

INSIDE THESE PAGES . . .

Retention is high on executives' list of concerns (pg.2); perceptions and alignment are key to engagement (pg.3); two new studies find success for part-time arrangements (pg.4); Schneider National is a trucking company that cares (pg.5); MetLife has suggestions for alleviating call center pain (pg.5); long commutes mean less satisfied workers (pg.6); the corporate culture may be either male or female, and there's a difference (pg.7); and Weyco starts a national dialogue by promising to get rid of all smokers, even if they only smoke at home (pg.8).

WORK & FAMILY NEWSBRIEF SALUTES...

Arrow Electronics

This company has discovered the payoff for offering and encouraging sabbaticals; the only rule is that the ten weeks away from your desk must be fun, relaxing and unrelated to work. More than 3,500 staffers have taken them since 1994 and the company says it's delighted – everyone benefits. Employees come back refreshed, happier and more productive, those who take over for them learn new skills, and Arrow has learned how to create a talent pool that's well coordinated and flexible. Says one satisfied employee, this employer agrees that there's more to life than work, and "that really makes a difference." (See page 8).

CHILDCARE . . .

Study finds both profit and payoff in onsite childcare

Researchers have studied three companies, two with centers and one without, and debunked two myths; first, that onsite childcare is too costly, and second, that it will cause backlash.

Economist Rachel Connelly from Bowdoin College has been analyzing the economics of childcare since 1988. Her latest study, published in "Kids at Work: The Value of Employer-Sponsored On-Site Child Care Centers," has found that not only is it affordable, it can be profitable. Connelly and professors Deborah DeGraff and Rachel Willis interviewed nearly 1,000 manufacturing workers, mostly female, with no college education, earning \$10 to \$15 per hour. Using a process called contingent valuation, they translated the dollar value employees placed on the centers into wages and found that the centers made a sizeable difference. Employees – even most of those with no children – were willing to take up to \$225 a year out of their paychecks to help their employer provide it. The bottom line: the two companies with centers were saving \$150,000 and \$250,000 respectively, between one-half and twice the cost of the centers. The savings didn't include reduced turnover, higher productivity, goodwill, lower absenteeism or improved company image. Said Connelly, the support for onsite care was universal and strong in all three companies, with many viewing the provision of childcare as helping the company survive and remain profitable. To buy a copy of Connelly's book, go to www.workfamily.com and click on Work-Life Bookstore.

19801 BOWDOIN ACADEMIC SPOTLIGHT, 2-07-05



CHILDCARE . . .

Florida's governor signs universal Pre-K into law

After nearly a year of fighting, debating and even a veto, Gov. Jeb Bush has signed a law creating a free pre-kindergarten program designed to prepare Florida's 4-year-olds for school.

The new bill offers parents a choice among different options including a 540-hour school year and a 300-hour summer program, both delivered by either a public school or private provider. The Department of Education will set standards (schools will devise their own curricula) and local

early learning coalitions will administer the programs. Classes will be limited to 18 students and have teacher-student ratio of 1:10. Pre-K instructors must have at least a child development associate credential. Democrats had fought for smaller class sizes (18 is the maximum but Republicans say the average across the state may be lower) and more instruction hours per day. Florida now joins Georgia and Oklahoma, both of which provide pre-kindergarten services to more than half of their four-year-olds, and New York and New Jersey, which have more geographically targeted programs. New York passed legislation in 1997 with the goal of achieving universality by 2002, but lack of funds has limited the program to less than half of the eligible children. Both Georgia and New York gave precedence to at-risk children in the roll-out of their pre-kindergarten programs, and in Georgia, about 60% of eligible four-year-olds attend.

19802 MYFLORIDA.COM, 2-14-05
GAO HIGHLIGHTS, Undated



RETENTION...

Leaders find ways to retain staff

With retention of top employees climbing the list of corporate concerns, BusinessWeek Online took a closer look at some strategies.

Texas Instruments trains its managers in engaging employees and teaches them how to keep “re-recruiting” them all the time, making sure they’re being challenged, exposed to other opportunities that will maximize their skills and helped to develop in their jobs. **Y**ahoo wants to make sure its workers feel they’re doing something they’re interested in, but also something that makes a difference. That company has moved to performance-based compensation. **G**oldman Sachs has made it easier for employees to explore new opportunities in the company without revealing it to their managers. They’ve also beefed up training, and more than 80% of the courses are taught by the company’s own senior executives. And to make sure its new employees are a good fit, **M**arriott periodically identifies top performers, surveys them to find out what makes them tick, and then uses the information to find out which job applicants have similar personality traits.

19808 BUSINESSWEEK ONLINE, 2-2-05

RETENTION...

Domino’s focuses on its managers

On his first day as Domino’s Pizza’s CEO, David Brandon asked about the company’s turnover and was told it was 158% a year.

“Honest to God, I almost fainted,” says Brandon. He vowed to change things and began by re-naming the human resources department “PeopleFirst. When research showed that the most important factor in a store’s success was its manager, the company went to work to train managers to be more patient and respectful, treat employees like human beings, and find ways to discipline them without alienating them. One manager invites those who make the same mistake more than once to don a pair of dopey, oversized, black-rimmed glasses and no one has yet declined the invitation. The company’s turnover is down by 50%.

19807 New York, NY, THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, 2-17-05



LACTATION PROGRAMS...

Pediatricians want us to breastfeed

The American Academy of Pediatrics says it wants mothers to feed their infants only breast milk for the first six months of life.

Breastfeeding has not taken hold as the sole source of nutrition for infants despite its proven benefits, says the group’s new policy statement. While nearly two-thirds of new mothers do so at birth, by the time their baby is six months old, that number falls to 14%. That’s not okay with the **AAP**; their new guide calls for women to use breast milk exclusively for the first half of the year and continue for the second half while adding weaning foods. Doing so, they say, can lower the risk and severity of ear infections, diarrhea and bacterial meningitis, and may protect against crib death, diabetes, obesity and asthma. For mothers, it protects against a variety of afflictions, including post-menopausal osteoporosis. And for companies, it reduces absenteeism and health care costs. The guide includes pages of instructions and may be downloaded at www.aap.org/.

19804 AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS, 2-05

CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY...

Companies That Care invites you to help schools get needed resources

The Center for Companies That Care is inviting organizations to help provide public schools with some badly needed resources.

The non-profit group has created two projects to be kicked off on March 17th, and companies and employees can donate to either or both. One, "Terrific Tales," will help fill school libraries from a list of diverse books compiled by educators. The other, "Teachers Know Best," will respond to teachers' proposals for help to buy materials or give children enrichment experiences. A donation of \$100 or more will bring you thank-you notes and class photos. To register your gift or get more information, go to www.companies-that-care.org/.

19811 Press release, CENTER FOR COMPANIES THAT CARE, 2-05



COMMUNICATION...

Aligning staff behind the brand

More companies are hiring ad agencies to help them ramp up splashy internal communications efforts, and get employees aligned.

When it's done well, say ad agencies, the internal branding builds morale. The idea is to make employees ambassadors – perhaps even passionate evangelists – for the company's products. Says one CEO, "You could argue that getting alignment inside companies is one of the critical issues." It is at **Masterfoods USA**, which has carved out a big chunk of its huge global advertising budget to turn its 35,000 employees into knowledgeable enthusiasts for its Pedigree dog food. An ad firm is helping the company be pet-friendly; pets are welcome at some offices, pet insurance is offered, and the employee handbook is called "Dogma." Ad agencies see it as an important new focus; **The Richards Group** in Dallas has formed a unit called Richards Inside, which devises workshops and workbooks to guide the internal branding process. But experts warn that it has to be done right. If not, employees will feel like they're being sold, forced to drink the proverbial Kool-Aid.

19803 New York, NY, THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, 1-18-05

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT...

Perceptions are key to engagement

Four years ago, Guild Insurance & Financial Services Ltd. had declining net worth, failing profits and low employee morale.

They set out to reenergize employees and reverse their financial fortunes, and **International Survey Research** monitored their progress. Four years later the result has been a striking reversal, a dramatic increase in employee engagement and an impressive record of how it all happened. The key, says ISR, is alignment. First **Guild** involved its leaders, giving them a role in setting goals and aligning culture and people practices with the new business strategy. Then the strategy was aggressively and clearly communicated to employees with the purpose of getting them on board. Senior managers were encouraged to communicate with their staff in a way that let them know they cared about their day-to-day challenges. Financial results were tracked each month and shown to employees. Concludes ISR, what drives engagement (and alignment) are three things: perceptions of leaders' sense of direction, the degree to which they communicate that direction, and how much it correlates with the organization's values. Today, 90% of **Guild's** employees believe the company is living its values, 82% see a clear sense of direction and 97% say the company is doing an excellent job of keeping them informed. Call us for a copy of the report.

19805 WWW.ISRSURVEYS.COM, Undated



EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT...

Best Buy's most important measure is number of engaged employees

Brad Anderson charges around the country telling anyone who will listen that the company's strength "lies in their blue shirts."

And to measure just how engaged those blue shirts are, says Anderson, **Best Buy's** CEO, they ask employees **Gallup's** Q12 – 12 questions about their work experience (for a list of the questions, go to www.workfamily.com for this month's **UpDate** column). To be truly engaged, an employee must

answer yes to all 12. An article in *Time Magazine* says Gallup has been surveying employees for 35 years to see why people in some work groups, even in the same company, are so much more effective than others. The questions grew out of their interviews and are designed to measure employees' overall happiness with their work. The most recent Gallup polls paint a picture of a rather disaffected U.S. workforce; only 29% say they are engaged. The reason, says Gallup psychologist James Harter, is that companies simply misread what makes employees happy at work, thinking it's pay and benefits. Instead, it's a strong relationship with coworkers, and a supportive boss. A positive response to "I have a best friend at work" is a powerful predictor for profitability as well as a sign of a **happier employee**. And a **University of Nevada** study has found that happy employees can mean as much as a 25% improvement in job performance.

19806 *FAST COMPANY*, 3-05, pg. 65
TIME, 1-17-05, pg. A58



PART-TIME ...

Reducing hours doesn't hurt careers

A new study finds that letting workers cut back their hours pays off for both companies and workers, but everyone must be flexible.

Ellen Kossek and Mary Dean Lee, researchers from **Michigan State** and **McGill**, tracked the progress of 87 part-timers from 1996 to 2003, all professionals and managers, interviewing them and their employers. For the companies, allowing the option helped them retain top talent. For part-timers, it was important to have more control over both workload and time, grow and learn on the job and make a meaningful contribution. And while 42% chose to go back to full-time after a few years in order to accept a promotion, the study concludes that most got just what they wanted from the arrangement; careers and professional growth weren't hurt and salaries grew. Say the researchers, "Our findings suggest that reduced-load work is a viable, sustainable, long-term career option." A Sue Shellen-barger column agrees and says more law and accounting firms are battling the "schedule-creep" that often means part-time pay for full-time work. Some firms are assigning coordinators to monitor the welfare of part-timers. Law firm **McNees**

Wallace now gives three-quarters pay for working two-thirds of normal hours and allows part-timers to progress on the partnership track. The quit rate for their women attorneys, they say, has plunged.

19809 *NEWSWISE*, 2-16-05
New York, NY, *THE WALL STREET JOURNAL*, 2-17-05



PART-TIME ...

9to5 study finds part-time is win-win

A study has profiled 15 companies, and all agree employees should be allowed to work part-time hours without being penalized.

The employers, all from Wisconsin, were surveyed by **9to5** as part of a study funded by **The Sloan Foundation**. All found providing quality part-time options was beneficial to the business in a number of ways, including improved retention, increased morale, efficiency and productivity, and improved customer service. Researchers also collected information on best practices for managing part-timers. They included creating a fair workload for other staff, encouraging and training supervisors to be open about part-time options and manage them effectively, involving employees in resolving scheduling conflicts and sending a clear message that employees are encouraged to use the options and the company wants all staff to achieve integration of work and personal life. "It's absolutely been worth the investment," says John Horkey, a Principal at **Kahler Slater**, a Milwaukee design firm. His company has found replacement costs can run 300% of a person's salary. Adds Anne Wakeham, Director of Client Services at **Covance, Inc.** in Madison, "How can you not do it? It's so easy." Call us for a copy of the study.

19812 Press release, 9to5, 1-24-05



EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT ...

Companies maximize suggestion box

American Axle now prescreens employees' new ideas every day, turns them around in less than two months, and adopts about 25%.

The company uses a three-page form; on the first page the employee describes the recommendation

specifically, on page two they describe its measurable benefit and on the third page – a sheet of graph paper – they draw it out. **Lockheed Martin's** Owego, NY employees submit their ideas electronically; the site chalks up savings of more than \$100 million each year from employee suggestions, about \$77,000 per implemented idea. **Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts** in Toronto holds regular meetings where employees can give the hotel's general manager their ideas and honest feedback about what's working and what isn't; their bosses aren't invited. **Modern of Marshfield**, a specialty upholstery manufacturer, used to pay employees a percentage of the savings their suggestions created. But they discovered that the money fostered competition rather than teamwork; suggestions often benefited one department at the expense of another. Now employees are rewarded through a new colleague-to-colleague recognition program; they're recognized for a month with postings on a company-wide board, personally thanked by supervisors and acknowledged with personalized gifts.

19810 HR MAGAZINE, 2-05, pg. 55



EMPLOYERS' EFFORTS...

Trucking firm's goal: get drivers home when they need to be home

Schneider National is using a new electronic scheduler, part of the company's push to give its drivers more work-life balance.

The new system allows drivers to punch in special events, like a child's birthday, to make sure they'll be close to home on that day. They can access it from their trucks, their homes or company headquarters, and it makes scheduling more predictable. The Green Bay transportation firm is working on giving everyone, not just those with seniority, the kind of schedules that will give them a more predictable life. A "home-run" program allows three drivers living in the same area to rotate two trucks among assignments, giving each driver a week off after a two-week out-of-town assignment; that means 17 weeks off a year to spend with their families. And they recently announced the largest pay increase in the company's 70-year history. The industry has been plagued by a shortage of drivers and high turnover, and while

the technology for the new scheduling system represents a multi-million dollar investment, says recruitment director Mike Norder, turnover has dropped and applications have soared. "We're hoping to make up [the cost] and then some," he says. And he adds, "You can't deliver service unless you have drivers."

19813 WORK/LIFE TODAY, 2-05



ABSENTEEISM...

Shiftworkers' absenteeism leaps up

Shiftworkers' unscheduled absences cost U.S. employers an estimated \$111 billion last year, up from more than \$25 billion in 2003.

The reason, says **Circadian Technologies'** Alex Kerin, is that growing demand for goods and services is causing employees to work longer hours. Rather than hire more workers, firms offered existing employees additional hours when the economy began to recover; in some industries they were *required* to put in the extra hours. The result was that shiftworkers, who are more likely to suffer from fatigue, stress and sleep problems, reacted by asking for more time off or calling in sick. To make up for their absence, employers called in temps or asked coworkers to fill in. The cost: \$8,035 for every absent shiftworker, as opposed to just \$1,108 for daytime employees. The Circadian research was based on a nationwide survey of 440 managers and 149,000 full- and part-time shiftworkers.

19817 Boston, MA, BOSTON GLOBE, 1-7-05



ABSENTEEISM...

Guide aims to lower call center costs

MetLife's new guide sets out to help relieve the major problems that plague call centers: absenteeism, turnover and low productivity.

Employers complain that salaries are higher, retention is lower, and loyalty is almost non-existent. They've come to expect that employees will resign almost as quickly as they are hired, says the new guide, "Absence, Lost Productivity, and Seven Solutions." The culprit in most cases is stress, and most of it is related to work, family and personal

issues. Centers where the work is repetitive and labor-intensive experience the most stress, short term disability claims, FML absences and high turnover; most stressed are those in telecommunications, where calls are expected to be quick, and representatives feel they have little or no personal control over the demands placed on them. Centers that provide full-service consultative solutions, where interactions are based on knowledge and information exchange, have the least stress and turnover. The seven solutions (each of which comes with a comprehensive explanation): 1. Screen potential employees for skill sets; 2. Involve the union; 3. Take advantage of technology; 4. Communicate the company's vision; 5. Involve everyone in health and wellness; 6. Assess the work environment; and 7. Educate employees. The guide is free: Call us for a copy or go to www.MetLifeEasier.com.

19816 Press release, METLIFE, 2-08-05



TELECOMMUTING...

SHRM call center works from home

SHRM's call center, staffed by 14 HR pros with master's degrees and from five to 15 year's experience, gets about 350 calls a day.

Deborah Keary, director of the Society for Human Resource Management's Knowledge Center, says it takes at least six months to train one of these workers, and she was losing too many of them to job stress, irate callers and "the rotten commute to SHRM's downtown D.C. office." Five years ago she started a four-day work-at-home program. That, says Keary, was the end of turnover.

19814 NETWORK WORLD, 2-8-05



TELECOMMUTING...

Telework has an image problem

Technology means working from home can be much more productive, says a study, but telework has to overcome its image problem.

The study by Futuribles looked at 1,700 organizations in five European countries, examining attitudes about remote work. Researchers found that while it benefits both workers and their bosses,

there were "a few surprises." Technology, says researcher Anne de Beer, is critical, but "far more critical is a revamped work organization," and this is where many small and medium employers have problems. Some key conclusions: HR must make sure the right people are hired for remote work, and training is essential. Some technological autonomy is necessary, for which training should also be given. A related article says British telecommunications giant BT has a different idea. They'll use their new super-fast broadband connection to watch over staff working at home with tiny webcams, which will be clipped to PC screens or hidden inside them, and will be able to pick up everything, just as in 1984, George Orwell's vision of a world without privacy. BT is also developing technology that will allow bosses to find employees at any time. Says CEO Ben Verwaayen, "People working from home will benefit from adult supervision. I personally would welcome it."

19815 EUROPA, 2-15-05
NEWSEDGE, 2-15-05



COMMUTERS...

EPA ranks best places for commuters

Intel offers ride-home services for those who work late, preferred parking for car poolers and electric-car power stations.

It's been named by the EPA as a best place to work for commuters, along with a half-dozen others. Some standouts: **Fannie Mae** subsidizes transportation (\$100 per month), offers free shuttle service to offices and has half its workforce in some type of telework arrangement. **Cisco Systems** offers free at-home broadband, guaranteed rides home, bike lockers and showers in every building, and car and van pools. **Sun Microsystems** employees can work from home, drop-in centers or campuses across the country, and the company offers free shuttle service around the Bay Area. This *BusinessWeek* article says the fastest growing group of work travelers in the country are like the members of a group that calls itself the "Bus Buddies" of the Adirondack Trailways' Red Line, moms who wake as early as 3 a.m. to embark on a commute that lasts five or even six hours. The group celebrates when one of their members manages to change jobs for one close to home, but they confess to jealousy.

Studies show commuters are, on average, much less satisfied with their lives. And economists quoted here say a commuter who travels one hour each way would have to earn 40% more to be as satisfied as a non-commuter.

19821 BUSINESSWEEK, 2-21-05, pg. 80



GLOBAL WORK-LIFE...

Skills gap is global, from UK to India

A UK survey of 6,000 companies finds a 50% increase in the number of employers who say they can't find the talent they need.

The survey, by the **Chambers of Commerce**, found 43% who reported problems recruiting staff, and the Chambers has accused the education system of failing to meet employers' requirements. A **KPMG** survey conducted with the **London Chamber of Commerce** found 67% of companies with between 100 and 500 employees felt they would be held back by staff costs and skill shortages. A related article says India, where the outsourcing industry grew 35% last year, is having a talent crunch of its own that may dull its edge. It's serious enough that many companies are offering big bonuses and lots of opportunities for advancement to keep veterans from jumping ship. Experts say the skills shortage shouldn't last more than a few years; Indian colleges are gearing up to produce more trained workers. In the meantime, firms are hoping Indian expatriates will return from Europe and the U.S. and fill the gap, and so far, 20,000 tech professionals have done so.

19818 4 NORTHERN IRELAND, 2-15-05
BUSINESSWEEK, 2-14-05



GENDER ISSUES...

Cultures have a gender, and it counts

A study concludes that cultures are dominated by either male or female values, and there are significant differences in outcomes.

The study, conducted by a **University of Delaware** researcher for health care firm **Lluminari**, found that when women work in a culture dominated by male values, or vice versa, there are

negative consequences. Those who don't share the predominant gender's values may have more health problems, be less productive, less motivated and more inclined to leave. A female-oriented culture emphasizes values, culture and work-family balance. It's based on the assumption that work is a collaborative effort and that a successful business recognizes the importance of human relationships and communication. The male-oriented culture assumes work is for the purpose of achievement and fortune, and that business must recognize the importance of achieving results. Success is defined primarily by profits, market share, status and influence. For men, job stress came mostly from their treatment by those in authority; for women, the general environment played a greater role. Says Lluminari CEO Elizabeth Browning, "Knowing and managing gender differences may help motivate employees, increase productivity, foster loyalty and improve physical and mental wellbeing."

19819 Press release, LLUMINARI, 1-31-05



DOMESTIC PARTNERS...

One champion makes a difference

Back in the '90s, Barbara Waugh learned that HP had decided not to offer domestic partner benefits. That was all she needed.

It was an issue the **Hewlett Packard** mid-level manager understood intimately, since her partner of 25 years was diversity expert Anastasia Cusulos. She sent a questionnaire to gay and lesbian workers, asking two questions: "How has homophobia affected your productivity?" and "What business issue would you rather be discussing with the CEO and his staff than homophobia?" Working with a growing number of allies, she used the answers to create what was called a Reader's Theater – a dramatic presentation of stories that personalized the issue. Employees who didn't want to go public had their stories told by others. One woman told how a lesbian couple living nearby had been burned to death in their home; another said she would be leaving HP so she could get health insurance for her partner and their baby. A manager talked about his partner's death from AIDS and the support he got from his manager. The play was performed more than 60 times over a six month period and the company reversed its decision in

1997. A new survey by Mellon has found 31% of more than 550 large U.S. employers now offer the coverage, compared to 19% in 2001.

19820 BUSINESS ETHICS, Winter, 2004/5, pg. 10
Press release, MELLON, 2-02-05



SABBATICALS...

Arrow is delighted with sabbaticals

More than 3,500 have taken sabbaticals since Arrow Electronics first offered them in 1994, and the company says it's delighted.

More employees are expected to take the paid ten-week leave this year than ever before – as many as 450, says Melanie Young, corporate HR director. Why is Arrow so pleased that so many employees won't be at their desks for so long? Because, says Young, when employees go on sabbaticals, everyone benefits. "It's like a domino effect," she says. The employees get quality time away from their work, those who take over for them learn new skills, and the company has happier and more productive employees. Full-timers can take ten weeks off every seven years and the only requirement is that the sabbatical is "fun, relaxing and non-work-related." The approval process begins six months before the eligibility date, and then a plan is put into place to make sure the work is covered ("It's amazing how coordinated and flexible our talent pool is," says Young). Says senior manager Grace Dervin, who took a trip to the Caribbean with her husband, went sailing, did some gardening and played golf, "It was a great reminder that there's more to life than work. And when your employer acknowledges this as well, it really makes a difference."

19822 WORKLIFE MATTERS, Winter 2005, pg. 20



RETIREMENT...

AARP fights retiree benefit rule

AARP has sued the EEOC, and will fight to prove it had no business passing its new rule about retiree health benefits and Medicare.

Last April, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission announced the rule, which would allow employers to reduce or eliminate health

benefits once retirees become eligible for Medicare, without violating the Age Discrimination in Employment Act. That Act says employers must see that pre- and post-Medicare-eligible retirees receive health benefits of equal type and value. A federal judge has delayed the rule's implementation for sixty days, while AARP pursues its lawsuit, which says the EEOC acted outside its authority in approving the rule. AARP says the rule will lead to employers cutting retirees' health benefits. On the contrary, says the EEOC; their intent was to protect retirees' health benefits. As employers face soaring health-care costs, they say, *not* letting them coordinate benefits with Medicare could mean they'll quit offering health coverage to retirees of all ages. In other federal news, the Senate has approved for the second year in a row a bill to protect employees from discrimination if their employers find out they've had genetic testing for diseases like cancer or heart disease. Last year, the House, more strongly influenced by business, failed to pass the bill. Its future is uncertain this year as well.

19823 BUSINESS & LEGAL REPORTS, 2-7-05
FINDLAW, LEGAL NEWS & COMMENTARY, 2-17-05



THE WORKPLACE...

Where there's smoke, you're fired

No news item has gotten more coverage this month than Weyco's promise to fire anyone caught smoking – even if it's at home.

"What's next?" asks an irate Kary Moss, director of Michigan's ACLU. "Sitting in the sun? Getting pregnant?" Under a new policy that lawyers say is the first of its kind, Weyco, an insurance benefits administrator with 200 employees and a health enthusiast for a president, began testing for smoking in January. Four employees quit, rather than take the mandatory breathalyzer test. The truth is, employers in 46 states can do a lot to control what employees do in their off time. EDS once barred facial hair, and until the mid '90s, airlines limited how much flight attendants could weigh. In 1989 an Indiana company fired an employee for drinking after work, and just last September a company in Alabama fired a woman who drove to work with a Kerry-Edwards bumper sticker. While most agree that Weyco is treading a slippery slope, 20 of its employees have already quit smoking.

19824 CNN.COM, 1-26-05