(Class 01/2020)
(Based on the lesson "Jobs" from Lingua House")

Jobs & Occupations: Cultural differences

(by Caroline Silva)



Getting started

Task - Read the questions and discuss:



1. How many hours do you work daily?
2. How have you organized your schedule to fit your personal needs (e.g. household chores, leisure activities, family time)?
3. What were your top 3 challenges in adapting to home office?

Task 2 - Are you a blue-collar worker or a white-collar worker?

a blue-collar worker: somebody who does physical, unskilled work, for example in a factory or on a building site

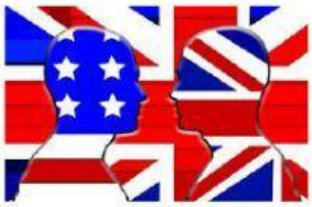
a white-collar worker: somebody who does "mental" work, for example in an office, rather than physical work

Task 3 - How would you classify the following jobs?

a banker
a computer programmer
an electrician
a secretary
a bricklayer
a lumberjack
a sailor
a tailor
a builder
an accountant
a sales representative
a university lecturer

Blue-collar worker	White-collar worker

Starting point



Task 1 - Some British and American job titles are not always the same. Can you guess the equivalences?

UK	US
1. a shop assistant	a. a babysitter
2. a postman	b. a bartender
3. a dustman	c. a garbageman
4. a headmaster/headmistress	d. a mailman
5. a childminder	e. a pharmacist
6. a chemist	f. a principal
7. a barman/barmaid	g. a sales clerk

Task 2 - Beside the titles, what other differences do you think are there in British and American work style?

Task 3 - Read the article and check out our previous thoughts.

There are many similarities between the US and the UK, including its shared language and its interwoven history.

But in the workplace, things are quite different. Here are five differences between the working life of a British and American worker.

Americans work longer

You won't see many Americans running to clock out at half five each evening, as the average American works longer hours. According to an infographic created by a business specialised in helping British companies set up in the US, the average British employee works 37.4 hours a week. But, a week at work for the typical American looks to be around 40 hours. Saying this, 2 out of 3 British workers do not take a full hour for lunch every day. This is similar to 4 out of 5 US workers who don't leave the office for lunch each day.

US workers are employed at will

Most British workers are employed under a formal contract. This means, in most cases, a British worker can only be fired with reason, and under a particular notice period. America, on the other hand, offers fewer contractual rights to workers. US workers are generally employed at will, which means there's no contract for employees or employers to be bound by. This may be why most Americans are considered hardworking and committed, as they technically could be asked to leave at any moment (with a few important exceptions).

UK workers are entitled to more benefits

Most commonly, sick pay, paid maternity leave, paid paternity leave and holiday pay are given to UK workers by law, while in America, these are largely considered to be 'benefits' and up for negotiation.

If a British worker falls ill and needs time off work, they are entitled to a minimum of £89.35 per week for up to 28 weeks, under the guidelines for Statutory Sick Pay. However, in the USA, no amount of money is guaranteed to US workers if they're sick for any period of time. The Family Medical Leave Act does provide up to 12 weeks' unpaid leave without a threat of job loss but it's up to the company to decide if this will be paid.

A different office culture

If you walked into an American office, you'd find the general 'vibe' to be quite different from that found in a British office. Brits seem to be a little poor with time keeping as meetings rarely run on time, using a different set of business jargon and tend to speak modestly, deflecting praise with self-deprecating humour. Americans tend to be more outspoken, confident and driven. They're not afraid of self promotion, and they are more than likely to give a compliment with enthusiasm when it's due. On average, you'll find meetings begin on time and are usually quite short and straight to the point in the US.

Those are just a few differences between US and UK work culture. You'll notice plenty more differences if you spend any time crossing the Atlantic.

(Adapted from "5 differences between the US and UK work culture". Retrieved from https://www.icenimagazine.co.uk/5-differences-us-uk-work-culture/ on November 17, 2020)

Task 4 - According to the article, what are the main differences between the British and the American work styles?

_____
_____
_____

Task 5 - Analyse the statements and check True or False:

a. Most British workers do not take full hours for lunch every day. T F

b. 2 out of 3 Americans take full hours lunch each day. T F

c. Both contracted and at will workers have the same benefits when it comes to work regulation. T F

d. Working at will means that the employee is more committed to the work. T F

e. The business jargon is similar in both cultures. T F

Task 6 - The Brazilian work style is more similar to the British or American? Why?

Hands on



Task 1 - How would you describe your work style? Take some notes and talk about it offering examples to support your argument.

> Check your answers on this Quiz . Do you agree with the result?

Task 2 - We live in a huge country and each region has its own lifestyle. When it comes to work, it is not different. Think about your experience at work and write an essay about

work style differences in Brazil. Remember to support your ideas with practical examples (minimum 80 words).