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after Christmas. I just so happened to have flight reservations at the same time the storm was forecasted to hit. Great.

Darren Root • Jan. 28, 2013

It was Christmas Eve and all the meteorologists were talking about the impending blizzard. They were calling for 10 inches of snow starting early morning on the day after Christmas. I just so happened to have flight reservations at the same time the storm was forecasted to hit. Great.

I had planned two weeks in Sarasota, Florida, with my wife and kids...the first week with the kids and the following week without. The kids, naturally, wanted to be back in Indiana to enjoy the New Year festivities with their friends. We did end up flying out of Indiana just in time...just as the blizzard was starting. I breathed a sigh of relief. And trust me when I tell you that I found the 70 degree weather in Florida much more enjoyable than the below freezing temps we had left behind in Indiana.

I tell you this to make a very clear point. While end of year and early January would typically be a busy and stressful time at my firm, barring me from a lengthy out-of-town excursion, it was not an issue. Technology has lifted the barriers of time and geography, so going to Florida didn't mean I couldn't work. In fact, I probably worked more than I should have, but at least I had the option to work on the beach and not in a snow bank.

With the advent of Cloud technologies and the removal of any tether to the office, I'm honestly working more than ever. Constantly inundated with emails and text messages, blogs to write, keeping up with technology change, and figuring out complicated tax issues...I don't think working less is on the horizon. So, what's really different today than in years past? If we're not working less, then how do we cope?

My perspective is that it's no longer about working less. It's about working *differently*.

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occur. Firms must get into a mindset of working differently. For example:

- **Embrace a Culture of Fun:** People want to work in a positive, fun environment. Check out Withum Smith & Brown's video on Youtube (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1EymCFOP14Q&feature=player_embedded). It's a great example of a fun firm culture.
- **Demolish the Walls of Geography:** Firms must embrace a digital culture in order to support a true remote-enabled work environment. This means digital storage, digital workflow, and digital delivery.
- **Develop a Results-driven Culture (not one based on the billable hour):** As long as systems are tied to the billable hour, firms will judge staff and professionals on the hours we see them at the office. This leaves NO room for working off site or abandoning the very outdated time clock mentality.
- **Develop a Culture of Change:** Change is happening all around, meaning that firms must be in a mode of constant evolution.

Think about the kind of firm in which you want to work. Is it a firm that's fun? Can you work from home, the coffee shop, or on the beach? Is it a firm where you are assessed on results and not the hours you sit at your desk? If your firm is none of these things currently...it's time to make changes.

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