

Women lawyers work the GFC

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EVERY cloud has a silver lining and, for females at law firms, the silver lining of the GFC is more time with kids and family.

According to US publication, Working Mother, firms have become more flexible with working hours for their staff since the start of the crisis.

Legal BlogWatch reports that according to Working Mother, of the 50 best law firms for women, nearly all have started offering reduced schedules to lawyers, while 62 per cent offer full-time telecommuting, and 42 per cent have written flexible-schedule policies.

“A desire to work fewer hours is now coinciding with law firms' desire to cut costs,” it states, with some firms allowing lawyers to reduce their hours to a 60 per cent schedule and retain full-time healthcare, an arrangement that is preferable to layoffs.

The article emphasises that if times are bad, firms are finding it financially advantageous to offer flex time.

However, once the economy ramps up again, there's little guarantee firms will be so flexible, it suggests.

Ultimately, the lesson for lawyers who want work/life balance or any other benefit from law firms, in good times or bad, is to find a way to make themselves economically attractive, so their employers will want them, regardless of the hours.