

**Listen to the four people talk about past regrets. For questions 1 to 7, choose the correct answer (A, B, or C)**

**1- Emma...**

- A. is planning to take a gap year.
- B. wants to follow her passion.
- C. did what others wanted for her.

**2- Which sentence is true about Emma?**

- A. She appreciates her parents' efforts.
- B. Her parents encouraged her to explore different career paths.
- C. She doesn't care what other people think.

**3- Jake...**

- A. could have got much more money for the truck if he'd waited.
- B. regrets listening to his dad.
- C. would like to buy a similar truck now.

**4- According to Jake...**

- A. He would have liked to keep the truck to sell it later.
- B. His friends don't really know much about money either.
- C. If he'd kept the truck, he'd be living down the coast now.

**5- Sarah...**

- A. isn't happy about her work conditions.
- B. was afraid to pursue writing as a career.
- C. stayed in her current job because she found out she was pregnant.

**6- Sarah...**

- A. says people have the wrong idea about work.
- B. has just found her true passion.
- C. thinks it's too late for a new career now.

**7- Daniel...**

- A. didn't really like piano lessons as a kid.
- B. tried to have some regular practice during college.
- C. hasn't given up the idea of learning again

**Fill in the Blanks with the words from the below box**

Modest	corridor	acre	newcomer	sustain
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1. An \_\_\_\_\_ is a small unit of land measurement.
2. The \_\_\_\_\_ of the house led to the garden.
3. She made a \_\_\_\_\_ contribution to the charity.
4. It's important to \_\_\_\_\_ resources for future generations.
5. A \_\_\_\_\_ is often made by someone who is new to a place.

**Multiple Choice**

Which word means to pay back?

- A. Offense
- B. Repay
- C. Neglect
- D. Riddle

What does "distinct" mean?

- A. Similar
- B. Unique
- C. Hidden
- D. Unimportant

Which of the following is a term for a narrow passage in a building?

- A. Chamber
- B. Corridor
- C. District
- D. Complaint

**True or False**

9. T/F: To "overlook" something means to ignore it.
10. T/F: "Arithmetic" refers to a type of writing.

**You are going to read a text about the changes in workplace culture and employee benefits at Trevex, a large multinational company. For questions 1 to 7, decide if the statements are True or False.**

## **The most sought-after company benefits**

I work in the HR department at a large multinational company, Trevex, and part of my role is to review the company's employee benefits programme. As you can imagine, the benefits we offer have changed hugely since the Covid pandemic.

Pre-pandemic, Trevex was always touted as having great perks. We had nap rooms, a relaxed work environment with lots of different options for where you worked, free meals, child care facilities, an on-site doctor's surgery and free health checks. There was even subsidised accommodation on campus. Basically, we had everything available to allow our employees to work without interference or distraction from the outside world. That's not to say that it was an all-work-and-no-play sort of place. We offered excellent vacation time with the option to buy extra days, and lots of people took advantage of our gym, spa and subsidised excursions.

It wasn't everyone's cup of tea, though. We did get considerable criticism from those who thought we were a sort of cult that enticed young, talented men and women and turned them into machines, giving them everything they could possibly need in return for their undivided attention and work. I don't think that is entirely fair. After all, I don't think there's anything wrong with a company wanting to get the most out of the workers it is paying to employ.

No one was forced to work overtime, although most chose to do so. Anyone who didn't like the conditions was free to leave. However, our staff turnover was indeed high. Lots of employees experienced burnout after several years at the grindstone. But even if we lost top talent, we never had trouble employing fresh graduates who were eager to prove themselves and take advantage of our high pay rates.

The pandemic changed everything, though. With everyone forced to stay away from the office and our childcare centre, we had to put all our efforts into enabling staff to work from home. It was a 180-degree turnaround for us, as we had always tried to make the workplace as attractive a place as possible. Now, we were encouraging them to stay away. Many could not cope with the demands of child care on top of work and threatened to leave. Suddenly, we had to listen to our staff instead of calling the shots.

What they wanted was the flexibility to manage their private lives alongside their working lives. Instead of convenience, they wanted choice: the option to be able to choose child care, medical or sports facilities, rather than feeling obliged those at work, or even the option to care for children or elderly relatives themselves. What's more, mental health care was also deemed as high a priority as general health care, something we had overlooked in the past. In no time at all, wellbeing and counselling initiatives have been put in place.

These changes have had a significant impact on our staffing. Now, instead of taking on the minimum number of employees required and working them to the bone, we have more people on the payroll than ever before, many working part-time or flexible hours. It means we can retain our experienced staff and that's really beneficial.

I don't think people want different things now compared to the days before the pandemic. I just think that in the past, we had been led to assume that dedicating our lives to work was the only option, and the perks that companies offered that attempted to keep people working happily for as long as possible reinforced that attitude. I think the pandemic gave people a chance to reflect on what really is important in life, and companies have had to change their practices at the risk of losing their best staff.

**1-** Before the pandemic, Trevex aimed to provide everything that staff needed.

- A. True
- B. False

**2-** Before the pandemic, Trevex's benefits paid no attention to employees' leisure time.

- A. True
- B. False

**3-** The writer somewhat agreed with the criticism of Trevex's employee benefits policy before the pandemic.

- A. True
- B. False

**4-** Before the pandemic, staff often left Trevex despite its perks.

- A. True
- B. False

**5-** Before the pandemic, most people at Trevex worked more hours than they had to.

- A. True
- B. False

**6-** Trevex had to introduce some slight changes during the pandemic to avoid losing valuable staff members.

- A. True
- B. False

**7-** Trevex noticed it was essential to improve the mental healthcare they were offering before the pandemic.

- A. True
- B. False