

Iberdrola is the number one Family Responsible company in the electrical sector, and one of the top 12 of all Family Responsible companies in Spain. Now, a year after its implementation, it is appropriate to analyze the outcomes of its new policies within the company and the employees. Mr. Ramón Castresana, Human Resources Director of Iberdrola, explains the advantages, significant changes and the value of family responsible policies.

ICWF: What have stood out as the main advantages and disadvantages of the approved FR measures during the last year?

R.C.: One of the main advantages of the new company work hours is that employee productivity has increased as they make the most of their time, and it is more possible for them to balance their work and family life. Regarding the disadvantages, I don't think we can talk about these issues like this. The results from the first year's program of establishing continuous working days have been really satisfactory.

Your objective is to increase the production in 500,000 hours. How have you calculated the expected increase? What practical repercussions have you had?

Iberdrola has introduced different policies for flexible working hours and continuous work days, in order to determine the groups that have never traditionally welcomed these types of work hour arrangements. But in November 2007, the company created a group of 7,300 people who partake in the continuous working day, which starts between 7.30am and 7.55am and ends between 3.05pm and 3.30pm. This has led to a direct increase in productivity by increase in hours, 40 hours a year per employee, eliminating time wasted in changing clothes, as with the lunch hour. It has also led to higher motivation with people being much more motivated and producing much more.

The link of employee compensation and personal objectives and the company results, How has it affected the staff? What measurement tools have you use to evaluate these objectives?

The results of these initiatives have been very positive, given the serious implications for the employees. It encourages team work and generates pride in participation when the objectives are reached. These types of policies at Iberdrola changed years ago - abandoning the trend of attendance at work means fulfilling objectives. There are compensation policies of evaluation which are the same that binds to some complements and, since the last agreement, are also applied to a fixed salary.

Has there been any significant changes in relation to absenteeism, maternity leave, staff turnover, etc?

All of these have steadily reduced in the last few years. Issues such as absenteeism, sick leave or accident rate during work hours have all improved year on year – not only because of better work hour flexibility, but also because of the labour risk prevention policies which have been developed extensively in the company.

You also have to consider that 25% of work-related accidents occurred during the afternoon – as opposed to today with accident and absenteeism rates reduced to 10%.

Analysis from previous periods have shown that the incidence of leave due to accidents and absenteeism has decreased, in terms of number of days lost and accumulated days on leave.

Regarding staff motivation: have there been any changes? Do you have any examples?

Offering better flexibility and better distribution of work hours means that employees are more and more motivated every day. For example, the continuous work day means that workers want to make the most of their time before going home, and so they leave a list of pending actions for the next day. It is fundamental to highlight that the criterion of flexibility to go home for all the staff at Iberdrola, with independence to introduce the continuous working day.

Brief Assessment of the measures in general

The applied measures for streamlining works hours during the last year have been truly rewarding. It has improved productivity, the work environment and staff pride in belonging to a company committed to balancing work and family life. From the point of view of the company, there is undoubtedly reinforced competitiveness and a stronger Corporate Reputation.

What are the plans for the future? Are there any new policies you are planning to implement?

Our aim is to carry on moving forward with our policies of work hour streamlining and work and family life conciliation. After having established the continuous work day and encouraging more flexible working hours, we continue to work on the application of new measures that will help to improve the quality of life of our employees. Obviously, Iberdrola will check that the introduction of such measures conform with the profile analysis of our staff and their needs. We want to go beyond the local legislation and policies for family support by going ahead with original and different initiatives that we already have in place, such as the “Family Plan”, for employees that have family members with a disability. We are currently carrying out a pilot program in the tele-working section in Iberdrola Engineering.