

1. The job involved mostly **manual** labor, with workers handling tools and machines all day.
2. Many companies are **dependent** on consistent internet access to complete daily tasks.
3. My workday is **interspersed** with short breaks to help me stay focused and refreshed.
4. **Reforms** in the workplace have introduced more flexible hours to accommodate modern life.
5. The **concept** of remote work has become popular, especially for roles that don't require a physical presence.
6. As a consultant, I keep track of my **billable** hours to invoice clients accurately.
7. The idea of a strict 9-to-5 work schedule is deeply **embedded** in some companies' cultures.
8. With remote work, I save time and money by avoiding a lengthy daily **commute**.
9. My freelance work allows for a **non-linear** schedule, so I can complete tasks whenever I'm most productive.
10. For some people, more hours at the office **equate** to dedication, but others believe in working smarter, not longer.

Vocabulary

- a. Fixed
- b. Changes
- c. Compare
- d. Flexible
- e. Idea
- f. Mixed
- g. Payable
- h. Physical
- i. Relying
- j. Travel

Match the sentences to gaps 1 - 4. There are more sentences than gaps.



- A. The long work days continued with 12 hours per day, 6 days per week being the norm.
- B. It has also reduced the culture of staying late at the office in order to be seen to be working.
- C. When they returned at the end of the day, many were too tired to do household tasks such as laundry and childcare.
- D. Their labor was focused on the results of what they did rather than the hours they spent doing it.
- E. As the 1950s progressed, lawyers began to make more money than any other profession leading to them being regarded with suspicion.
- F. During the 1950s, lawyers noted that they weren't making as much as doctors and dentists, due to charging fixed rates for their services.

Up With the Sun?

How the working day has changed

- I. Before the late 1700s, the majority of people did manual work on farms, growing food and looking after animals. Society was largely dependent on sunlight as electric light wasn't widely used until the 1800s, so people got up early and worked during daylight hours until dark. However, their days were interspersed with breaks, meals and naps to keep them going. ¹ After all, if they didn't plant the crops in time, for example, they wouldn't grow. So there was a natural motivation to complete tasks.
- II. When the Industrial Revolution arrived, increasing numbers of workers started spending their days in a factory. ² Over time though, reforms meant that this was reduced to the 40-hour week that many still use today. This was when the concept of working 9 - 5 came in: eight hours per day, five days per week. As technology advanced and offices began to be used, the same hours were used there.
- III. ³ The American Bar Association (ABA) suggested that, just as factories were paid according to the number of products they produced, lawyers should be paid according to units of work they did - the most useful unit being the hour. So the concept of billable hours came in, meaning lawyers could charge according to the amount of time they spent on a case rather than the service as a whole. It didn't take long for lawyers to begin working far longer hours, as now, the longer they spent working, the more money they were making for the firm. This concept passed on to other industries and became embedded in attitudes to work.

IV. When the pandemic hit in 2020, it forced a lot of people to stay at home and deal with their responsibilities, such as child care and household tasks, in one place. With no daily commute, employees were able to be more flexible with the time they worked and adopt a more non-linear approach. Since then, with remote and hybrid working now a much more accepted way of working than the period pre-pandemic, this has continued. Workers have found that they are able to more easily manage their personal and professional lives by breaking up their working periods through the day. _____⁴ There have been numerous studies showing that more hours spent working doesn't necessarily equate with a greater level of productivity. Yet if staying late is part of the office culture you're in, it's hard to ignore. Working from home means that, just as with pre-industrial times, the focus is once again results-focused rather than time-focused.

sources: abajournal.com, bestlifeonline.com, BBC Worklife

Match the sentences to endings a - g.

1. Prior to the invention of electric light,
2. Following the arrival of the Industrial Revolution, increasing numbers of
3. As labor reforms took hold,
4. Due to concern that their earnings were below that of doctors and dentists,
5. The concept of a worker's productivity being based on how long they spent working spread from
6. As a result of restrictions during the pandemic,
7. As with pre-industrial times, there's been a shift to

- a. lawyers to other professions.
- b. the working day was generally from 9 am to 5 pm.
- c. workers began to once again adopt a non-linear approach to the working day, mixing work with personal responsibilities.
- d. workers were dependent on sunlight and so worked as long as it was available.
- e. workers completing tasks rather than measuring time spent.
- f. lawyers began measuring their work in terms of time spent on a task.
- g. workers worked long days in factories.