

Hershey's Work Model: Deep Work Mondays and Pizza Wednesdays

The CPG encourages in-office collaboration without being "prescriptive," said its chief HR officer.

By **Shefali Kapadia** | September 13, 2023



Staff photo

HERSHEY, Pa. — On a Thursday at **Hershey's** headquarters these days, the building is neither empty nor full. A group filters into a small conference room for an in-person meeting and fills every chair. A bank of cubicles on the upper floor sits largely vacant, and the handful of employees sitting there speak to their colleagues on video.

In the post-pandemic era, Hershey has adopted a flexible model for office work.

"We call it 'best of both,'" CHRO **Chris Scalia** told CPG Specialist in an interview at Hershey's headquarters.

Most corporate roles require a mix of collaboration and focus. To accomplish the former, Scalia and Hershey's leadership have encouraged employees to be in the office Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, to be together for meetings and collaborations. On one of those days, 600 to 1,000 people might be in the headquarters building, Scalia said. For the remaining days of the week, Hershey suggested deep, focused work.

"On Mondays and Fridays, you can see a lot of people working online, and the building seems very different," Scalia said.

However, nothing is mandatory. The CPG doesn't currently require employees to be in the office a minimum number of days or specific days of the week. The reason: Hershey doesn't want to be "prescriptive," as Scalia explained in the video below.

To view the graphic, [click here](https://www.cpgspecialist.com/c/4236604/548044?referring_content_id=4236604&referring_issue_id=548044) or go to https://www.cpgspecialist.com/c/4236604/548044?referring_content_id=4236604&referring_issue_id=548044

Food and beverage CPGs have adopted various models for the workplace. Some are hybrid, with either encouraged or mandated office days, while others are completely remote or in-office.

Across industries, about 30% of full-time employees work in a hybrid arrangement, according to a study released last week by the Survey of Working Arrangements and Attitudes. The majority, 56.8%, are fully on-site, and 12.8% are fully remote.

Hershey initially faced some skepticism from employees on returning to the office multiple days of the week, Scalia said. The company never drew "a hard line" on office policies, he said, but the leadership team came up with incentives to encourage in-office attendance Tuesdays through Thursdays.

"We had a really interesting innovation," Scalia said. "Pizza Wednesday ... It worked pretty well."

Office goers also have limitless access to Hershey snacks. Each conference room features two bowls of candy — one chocolate, one non-chocolate — that never go empty. Bags of the CPG's salty snacks are scattered throughout the office.

Beyond free food, Scalia said employees see the benefits of being in-office at least a few days a week, being able to interact with teams and managers. He's heard feedback from employees that they like being in person, and it's helping with engagement and productivity.

"Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday is not just about collaborating or being in meetings," Scalia said. "It's about being together."

The positive feedback shows up in the numbers, too. Company-wide, Hershey's net promoter score, a metric that gauges how likely employees would recommend their workplace to others, rose from 30 pre-pandemic to 51 post-COVID, according to Scalia.

"I think people understand why they want to be together here, especially in this culture," he said. "And they've leaned into it."