Beyond Just a Paycheck
How Work-life Supports at Herman Miller Address Fundamental Human Needs

Study after study has shown that people want more than a paycheck from their job. They also want to feel good about where they work, how they work, and why they work.

Herman Miller’s Human Dynamics + Work group studies the sociology of work—how people affect their work environment and how it affects them. In the course of research to support the company’s Living Office, the group has identified six fundamental human needs: achievement, autonomy, belonging, purpose, security, and status.

To meet those needs, Herman Miller offers dozens of work-life supports—policies, practices, and perks that make work more rewarding and life a bit easier. Here’s a look at how those various work-life supports help fulfill each of the fundamental human needs.

Achievement: We strive for excellence and take pride in our accomplishments.
Achievement is supported by a number of programs that aid career growth. The satisfaction of achievement also can be experienced by getting things done and having more ease in daily activities. The approaches below speak to these.
- **On-site concierge.** Need an umbrella? Flowers? A last-minute greeting card? Concierges can provide or arrange for a variety of services, including dry cleaning, oil changes, and massages. Notary, postal, and copy services, too.

- **Internal internships.** For current employees who want a new challenge, perhaps by moving from manufacturing to the office.

- **MyTalent Learn.** Training and self-study modules for software or business skills.

- **Mentorship program.** Employees volunteer to be either a mentor or protégé.

- **Job postings.** Every job opening gets posted for all to consider.

- **Development plan.** Where do you go from here? Team leaders advise employees on developing career plans.

- **FlexRetirement.** Staged retirement eases the transition by letting employees gradually pare back instead of stopping all at once.

- **Vacation purchase.** Want more time off? Buy an extra week of vacation.

- **Flexible spending accounts.** For healthcare, dependent care, and transportation.

- **Tuition reimbursement.** 100% of tuition costs are reimbursed.

- **Fitness center.** Equipment and classes on-site.

- **Retreat rooms.** A soothing place to relax or recharge.

- **Travel resources.** Discounted tickets and help with reservations.

- **Perks discounts.** Special deals from a variety of retailers, attractions, and wellness resources.

**Autonomy: We seek freedom in our actions and decisions.**

Autonomy is about the freedom to choose and to make decisions that make sense for you. Here are some of the ways Herman Miller supports autonomy during the day or throughout a career.

- **Flexible work arrangements.** FlexTime, FlexPlace, FlexShare, FlexWeek, FlexYear, FlexPartTime—Herman Miller has formal programs to support unconventional ways of working.

**Belonging: We want a meaningful connection to others.**

Belonging is experienced as inclusion, acceptance, and social validation. It’s the feeling that we’re in this together, sharing common experiences and goals.

- **Vacation donation.** Employees are free to donate vacation time to colleagues who could use more to deal with personal emergencies.

- **Inclusiveness resource teams.** A number of employee teams have been set up to address issues pertaining to specific demographic groups.
• **Family-friendly events.** Employees invite their families to a picnic in summer, trick or treating in October, and a Santa and Frosty event in December.

• **Classifieds.** Got something to sell? Post it in the company classifieds.

• **Product purchase.** Get Herman Miller products at a special employee discount.

• **Healthy You.** Teams participate in virtual online challenges. Example: See how long it takes to hike the Appalachian Trail.

• **Clubs and events.** There’s something for just about every interest.

• **Cafeteria on-site.** A convenient place to meet and eat.

• **Volunteer opportunities.** Habitat for Humanity, Adopt a Highway, and more.

• **Paid volunteer hours.** 16 hours per year for each employee.

• **Volunteer spotlight.** Employees seek support from colleagues for their favorite charity.

• **Volunteer engagement fund.** Employees can apply for support from the Herman Miller Foundations on behalf of their favorite charity.

• **Employee giving boards.** Employee-run charitable funds that operate as mini foundations.

• **Adoption assistance.** Plus, all new parents get a baby gift from Herman Miller.

• **Garden club.** Tomatoes, peppers, corn, beans growing in gardens on facility grounds.

• **Blood drives.**

• **Connections program.** Employee development opportunity to connect and learn about other areas of the business and work to solve a business need.

• **Communication reps.** Designated plant employees attend department meetings and report back to their team to build leadership skills.

• **Team 53.** Focuses on education and communication about Herman Miller’s sustainability practices.

**Purpose: We want to make a meaningful difference.**

Everyone wants to feel they’re contributing to something that matters, not just punching a time clock. Opportunities to support the community and the environment are available to all Herman Miller employees.
• Recycling on-site.

• Carpooling. Employees are encouraged to carpool to work and are even entered into a monthly drawing if they do so.

• Veggie van. Picture an ice cream truck, but stocked with vegetables.

• Doorganics. A subscription service that delivers organic products to employees at work.

• MBX. The Monthly Business Exchange brings employees together to share Herman Miller happenings and increase business literacy.

• Employee annual meetings. Business leaders share globally and virtually Herman Miller happenings and plans.

Security: We desire health, safety, familiarity, and competence.
To feel more secure about their health, finances, and families, employees have access to benefits that go far beyond the norm.

• Medical, dental, and vision insurance.

• Retirement plans.

• Disability pay.

• Vacation pay.

• Holiday schedule.

• Parental leave (paid). For both men and women.

• Family medical leave (unpaid). Time away if a family member is ill.

• Telemedicine. Doctors are available by phone or video 24/7, 365 days a year.

• 24-hour nurse line.

• Flu vaccines. On-site available for employees and retirees

• Nutrition on-site counseling.

• Tobacco cessation support.

• Health education classes.

• Disease management programs. For help with high blood pressure, diabetes, and more.

• Employee assistance program. Counseling services to address significant life problems.

• Health clinic on-site. Urgent care, lab work, and sports physicals.

• Reimbursements. For wellness expenses like weight-loss programs, gym memberships, and bike purchases.

• Healthcare help. Assistance with finding a doctor, getting a second opinion, or navigating medical bills.

• Absence pay. For bereavement, civic duty, or personal.
• **Early childhood development supports.** Partnerships with providers specializing in getting children ready for school.

• **Children with special/unique needs.** Support navigating the education system and laws to advocate for children with special and unique needs.

• **Daycare contribution.** A company match to provide assistance in paying for daycare.

• **Eldercare Supports.** Assistance for short-term and long-term care needs of our aging loved ones.

• **Back-up childcare.** Reserved spots at nearby centers or with in home nanny care for unforeseen or scheduled daycare coverage concerns.

• **College planning.** Education services, scholarship programs, and loans for computer purchases.

• **Lactation rooms.**

• **Legal and financial assistance.** An optional addition to the benefits package.

• **Pet Insurance.** For our furry, scaly, and feathered friends.

**Status: We seek recognition for our contributions.** Status relates to social and professional standing. Herman Miller offers development programs that reward and recognize valued employees.

• **Bridge program.** Professional development for manufacturing employees with high potential.

• **Pep awards.** Employees nominate colleagues for special recognition.

• **Bold program.** Career development for younger employees with high potential.

• **Leadership programs.** Mentoring and training for employees aspiring to leadership positions.

**A little recognition**

While Herman Miller employees appreciate all these supports, Herman Miller has also earned accolades from many of those external to the company. These are a number of Herman Miller’s recent awards for its commitment to workplace wellness and flexible work arrangements.

• Fit Friendly Worksite (2012-2014), *American Heart Association*. For promoting physical activity, healthy eating, and a wellness culture.


• 100 Best Companies (2013), *Working Mother Magazine*. For best practices in workplace flexibility.

**In sum**

Work-life supports at Herman Miller constantly evolve based on employee feedback about what works and what’s needed. In one way or another, all help to support fundamental human needs that give them value beyond what might be readily apparent.