Work Life Balance

Ronan

I work in a fairly traditional office environment doing a typical nine-to-five job. I like my job, but it's annoying that my commute to work takes an hour and a half each way and most of my work could really be done online from home. But my boss doesn't seem to trust that we will get any work done if left to our own devices, and everyone in the company has to clock in and out every day. It's frustrating that they feel the need to monitor what we do so closely instead of judging us based on our task performance, like most companies do these days.

Lily

I'm a freelancer and work for myself. This is great because I am in control of what I do and how I spend my time. At first, I was working from home, but I found it really hard to concentrate. There were just too many distractions around: housework that needed doing, another cup of tea, my family members wanting my attention for various things. So I started to go to a nearby café to work, but the Wi-Fi connection wasn't ideal and I found myself drinking too much coffee. In the end, I decided to rent a desk in a co-working space with five other freelancers like myself. I liked getting dressed to go to work in the morning and being able to focus in an office environment. The other freelancers do similar kinds of web-based work to me and so it's nice to have workmates to bounce ideas off as well.

Jo

I used to do a typical five-day week, but after I came out of my parental leave, I decided that I wanted to spend more time with my children before they start school. After negotiating with my boss, we decided to cut my working week down to a three-day work week. This of course meant a significant cut in my pay too, as I'm paid on a pro-rata basis. I've since noticed, though, that my workload hasn't decreased in the slightest! I'm now doing five days' worth of work in three days, but getting paid much less for it! I find myself having to take work home just so that I can meet the deadlines. It's wearing me out trying to juggle work with looking after my children and my family, but I don't dare to bring this up with my boss because I think he feels as if he's made a huge concession letting me come in only three days a week.

Marcus

I work for a global IT company, but because their headquarters is in the States, I do all my work online from home. That means that I don't waste time commuting or making idle chit-chat with colleagues. I work on a project basis, and this flexibility is very valuable to me because it means that I can easily take some time off when my children need me to go to their school performances or if I need to schedule an appointment with the dentist. The downside is that without clear office hours, I tend to work well into the evening, sometimes skipping dinner to finish a task. It can also get quite lonely working on my own, and I sometimes miss sharing ideas with colleagues.

Read what four people have to say about their working hours and play the game

LINK

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