"soft skills" through appropriate training. Managers also need the appropriate tools to help them be supportive. Such tools could include appropriate policies and guidelines, mentors who are themselves supportive, and information on why support matters. In addition to the above, organizations need to recognize that managing people and being supportive takes time. Organizations who want to increase the number of supportive managers, therefore, need to give their managers enough time to manage the people part of their job. People management is not just an "add on" to the rest of their job. Rather, it is a key part of what they do. Finally, organizations who want supportive management need to measure and reward support. Managers do what they are rewarded for. If the organization perceives that supportive management is key to competitive advantage (our results would suggest that it is) they need to design measures to quantify support, and introduce accountability around the "people part of the job" (i.e. make people skills part of the hiring, promotion and management selection process, introduce balanced scorecard which includes 360 feedback to assess how good a job managers are doing of "people management"). In other words, people management should be treated just like financial management with goals, objectives, measurement and accountability.

Another factor that appears to be key to work life balance is perceived control. Research in this area has shown that employees who feel they have more control over their work and personal lives report more balance and less stress (i.e. Karasek, 1979). Our previous work in the area would link greater perceived control to many of the factors discussed previously in this work: supportive management, flexibility around when and where one works, supportive work environments, and socio-economic factors such as income and education. Other work factors linked to higher perceived control include autonomy, empowerment, the increased use of self-directed work teams and better communication (laterally, vertically) within the organization.

Prevalence of work-lifestyle initiatives in Canadian organizations

Although prevalence data are not available on the full range of work-lifestyle options described above, there are several recent surveys that can provide some indication of the current level of employer responsiveness to work-lifestyle issues in Canada. Data have been obtained through two routes: employer surveys, which sample *employers* across Canada and question them regarding their human resource practices in the work-lifestyle area (Paris, 1989); and employee surveys, which derive their information by sampling Canadian *workers* and asking to what extent they have access to supportive programs in their places of employment (Akyeampong, 1997; Duxbury et al., 1991; Higgins et al., 1992; Lero et al., 1993; Duxbury and Higgins, 2001).

Table 1 provides a comparative overview of 6 Canadian studies that have sought to estimate the availability of employee-supportive practices in Canadian workplaces (see Johnson et al for a more extended discussion of this research). The Paris (1989) study was conducted by the Conference Board of Canada, and represents the only Canadian employer survey. The remaining 5 studies reflect surveys of employees. Two employ nationally representative data collected in conjunction with the Canadian Labour Force Survey (Akyeampong, 1997; Lero et al., 1993). Three reflect independent academic studies involving samples drawn from the public sector (Duxbury et al., 1991) the private sector employees (Higgins et al., 1992), and public, private and not for profit sectors (Duxbury and Higgins, 2001). 2001 data on the availability and use of various work-life benefits are shown on Figure 7.