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Work-Life Balance

What if Firms Thought of Flexible Work Schedules as ‘Balanomics’?

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By [Sarah Randag](#)

Blogger and solo practitioner [Denise Howell](#) is hearing the same drumbeat as Canadian law blogger and magazine editor [Jordan Furlong](#): For better or for worse, the [work-life balance debate is on the backburner](#).

"Steady work and steady pay are the currency of the moment," Howell writes in an op-ed for the [American Lawyer](#).

But Howell and other flex-time proponents think this is the perfect time for firms to mandate scaling back hours (and pay) for their lawyers.

Deborah Epstein Henry, founder of consulting firm Flex-Time Lawyers, advocates that troubled firms reduce hours in lieu of layoffs. Doing so cuts costs immediately, reduces future training expenses and improves productivity and morale, she says. She calls her solution "[Balanomics](#)," and discussed it in the May ABA Journal article "[Indelicate Balance](#)."

Howell writes in the *American Lawyer* that her solution is so far untested since Henry's clients "have yet to take the plunge."

Still, author and law blogger [Julie Tower-Pierce](#) is in Henry's camp: She thinks firms will become more interested in flexibility as a cost-savings strategy.

"Firms have historically viewed flex schedules as administrative/fiscal headaches, and now the message is totally the opposite." Tower-Pierce says.