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Source: [U.S. Department of Labor: Women's Share of Labor Force](#)

**Working Women and Infertility:
Addressing the Changing Needs of Women in the Workforce Today**
by Mindy Berkson, Founder, Lotus Blossom Consulting, LLC

Infertility is on the rise. One in six couples today will struggle with infertility -- the biological inability to conceive or carry a pregnancy to full term. Many factors can contribute to this staggering and continually growing statistic. Most common are delayed child bearing, advanced maternal age, medical conditions, sexually transmitted diseases, obesity and environmental factors. As women continue to work and delay having children, their needs with regard to infertility treatment, has also continued to grow.

The infertility diagnosis can be devastating and demoralizing. Unable to become pregnant, women often feel inadequate, alone and depressed. Infertility treatment is costly, and invasive. Success rates are not guaranteed and insurance benefits may be limited. The emotional, physical and financial stressors associated with the infertility process are often challenging and usually overwhelming, particularly to accomplished career-women who are used to controlling their own destinies, and getting the results they want.

While infertility affects the male and female population at almost identical percentages, it is typically the woman who undergoes the vast majority of invasive and costly medical procedures. These procedures require intense daily monitoring over the course of several weeks, and sometimes months, thus making it necessary to miss work for such treatments as pre-scheduled ultrasound and blood draws, followed by evening injections of hormones. Adding insult to injury, these treatments then cause increasing mood swings, physical bloating and discomfort. It is no wonder that undergoing infertility treatment has been labeled a full-time job.

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Given this prediction for 2008, companies need to consider how they will respond to the changes in the workplace environment and how they can address the changing needs of their employees while building loyalty and minimizing gross expenses.

Previously, Employee Assistance Programs [EAP] have been established to help employees of forward-thinking large companies address work/life balances for their employees. The benefits of such programs have been rewarding and beneficial. Today's talent and workforce are attracted not only by competitive salaries, but with benefits that translate to financial expenditures and security. EAP's have offered many benefits not only to employees, but to their eligible dependents as well. They have greatly improved work/life balance, decreasing depression and promoting family. An unprecedented number of forward-thinking firms have recognized that training is expensive and time consuming. With women playing more active roles and holding higher leadership positions, it is critical to prevent "brain drain" and increase retention rates.

Organizations are recognizing the value in keeping bright, motivated women as part of their core make-up. Employees, who feel they are well cared for and valued, in turn show greater loyalty, motivation, and commitment to the task at hand and the team that supports them. Ultimately, these valued employees contribute to the company's bottom line through improved performance.

Companies offering important and unique benefits gain a reputation for supporting their staff and building loyalty. It is vital to help valuable female employees take the time necessary to build their families, reduce stress and achieve a work/life balance. Ultimately this support creates optimal performance, and greatly enhances creativity and loyalty – two characteristics known to improve and enhance every team and organization from top to bottom.

Currently programs that include opportunities to help guide women through the infertility process could also help to increase profitability, motivation and loyalty. After all, with delayed childbearing affecting a large percentage of professional women within the workforce, it is necessary to offer options and opportunities that are specific to women and their needs.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mindy Berkson has more than a decade of experience in the infertility field. As one of the first infertility consultancies in the United States, Lotus Blossom Consulting, LLC was founded by Mindy Berkson in 2005 after her own personal battle with secondary infertility. Mindy has guided hundreds of intended parents through the stressful demands of the infertility process by providing professional and compassionate assistance in dealing with the emotional, physical, and financial barriers involved with third-party reproduction. For more information about this topic, or a free consultation regarding infertility issues, log on to www.lotusblossomconsulting.com, or call (877) 881-2685.