

Dental City Portfolio

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Introduction to Portfolio

The goal of our Organizational Communication class was to help find ways that Dental City as a company can keep customers satisfied, focus on the well-being of employees, and have a solid organizational structure in place where each employee can work effectively either in the company office or working from home. We explored this topic in three separate papers, reflected in this portfolio in three separate sections. The first section analyzes Dental City and its current culture, including how the company is run, the current experience of everyday life for their employees, and the experience of customers. The second section is focused on research that investigates work schedules and balance; we looked at academic research previously conducted and we also sent a survey and interviewed current employees at Dental City to learn how they feel about the company. The final section contains our class recommendations, which are based on the semester-long process of researching and gathering information. We believe that these recommendations will help Dental City to focus on maintaining their company culture while adjusting to employee and community expectations for alternative work arrangements.

Section I

Company Overview

Dental City is a wide distributor of dental products located in Green Bay, Wisconsin. The company prides itself on its humble beginnings, rates of growth, and close relationships with customers. Dental City was founded in 1993 by John Mathys (the current president; Bodilly, 2017), Dave Withbroe, and Roy Stumpf and was built from the ground up. The company-customer relationship is of utmost importance to Dental City, and employees at the company are encouraged to do whatever it takes “within reason,” (Dental City) to ensure that all clients are satisfied with their service, according to the Dental City website. With an average

annual growth of 15% over the past 10 years, Dental City is one of the top growing dental distributors here in the US, (Dental City) which can largely be attributed to the company's emphasis on customer satisfaction through quality products, competitive pricing, and "worry-free" service.

Dental City excels in customer satisfaction, but they are also a robust company that fills the needs of those in the dental industry. They offer over 500 brands and nearly 40,000 different products, as they are a full-service distributor of dental products. It is safe to say that most people have a dentist who uses Dental City, as they represent over 16,000 dentists across the country. In the business for over 25 years, Dental City has made lasting relationships with customers in the dental industry. Dental City not only has its own office space but it also has its own dedicated warehouse and shipping department that is attached to the office space, important for sales reps and other employees to keep tabs on what is in stock and the status of the orders they are taking care of. Dental City has been around for over 25 years and it is still growing every single day. This shows the dedication of Dental City's employees and leadership team.

Organization Structure

As an organization, Dental City's structure consists of several different divisions, including sales, purchasing, marketing, and human resources, along with distribution and warehouse workers (Dental City). Within each department, there is a distribution of power. For example, the sales department first has account manager supervisors (LinkedIn), who focus on helping to keep the company's vision running smoothly while overseeing account managers. Account managers tend to work more one on one with the clients than the supervisors do; they help each client with buying materials and helping open new accounts for other businesses. Dental City has many clients that they serve, but currently (due to Covid-19), they are only

selling to licensed dental practices; in the future, they might start distributing to non-licensed consumers (Frequently Asked Questions). Account managers do not have to help outsiders navigate purchases of their product. Below the account manager are the sales interns, they help everyone above them with basic tasks. Each position plays an important role in making the department run smoothly. Other departments have similar breakdowns but all look a little different as each department needs a different structure to function in the best way possible.

Employee Experience at Dental City

The organizational structure of Dental City has allowed for success, and so has their employee environment. Leaders at Dental City are driven to provide the best workplace for their employees to thrive because they truly believe that their employees are the “heart of Dental City” (Dental City). This is clearly illustrated on their website, which says, “a great customer experience starts with employees who feel a high level of engagement in their roles and who will invest more effort into providing a quality experience. Our goal is to have happy, healthy, and engaged employees who deliver a unique promise of outstanding service” (Dental City). This goal shows that Dental City believes that both people and labor are important.

Not only do they encourage the best from their employees, but Dental City wants to provide an environment that allows everyone to perform their best. In addition to fostering an environment with caring leaders, they also disclose on their website methods that are used to fulfill the needs of their employees, which can be understood through exploring Maslow’s hierarchy of needs (Miller, 2015). To begin, physiological and safety needs are met in complex ways. Dental City places a high priority on their employees’ health by offering health insurance and easy access to an on-site fitness center, which features spin bikes, treadmills, weights, racquetball and basketball courts, and outdoor courts as well (Dental City). They also have sports

leagues available to them to partake in. Dental City goes above and beyond offering a safe place to work, and also create a network that allows for physiological health outside of a forty-hour workweek. To build off of this, they create a strict 9-5 work schedule that allows employees to “have a life outside of work” (Dental City). This further shows their efforts to enhance a physiological environment for their workers.

It could also be argued that Dental City satisfies affiliation needs with their, “fun, casual and collaborative” work environment. Their work attire could include, “jeans, shorts and flip flops... or spruce it up if you so please,” and they often get together for food (Dental City). These things signal a workplace of camaraderie and culture that is laid back and good for cultivating strong work friendships. Finally, from their website, it seems as though Dental City satisfies esteem needs because they mention, “our team places importance on regular employee check-ins, goal setting, mentoring opportunities and networking events” (Dental City). With mentoring and goal-setting particularly, Dental City shows that they want to create an environment where employees feel as though they can continue to grow and improve over time there. They value taking care of their employees by allowing them to take care of themselves. This organization clearly cares deeply for the wellness and health of their employees by providing benefits, an environment that allows them to grow within the company, and by giving them opportunities to work on personal goals.

Customer Experience

Dental City has built a culture within their organization that emphasizes customer service. Employees are trained for providing excellent customer service in hopes of pulling in more customers. This value for customer service is illustrated on their website, “Dental City is dedicated to delivering the best combination of quality products, competitive pricing, and

‘worry-free’ service in the dental industry. That means Dental City employees are encouraged to do what it takes (within reason) to assure our customers are completely satisfied with their experience in ‘The City’” (Dental City). They recognize the importance of their customers and the benefits that come with a mutually beneficial relationship, and clearly state the importance of keeping their customers happy on their website; “We pride ourselves on earning customers the old-fashioned way, with relationships built through providing superior customer service and fair prices” (Dental City). In order to achieve their goal of excellent customer service, the company has on-site account managers always there to help customers with questions and orders. “With our group of on-site account managers, there’s always a friendly voice waiting on the other side of the phone ready to help in any way they can” (Dental City). By providing quick, continuous friendly service, Dental City is able to uphold their value for customer service. Another way they ensure that customer service is upheld is through mandatory and thorough training for their employees. “Each of our account managers goes through intense product training to assure they are experts on the ins and outs of dental products and industry insights, meaning you’re working with someone who understands and can assist with the needs of a dental professional” (Dental City). They believe that as long as they remain focused on their customers and they have employees that believe in their mission to provide exemplary customer service, their culture is strong.

Section II

Introduction to Research and Interviews

Over the past two years, companies have faced massive changes as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. These changes have caused many industries to take a new approach to the work environment, resulting in some organizations incorporating a hybrid workplace for their

employees. With the emergence of solutions such as the Covid-19 vaccine and availability of testing, some employers are itching to get back to the office, but not all employees are equally excited about the return to in-person work. Dental City has been faced with a similar question of whether or not to return to work. With demand for a hybrid working format on the rise, Dental City hopes to find the best balance between remote and in-person working for their company and employees. In this section, we provide an overview of relevant literature and share the results of our own data collection to take a closer look at employee preferences, productivity levels, telecommuting status, company culture, and communication.

Employee Preferences

Based on our own research conducting interviews and surveys of Dental City employees, we know that employee preferences in regard to remote work are split, as some would prefer to remain working from home or to adopt a hybrid work schedule while others would prefer to return full time in the in-person office. According to the results of a survey that we sent to Dental City employees, there are several different reasons some employees would prefer to remain remote; these include a more flexible schedule, less distractions from coworkers, a less stressful work environment leading to better mental health, and no commute time. Supporting our own findings, Singha et al. (2021) explored the ways that people experience working from home. Since the research on working from home, especially in light of a worldwide pandemic, varies to some extent, these researchers pursued general themes regarding employee thoughts about a work-from-home environment. Singha et al. found that, while men and women viewed working from home very differently, themes among both groups that remained consistent included: family, organization, personal life, and space. These themes are consistent with our own findings of the reasons employees might prefer to work from home. We explain more below.

With increased free time being one of the most prevalent reasons why an employee might prefer to work remotely, it is important to acknowledge how remote work has been beneficial to those that have children to work around. Increased role demand resulting in work-family conflict causes workers to feel that their resources are strained, as the necessity for a dual-earner house and single-parent families are on the rise. Ongaki (2019) reports a significant relationship between the use of flexible work arrangements like flexible work schedules and telecommuting and lowered stress levels as a result of the work-family conflict. An employee's ability to have control of their schedule and telecommuting status plays a significant effect on their management of the family-work conflict. The article also states that, "Management together with Human Resources should evaluate the multiple uses of various types of flexible work arrangements to improve employees' organizational commitment" (Ongaki, 2019, p. 180). Our own survey results, which align with Ongaki's findings, indicate that freedom to work around the family was one of the common reasons that Dental City employees prefer remote work. One respondent stated "flexibility with a family at home" as the reason for their preference for remote work.

Of the employees that we surveyed, 7.1% have worked at Dental City for 1-2 years, 35.7% for 3-4 years, 7.1% for 5-6 years, 28.6% for 7-8 years, and 7.1% for more than 10 years. Our research also discovered a significant positive correlation between the time an employee has spent working at Dental City and the preference for a more flexible work arrangement; this means that the longer the employee reported to have worked for Dental City, the more they preferred to have a flexible work arrangement. We found that those who indicated that they would like to have a flexible, hybrid work arrangement would like it to look like two to three days a week in the office and the rest to be at home. These findings may directly correlate with the aforementioned work-family conflict as a mature adult employee may have more

responsibilities and prefer the flexible work arrangement in order to balance work, family, and other responsibilities.

Interviews were also conducted to gauge employee's preferences on coming back to in-person work. The employees were very open about how Covid-19 affected their work life. One interviewee said, "Work from home [before the pandemic] was not really an option, after the pandemic, work from home now is in place along with a hybrid schedule, which is 50/50 work from home and office" (if you meet the company's qualifications). This interviewee states a preference for hybrid work as it gives them the option of working from home, something Dental City employees did not have the opportunity to before the pandemic started. This interviewee is just one example of employees sharing their preferences for hybrid or remote work.

Employee Productivity

In addition to employee preferences, a big factor to consider when deciding what type of work environment to implement for a company is productivity. Numerous studies from before the Covid-19 pandemic showed that working from home increased productivity, but Mirela (2020) conducted her own study using a questionnaire to measure how employees forced to work from home gauged their own productivity; her research found that remote work actually *decreased* productivity. Despite the overall negative relationship between remote work and productivity that was found in the study, the author still acknowledges that working from home can, in some cases, lead to stress reduction, increased well-being, and more tasks done in a short period of time if approached correctly (Mirela, 2020). In contrast to this research, Sutarto et al. (2021) gauged productivity for different companies across Indonesia using Individual Work Performance Questionnaires (IWPQs). The researchers found that employees' productivity remained consistent at home as well as in-office. Variables such as gender, age, education level,

job experience, marital status, and number of children were associated with the employees' psychological health but had no impact on productivity. These mixed results reflect our own findings that some employees are more productive in a remote setting and others need an in-office setting in order to be most productive. Within our survey, respondents answered on both ends of the spectrum when asked how closely they relate to the statement, "I am more productive when I work from home." On a scale of 1 to 5, the average answer came out to a 3.33, almost directly in the middle, with some respondents answering with 1 and others with 5 and everywhere in-between. With such a wide gap in answers, it's clear that employee productivity based on environment is not a "one size fits all" type of deal. Each employee has separate needs and works differently.

No two employees have the same level of productivity in a given environment, making it difficult to determine which work situation is best for all employees. One study analyzed working from home during the Covid-19 pandemic and concluded that there are a lot of positive and negative outcomes from working from home (Bolisani et al., 2020). This same study also stated that working from home can diminish the intellectual productivity of employees because of lack of knowledge exchange with colleagues. Because working completely from home may not be the best option for all employees, the study states that a hybrid model could be the best course of action for many employers (Bolisani et al., 2020). Our own survey showed us similar answers. Different employees reported different levels of productivity in the remote working environment. Some employees report that a hybrid approach would allow for those that are most productive at home to get work done remotely while still also meeting face-to-face for things where communication is important, such as team meetings.

When analyzing employee productivity, it is important to also consider employee communication because productivity is impacted when employees cannot communicate effectively. When analyzing results regarding communication from our survey of Dental City employees, conflicting reports emerge. Our survey reports a 3.67 mean out of 5 (where “5” is strongly agree) for a feeling of disconnectedness in a work-from-home environment among Dental City employees, meaning that the average employee feels slightly disconnected when working at home. This being said, our survey also communicated a 3.7 mean out of 5 when employees were asked if they feel that they are able to communicate just as effectively working from home as at the office. These reports indicate that some employees feel connected to their coworkers at home, while some feel that they cannot communicate effectively when working remotely. It will be important to consider each of these different perspectives when deciding which work environment Dental City employees should pursue.

Pros and Cons of Telecommuting

As Dental City explores a hybrid work model, it is important to understand both the benefits and disadvantages of telecommuting. Chattopadhyay and Pandit (2021) describe how individuals working from home still need the same set of tools and resources to complete the job. Unless executed consistently and uniformly, telecommuting is not beneficial because it creates gaps in performance expectations and the organization's mission (Chattopadhyay & Pandit, 2021). Another challenge surrounding working from home is freedom. Oftentimes, the option to work from home is seen as a privilege and a freedom afforded to employees. Working from home blurs the line between work and life; it makes it difficult to find a balance. Employees often work longer hours with less time for themselves and their families. This type of overworking can lead to burnout, headaches, body aches, anxiety, and depression. Instead of

freedom, employees become even more bound to their work if organizations do not implement telecommuting correctly (Chattopadhyay & Pandit, 2021).

In addition to distribution and freedom challenges, work-from-home can have other negative effects on individuals. Employees who utilize alternative work options may experience backlash from their managers and coworkers. Managers often perceive individuals who work in offices, work extra hours, and take on extra projects as committed to the company and higher performers (McDonald et al., 2007). Employees who work from home may be at the same level of production but not receive a promotion, sometimes due to the perception that face-to-face work is more valuable. Similarly, those who take advantage of flexible work practices are often subject to snide comments and “jokes” by their fellow coworkers (McDonald et al., 2007). In addition to managerial influence, employees who work from home may be taken less seriously because it is seen as an option for working mothers. Historically, flexible schedules were mainly designed and used by women. This is due to gender differences in perceived domestic responsibility (Potter, 2003). Because of this, women have, historically, taken advantage of flexible work schedules more often than men. As a result, employees who telecommute are seen as less committed to their jobs.

Despite the disadvantages and stigmas associated with working from home, there are advantages for both employers and employees. McDonald et al. (2007) stated that the use of organization work-life programs, such as work from home, leads to reduction of work-life conflict, improved life satisfaction, reduced absenteeism and turnover, and higher performance and productivity among employees. In some cases, working from home is a great way to balance all parts of life. Whatever the case, it can reduce stress around defined work hours that do not work for everyone’s daily life. In addition, it saves time and money when it comes to long

commutes and space needed to house employees. Remote work also has many more benefits than simply getting to work from anywhere; using it more universally can actually help to level the playing field. According to the *Harvard Business Review*, “Before the pandemic, remote work was typically limited to highly paid professionals. But during the pandemic, we learned that remote work is possible in many lower-ranked jobs” (Williams, Korn, & Boginsky, 2021). In the case of Dental City's, before the pandemic there was virtually no work from home opportunities available. Now, there is a significant, company-wide opportunity.

With that opportunity comes the need for employers to set up employees for success in creating work-life boundaries. When working from home, it can be difficult to separate an employee's life as a worker and as a person. Fonner and Stache (2012) created a list of possible solutions to the work-home boundary. First, some employees utilize physical space to create boundaries such as a separate office or simply a closed door that symbolizes the work day. Some employees utilize routines to define what is their work time from being at ‘home’. Other employees state that connecting to the organization's network, using work equipment and communicating with coworkers helped them create boundaries (Fonner & Stache, 2012). The bottom line is that employers need to pay close attention to the individual needs of their employees. As previously noted, our class survey results showed a correlation between length of time at Dental City and preference for flexibility. The survey results showed that the longer an employee has worked at Dental City, the more they would prefer flexibility in their work schedule. In comparison, newer employees expressed their desire to work in the office because it allowed them to develop relationships with their coworkers. In an interview, a Dental City employee discussed the culture of the company pre-pandemic as being “contagious” and went on to say, “When you are in the office, you feel that ‘buzz’. When you hear everyone on the phone

or we had a great sales day, people start shouting and get rambunctious. In that setting, you get to enjoy other people's successes. Conversely, when you do something great, you get instant gratification." As a result, Dental City should keep in mind that veteran employees already have an understanding of this culture while new employees still need to be integrated. If they allow new employees to work from home, a new form of cultural integration must be formed.

Culture Within a Workplace

Transitioning to work from home also has had an effect on the culture of organizations. Company cultures in general have been influenced by the pandemic, as pre-existing ways of working that were once understood by everyone in the company flipped completely upside down. In order to better understand exactly changed, it is important to re-evaluate culture. There are two key components to a strong organizational culture; artifacts, "the most visible and tangible part of organizational culture enshrined in a company's dress code, language, symbols, rituals and myths," and values, "a set of declared norms and beliefs explaining why people behave the way they do. Values are visible in that they are often formalized within an organization and members of the organization are keenly aware of them" (Asatiani et al., 2020, p. 64). Virtual or hybrid work environments could change what artifacts look like and how values are communicated, and it may take some time to re-introduce and understand those norms.

It is clear the Covid-19 pandemic has changed most company cultures to some magnitude, but we must also consider, at the individual level, the implications of this remote-work environment. Yarberry and Sims (2021) discuss the concept of social learning theory, which explains how people observe their role models and learn from their actions and the outcomes of those actions. This concept is particularly relevant to new employees who look to

their more experienced peers and co-workers to learn behaviors that will allow them to be successful. The triumphs of mentor modeling are threatened by Covid-19 because it requires “connecting with others by having conversations, participating in learning communities, joining communities of practices, and engaging in mentoring relationships” in order to be brought to fruition (Yarberry & Sims, 2021, p. 240). In times of crisis (such as the Covid-19 pandemic), Alonzo (2021) concluded that a learning organization – one that prioritizes learning and improving its characteristics and functions – is important for culture growth. Social learning theory reflects characteristics of in-person learning, and is relatively underexplored when it comes to virtual or hybrid environments. In theory, cultural norms would survive the most effectively through a crisis in a more traditional, face-to-face working environment; however, establishing norms about virtual or hybrid work (such as the equipment used, platforms utilized for communication, work hours, etc.) could accomplish virtually the same thing as in-person work.

As a class, we were able to connect some of our findings from the academic literature with additional interviews conducted with Dental City employees. As it is known, some employees might feel a disconnect with each other when working remotely and not in the office. Being surrounded by others helps the work environment to thrive, and people can work to achieve similar goals together. Dental City is a very close-knit community of coworkers who enjoy each other's company and working together. Our interviews show that the Dental City employees do feel very connected to each other even when they are not together, but while working from home the communication became different and was difficult for some of them to adjust to. While being in office the employees were a mere few steps away, which made it easier for them to ask questions directly, but being online changed that completely. Making connections

in general became more difficult, but the interviewees all agreed that the leadership that was offered to them by Dental City made the transition easier for them. Though our survey results indicated that some employees noticed some cultural changes during the pandemic, they felt it was mostly due to limited face time together. Employees did still feel somewhat connected and noted that this was largely because of company leaders. This also allowed them to transition into a more flexible schedule; some work from home or in office, while others might be utilizing a hybrid. Leadership during times of change is incredibly important (Miller, 2015).

It makes sense that having employees back in the office can lead to Dental City being able to refocus its company culture. Brower (2021) indicates that flexibility has become incredibly important to employees throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. Dental City is open to continuing to keep this flexibility for their employees in a hybrid workplace but wants to sustain their company culture at the same time. According to Brower (2021), the best way to do this is to discover ways in which you can help employees to create relationships and feel comfortable with one another even though they may not be working in the same physical spaces. We offer suggestions for incorporating Brower's ideas in the recommendation section of this portfolio.

Communication

According to ter Hoeven and Van Zoonen (2020), "Because of temporal and physical distance, employees may feel out of the loop and less valued as workgroup members" (p. 4). This can change the atmosphere of the company because they may not feel as connected to one another. Additionally, this could potentially make employees feel as though they are disconnected from others. Proper communication and clear expectations are both critical for forming a functioning organization. When the pandemic occurred, many companies were forced into work-from-home arrangements. How the workplace functioned prior to the Covid-19

outbreak significantly impacted how well the employees transitioned to being online. A study on remote work in Finland during the pandemic found that “structural factors (i.e., high work independence and clarity of job criteria) make it easier for employees to adjust to remote work settings” (Van Zoonen et al., 2021). In order for employees to feel as though they are accomplishing something with remote work from home, having a clear objective is vital. If they feel comfortable at work and are confident in their skills, the transition will be easier for them to make. The same can be said on the opposite side of the spectrum. When employees feel isolated at work and are not as engaged with their work in the office, it can negatively impact their work. Feeling connected is vital; it helps employees to adjust to their environment and allows the employees to thrive when they are working under new or different conditions.

Section III

Recommendation 1: Implement Hybrid Work Schedules

The work-at-home environment is demanding and needs to be balanced. Dental City can promote work-life balance thoughtfully considering flexibility. Our survey and interview data suggests that the majority of Dental City employees would prefer to have a hybrid work schedule because it would allow them to have more flexibility. A flexible schedule allows employees to better manage their time and personal lives. The employees believed that they were able to be more productive, more relaxed, and they could deal with work-family conflict much better while continuing to work throughout the business day. It will be important for leaders at Dental City to work closely with their employees to determine the exact details of how scheduling work-from-home opportunities will work. Ideally, those schedules would have the option for employees to work from home or work at the office on certain days of the week. Based on the academic literature we have read and the data we collected from Dental City, we believe that

working every day in the office or every day at home is not the best option. The hybrid work schedule provides a way for employees to customize the amount of time they need to delegate for their work alongside the time they need for managing their health, family, and other aspects of their personal lives.

Keane and Heiser (2021) present four strategies that we believe could be utilized by Dental City to create a hybrid workplace that would satisfy their employee needs as well as sustain their company culture. One of those strategies, “Braid the Digital and Physical Experience,” could be useful for Dental City to consider. Having half of their employees come into the office around a conference table and the other half virtual but present in the conference room via a big screen for meetings could help sustain Dental City’s company culture by having employees engage with one another. Considering the actual physical space is another recommendation of Keane and Heiser, and that physical space includes work-from-home spaces and the tools employees utilize. Dental City should make sure to provide employees with the same technology that would be used if the employee were completing that work in the office. This could include reimbursing employees for tools that they purchase for completing their job. Collaborating in this way is related to other recommendations by Keane and Heiser, in that employees and employers work together to figure out a balance between “we” and “me” work time and remaining fluid as these conversations and changes are occurring. Overall, if Dental City considers the four strategies suggested by Keane and Heiser, we believe they will be able to create a hybrid workplace that works for their employees.

Recommendation 2: Bringing Employees Back to the Office

We suggest that Dental City consider a hybrid work arrangement that very intentionally includes employees coming into the office on the same two days a week, such as on Tuesdays

and Thursdays. When employees have the opportunity to work from home but can also engage face-to-face with their colleagues at a few set times per week, it serves as a compromise between the two preferences of working from home or in the office while also creating a stronger and more uniform identity for Dental City. Creating a company-wide in-office work day policy could help to set new norms, and individual departments could also decide if they wanted to implement more required days. Dental City could also consider holding events or work days in almost pod-like groups, where certain combinations of people are in the office under certain conditions.

We believe that providing Dental City employees with clear expectations for being present in the office will help to establish a connection with those around them. Van Zoonen (2021) described how people learn important interpersonal cues when they socialize with others; without an opportunity to learn those cues, employees can be less satisfied and less effective. It is important for employees to feel connected with their colleagues regardless of whether or not they are in the same physical space. An interviewee stated that they met their best friend at work, and we think that there are lots of great opportunities for these types of connections to occur if there are structured social events and opportunities included with working together face-to-face and even online.

Recommendation 3: Fostering Relationships Among Employees

Brower (2021) suggests finding ways to help employees build relationships and feel comfortable with each other. Covid-19 has changed the way we work and has restricted our connections with others due to our computer screens. While a hybrid work style could work well Dental City, it is important that they are thoughtful about opportunities for fostering meaningful relationships. Some corporations have focused on maintaining or boosting morale employees through retreats. Company retreats disrupt the standard work process and can foster group

bonding. Employees with interpersonal relationships tend to feel like they have a voice in how things run and that their thoughts matter throughout the company.

Retreats and relationship-boosting activities could also help Dental City to close the gap between new and old employees. Employees who have been at the company for some time have extensive knowledge of how an organization works compared to someone who might have started more recently. Dental City should consider implementing a mentorship program so that connections are also more formal and can occur regardless of work format. Veteran employees can train the new employees to ensure that the junior employees are trained to the company standards. In doing this, employees can make sure that they complete their work correctly and efficiently, but it also creates a bond between and among those employees. One of the interview respondents said they had difficulty connecting with new employees during the pandemic. New hires struggled to make the same close connections as the veteran employees did when they started, so working more formally in smaller groups or pairs can help make these connections.

Conclusion

Dental City is a very successful company within the Green Bay area, with a focus on keeping customers satisfied, maintaining the well-being of employees, and having an effective organizational structure and culture. Dental City is a company that wants to give customers and employees the best experience possible. Dental City, like many other corporations, has been faced with the challenge of considering hybrid work arrangements. Considering factors such as employee preferences, productivity levels, telecommuting status, company culture, and communication, we analyzed literature surrounding the remote work environment as well as our own interview and survey results. Though some of the data we collected represents a wide variety of viewpoints, and those viewpoints reflect the sometimes conflicting research that exists

about hybrid work arrangements, we believe it is important for Dental City to pursue these important changes. Some employees work better in a remote setting because they are better able to manage their time, mental health, and numerous responsibilities while others feel that they do their best work and are most connected to their team when in-office. Because each person works so differently, there is no “one size fits all” as far as what will work best for Dental City employees and workers across the globe. However, Dental City’s strong sense of culture and “family-like” atmosphere will make it possible for them to adopt a more fluid, flexible set of policies that will keep their employees connected and satisfied.

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