



**CASE STUDY**

# Keller Trucking: Work-Life Balance in a Shifting Transportation Industry

## OVERVIEW

As many can attest to, the transportation industry is feeling pressure from several sources at once and is undergoing substantial change. These pressures have inspired many to innovate and create new ways of doing business that better consider drivers' needs. The following is a case study of Keller Trucking and spotlights a dedicated effort to create a company culture that is focused on work/life balance in an effort to attract and retain drivers and adapt to shifting driver demographics.

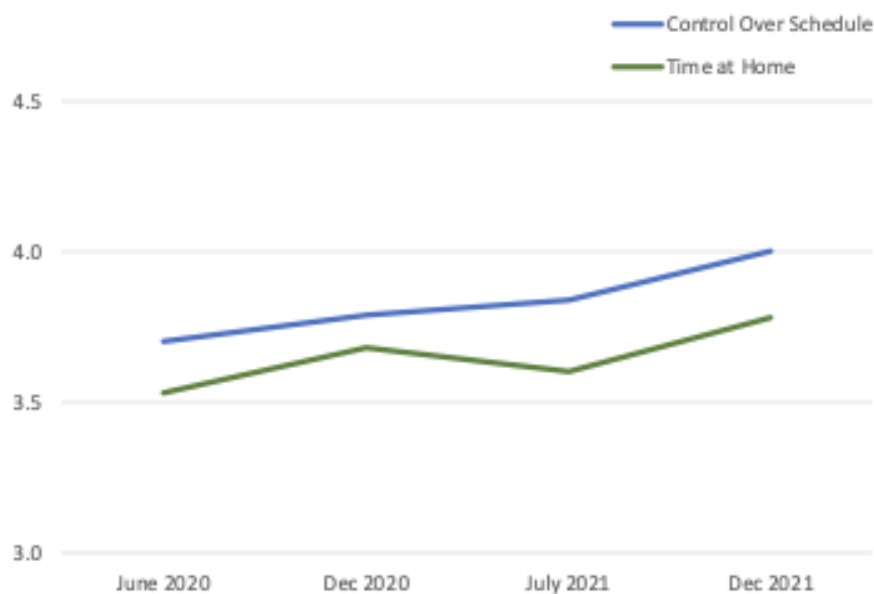
## APPROACH TO WORK-LIFE BALANCE

The truth is, increasingly, drivers are no longer willing to work the long hours for the pay. Younger drivers, for example, are more likely to focus on work/life balance. Drivers in general are looking to make the same amount of money as they did previously while working fewer hours. With the driver shortage, many are finding ways to do this. However, this puts pressure on carriers as trucks need to be utilized as much as possible to be profitable.

As a response, Keller is dedicated to adapting. Work/life balance has become a key in their long-term growth strategy. While this is an ongoing effort, they have already made changes in pay and work schedules to maintain profitability at the same time improving the balance for their drivers. Keller has introduced flexible schedules like four on four off, placed a high-sales focus on local freight opportunities and spotting/shuttle service to give drivers consistent daily home time, offered more generous paid vacation time package for new and less tenured drivers, and have worked with individual drivers to provide more options and flexibility to make their comfortable work/life balance a reality. Keller knows this kind of success does not happen overnight and are committed to monitoring driver perceptions over the long-term to ensure success.

## WORK-LIFE BALANCE & TURNOVER

The chart below is based on data from Keller's bi-annual full fleet driver survey. This shows changes in driver's perceptions of 'control over their schedule' and 'time at home' over an 18-month period. As you can see, the findings indicate a steady upward trend on these two items across the 18-month period. It is clear from these trends that driver's perceptions of these two issues have improved.



Quarterly turnover was bumpy for Keller through 2020 and early 2021. However, the last three quarters of 2021 showed a substantial downward trend, dropping 30 percentage points from Q2 to Q3, and another 11 from Q3 to Q4. Moreover, Q4 experienced the lowest quarterly turnover in that two-year period. Certainly, many factors press upon turnover, but the downward trend along with the trends in the chart above provide strong evidence of the effectiveness of Keller's approach.

## CLOSING REMARKS

Work-life balance will become an increasingly important issue as the transportation industry continues to shift along many dimensions. Gaining insights into driver's perceptions of the many aspects of work-life balance can provide carriers confidence in developing and implement real quality improvements. Ongoing evaluation will ensure long-term effectiveness of these improvements.



Keller Trucking is a family owned and operated, asset-based carrier established in 1978 with a growing fleet of 275 tractors and 800 dry van trailers. Keller was recently voted one of the top 20 Best Fleets to Drive for in North America for the 5th consecutive year. Keller Trucking is a subsidiary of Keller Logistics Group who also offers full-service transportation brokerage, warehouse, and co-pack service.

## AT A GLANCE

### Problem

- High quarterly turnover
- Driver shortage issues

### Solution

- Gathering driver perceptions through the use of a bi-annual full fleet survey.
- Implementing a new approach to pay and work schedules to give drivers a comfortable work-life balance.



At Keller, we are extremely focused on our culture and the work environment we provide for our professional drivers. Stay Metrics [now owned by Tenstreet] allows us to keep a very close pulse on these areas through consistent surveys of our driving staff. It became apparent that work-life balance was rapidly rising to the top of the list in importance, and with that we saw great opportunity to improve in this area. Through internal adjustments, flexible schedules, and a higher focus on all areas of our drivers work-life, we were able to achieve some outstanding results.

**Jonathan Wolfrum**  
President