

Long Vacations are Good for Employees, the Company and Me!

☒ When we first moved to the west coast, I was stunned to find that people routinely take two weeks of vacation off AT ONE TIME! On the east coast, my experience had been that taking more than a week off was reserved for getting married or going to Europe. Amazingly, and this was a revelation to me, people can take two weeks off at a time and the organization can go on! Now I am very much in favor of people taking longer vacations for a number of reasons:

1. It forces the organization to cross-train employees and to make sure that there are at least three people in the company that know how to do every critical task.
2. It requires the creation and maintenance of current, clearly written protocols associated with each job, in case the other two employees who are cross-trained on the job get sick, have jury duty, have a death in their family, or quit on short notice.
3. It gives the company an opportunity to assess the workload and composition of a job from another person's viewpoint. We've all had the experience where someone goes on an extended leave and you find out that the job is much more, or less, complex than you thought, or someone was telling you.
4. It ensures that nothing untoward is going on with someone who has access to company money. Everyone's heard of the manager who never takes a vacation, not because s/he's so dedicated, but because s/he has sticky fingers.
5. It gives the employee an opportunity to truly rest, heal, and remember that there is life outside of work (can you tell I'm thinking about myself here?)

Here's an **excellent article** that has some great points about the ethics of taking Vacations. The author, Bruce Weinstein, PhD states:

Leaving work behind for a period of time is not only acceptable; it is our ethical obligation.

My advice to each of you is to fulfill your ethical duty as soon as possible.