

Four-day working week

adapted from an article by Laurie Havelock

- 1 A new report from the Henley Business School suggests that two-thirds of companies that have adopted a four-day week have reported an improvement in staff productivity. The study also found that the same companies posted 40-1 in sick days taken and miles travelled to the office, resulting in fewer carbon emissions, too.



- 2 Some companies have embraced it already. *Perpetual Guardian*, a New Zealand financial services company, switched its 240 staff from a five-day to a four-day week last November and maintained their pay. It claims the work rate is up 20 per cent and has published 40-2 of the trial.
- 3 And that's before you even get on to how employees spend that extra day: whether used for volunteering for charities or community projects, or working on personal projects that had been relegated to 40-3 of 'to-do' lists, the benefits are widespread.
- 4 So, what needs to change? From a business perspective, 40-4 of a five-day week is entrenched around the world – but is a relatively new idea. Many trace it back only as far as the Industrial Revolution, while recent studies suggest that hunter-gatherer societies only worked for around 2.5 days a week.
- 5 It seems like 40-5 all around. So, time to start planning how to make the most of that extra time. I'd spend Fridays off catching up with all the great books I've never read. How would you spend yours?

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