest Inventory (interests)
- Career Values Card Sort (values)
- Lifestyle Representation (lifestyle)
- Interview with Others (skills)
- 10 Years Out (personal vision)
- **Life Themes (Summarize key “truths”)**

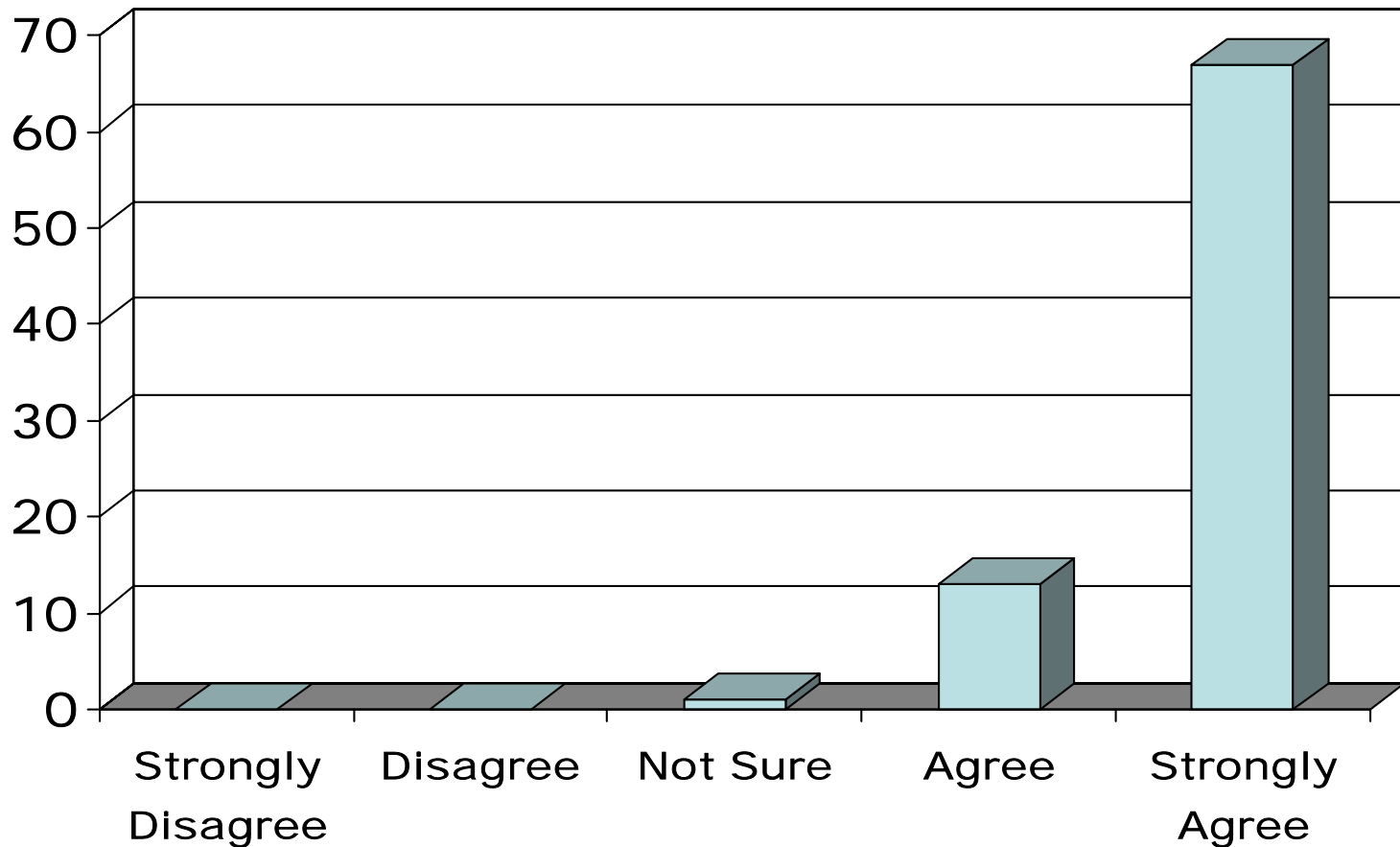


Adaptability: How do I manage my career / life over time?

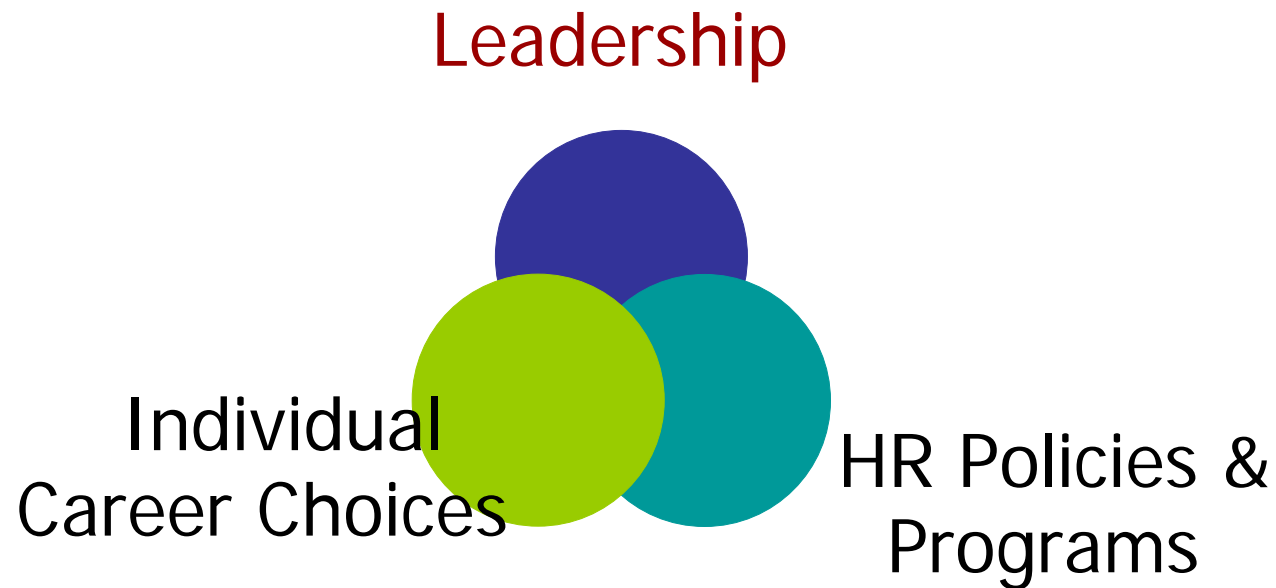
- Finding & pursuing the right opportunities
- Making good career decisions
- Advancement vs. Alternative Career Paths
- Couples & Family Issues
- Flexible Work Arrangements
- Careers over the lifespan
- **Developing a career plan**



Helped my personal development

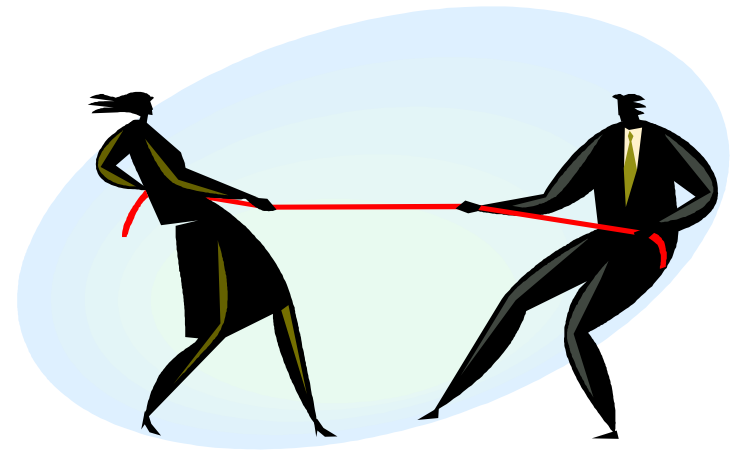


Changing corporate culture



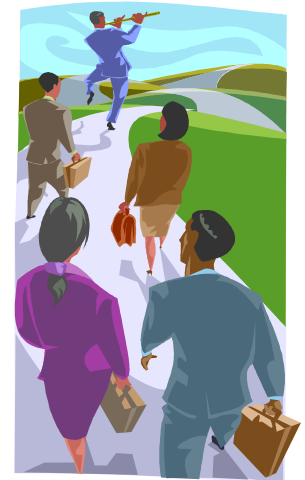
Why is Work-Life a struggle for leaders?

- Lacks “face validity”
- “Manage performance! Don’t take on personal problems”
- An employee-centric perk
- Two rules of change
 - Need top management commitment (maybe)
 - Top management needs to “walk the talk” (no)
- A huge issue personally, small organizationally
- Organizational ambivalence persists



Influencing Leaders

- Make business case for work-life clear (through data, research, & anecdotal evidence)
- Train managers how to use flexible management approaches with their work-groups
- Use surveys, focus groups to demonstrate importance of work-life in retaining talent
- Train all managers in career-life planning (themselves & subordinates)
- Support pioneer leaders and enlist them in making the case for work-life



Critical Skills for the Field

- Understanding how work/life perspective can be incorporated into broad range of workforce management practices
- Ability to demonstrate how innovative workforce practices lead to positive organizational outcomes
- Consulting with & educating managers on importance of and how to use flexible approaches
- Change management expertise
- Ensuring employees have the skills to make appropriate career choices



Summary

- Work-life movement is here to stay
- Issues taking center stage: aging, diversity, overwork, globalization, technology
- Practitioner role moving from implementing policies & programs to cultural change:
 - Influencing leaders
 - Helping employees craft career-life strategies
- Need to improve as change agents and HR integrators

