

## The Results-Only Work Environment: coming soon to an office near you

By Robyn Bews, April 2011

What if we told you that the culture of work is changing so drastically and rapidly that you will soon be able to eradicate the words 'coming in late' and 'leaving early' from your vocabulary? You might recall the Budweiser ad that featured Johnson – an employee who conjured up the illusion he was at the office bright and early, and then again burning the midnight oil by placing a “steaming cup of coffee” on his desk while in fact he was not working at all; he wasn't even there. The joke of course being that as long as you imply presenteeism in the workplace, you will be perceived as a valuable team member, even if you do nothing all day long.

Conversely, the Results-Only Work Environment (ROWE) is a human resource management strategy co-created by Jody Thompson and Cali Ressler, former Best Buy HR executives in the U.S. This model is the framework wherein employees are paid for results (output) rather than the number of hours worked. ROWE is not flex-time, job-sharing or Fridays off for the summer. It is a business strategy that has a positive impact on an organization's bottom line while simultaneously improving the employee experience. With the rapid adoption of technology that allows us to, with increasing regularity, perform our jobs from places outside “normal” work hours and locations, the notion that we should be fighting traffic five days a week in order to make an appearance at the office when we don't actually need to, is becoming antiquated. All of this unnecessary commuting and loss of productivity is making, as the title of Ressler and Thompson's book would suggest, “work suck.”

“We labour under a myth: time plus physical presence equals results,” says Ressler. “ROWE is all about results. Time and physical presence are old measures. In a ROWE, there is no coming in late or leaving early. Those phrases are meaningless,” she continues. “It's about 'I'm producing results' or 'I'm not producing results.' Period.” Calgary Economic Development is pleased to be hosting the founders of ROWE for their first-ever Canadian public appearance on April 19, 2011, at Gasoline Alley – Heritage Park, as a part of WORKshift Week. This high-energy interactive journey promises to mess with your head, get under your skin and make you question everything you believe about work. If you or your team members are ready to take a journey into the future of work you can pre-purchase tickets through Calgary Economic Development.

And in the meantime, if the idea of a ROWE is just simply too much of a leap for you, consider WORKshift, the nation's first and only initiative that takes the concept of flexible work (often referred to as telecommuting or teleworking) and makes it fast, simple and free to trial for Calgary companies. This award-winning program that promotes that employees should work where and when they are most effective is differentiating Calgary, and demonstrating that our employees are productive, trustworthy and enterprising.

This paradigm shift isn't as some claim, about pandering to Gen Y. It's about embracing existing technology to make Calgary companies the leanest, meanest and most attractive – both from an employment and investment perspective. It's about accepting the changing nature of work to position Calgary as a leader in the race for talent. WORKshift is also about taking responsibility. You're not stuck in traffic – you ARE the traffic.

Even occasional WORKshifting is good for the citizens of Calgary and their employers. Join the pledge to telework during WORKshift week by “liking” our Facebook page and check in regularly to [www.workshiftcalgary.com](http://www.workshiftcalgary.com) to see what other exciting events will be happening in Calgary. After all, isn't work something you **do** not a place you **go**?