

# MAY 2017 Moem



Of the many roles that women fulfill today, one of the most controversial is being a working mother. When I became a mother and was faced with the decision to continue, modify or stop working, unsolicited advice came from everyone—my family, colleagues, friends and even the media. Truth be told, the harshest opinions were my own. Like many women, I was guilty of comparing myself to some imagined ideal not only of my role as the mother of my sons, but in all of my other roles as well.

In the last several generations, women’s roles have multiplied exponentially. The women of my mother’s generation were expected to be wives and mothers. Though my mother wanted desperately to be a librarian, it never happened. Her employment would have brought shame to my father’s ability to provide for the family. She passed on to me the need for a profession — one that could stop and start with moves, kids and all of the other way stations in life.



I did exactly as I was advised and became a CPA. I left public accounting when I had my twin sons, but kept current by teaching college part time. I didn’t fully re-enter the working world until my sons started school. My chosen path is typical of someone with what the Working Mother Research Institute (the Institute) calls a career-oriented working mother mindset. Whether for career continuation or out of financial need, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that 70% of mothers are members of the workforce today.

Regardless of a mom’s employment status or mindset, nearly every one of them feels judged. Not only have the expectations of being a good mother been ratcheted above those of our mothers or grandmothers, there is also an unprecedented level of pressure to stay fit, healthy and attractive. Where once attempts at improving one’s looks were considered sources of vanity and evidence of a lack of character, today it is yet another area where women find themselves deficient. Consider that Michelle Obama, the former First Lady of the United States, a mom and a lawyer is most lauded in the media for her “guns.”

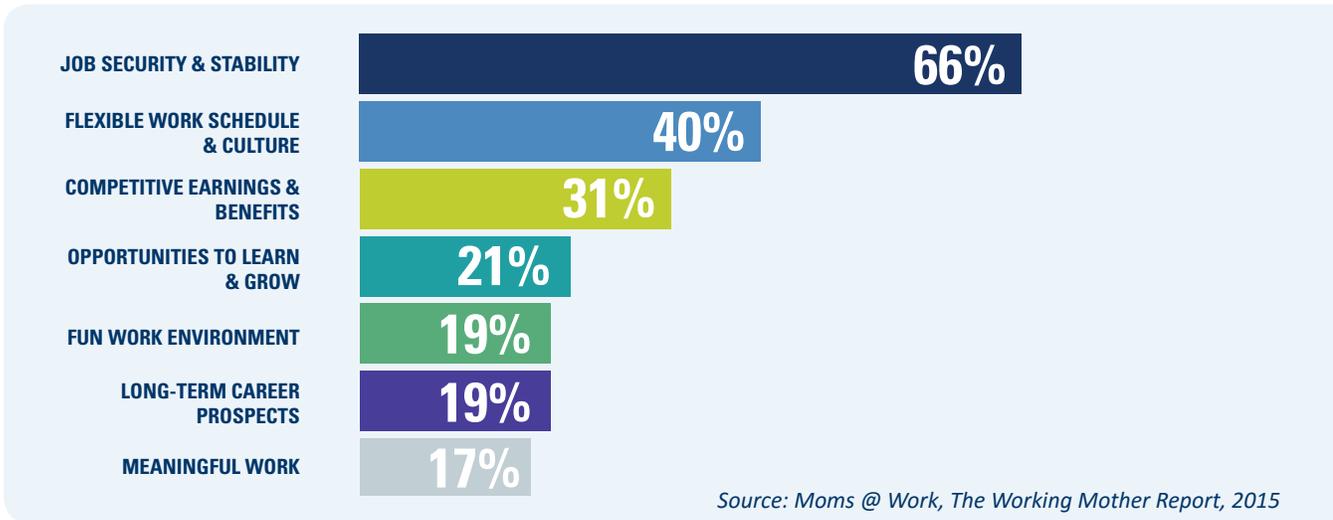
The fact is that women tend to look outside of themselves for validation of their life choices. With the media bombarding them with airbrushed images, the grocery store packed with convenience foods, and a 24/7 workplace, it is harder than ever to measure up to all of those ideals.

Fortunately, progressive enterprises have recognized the benefit of trying differently. Flexible work schedules facilitated by technology, team structures and family-friendly managers are now more the norm than the exception. Eighty percent of moms rely on some sort of flexibility to allow them to juggle the responsibilities of both work and home. As noted in the following graph, flexibility is valued above competitive earnings and benefits when considering a place to work.



the supplement  
FACILITATING VITALITY

## WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTORS WOMEN CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING A PLACE TO WORK?



While changes to the workplace have made it easier for moms to keep all of the balls in the air, they still struggle with self-care. This month make certain to let the moms in your life know that they measure up to your ideals in whatever role they may play in their life. And better yet, give them a little of what they wish for. The *Moms @ Work Report* lists these top two:

### WHAT MOMS WISH FOR:



**ME TIME** Make an appointment for her at her favorite spa. Make certain that the kids have plans, the laundry is done and the dishwasher is emptied. And please when she comes home, make certain that the house doesn't look in shambles. If she sees that you are perfectly capable of taking care of yourselves while she is gone, she may make more time for herself. Remember in the words of Ron Hall: "if 'Momma ain't happy, ain't nobody happy.'"



**TIME WITH PARTNER** When was the last time you had a date night or a weekend away? Make some reservations for you two and arrangements for the kids, the pets and the house. Surprise her!



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Patricia M. Fuller has dedicated the last 19 years to designing and delivering wellness programs. Her events earn consistently excellent ratings for her holistic approach and her real world application.

Prior to concentrating in wellness, Pat taught accounting and auditing as an adjunct professor at the University of Tampa. She earned her CPA designation in 1992 as a senior associate for Coopers & Lybrand. She has a Masters in Business Administration from the University of Utah.

Pat has a PhD in holistic nutrition. In 2010, she was board certified by the Holistic Nutrition Credentialing Board. Her areas of research include stress management and eating habits. She is a Certified Wellcoach and a member of the Institute of Coaching. She is an annual attendee to The Harvard Medical School Conference, Coaching In Leadership & Healthcare.

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