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**Level 5 – 7th November, 2019**

## **A 4-day work week in Japan increased productivity**

**FREE online quizzes, mp3 listening and more for this lesson here:**

<https://breakingnewsenglish.com/1911/191107-4-day-work-week-5.html>

### **Contents**

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| The Reading          | 2 |
| Phrase Matching      | 3 |
| Listening Gap Fill   | 4 |
| No Spaces            | 5 |
| Survey               | 6 |
| Writing and Speaking | 7 |
| Writing              | 8 |

**Please try Levels 4 and 6. They are (a little) harder.**

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# THE READING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/1911/191107-4-day-work-week-5.html>

Microsoft has successfully trialed a four-day working week in Japan. It saw improvements in workers' productivity and job satisfaction. The trial took place at the tech giant's Tokyo headquarters. Employees had every Friday off as paid leave in August. Analysts monitored the effects of a three-day weekend on workers' performance. They found the shorter working week resulted in several benefits. Productivity rose by 40 per cent and 92 per cent of workers expressed their satisfaction with the trial. It could change Japan's infamous workplace practices of long hours and overtime.

The trial was called the Work-Life Choice Challenge. It aimed, "to create an environment where each employee can choose a diverse and flexible way of working according to the circumstances of their work and life". It included shortening the length of meetings to a maximum of 30 minutes and asking workers to chat online rather than face-to-face. In addition, Microsoft said electricity bills were down by 23 per cent and 59 per cent fewer pages were printed compared with August 2018. Microsoft will repeat the experiment in Japan later this year. It asked for employee input.

Sources: <https://www.businessinsider.com/microsoft-japan-4-day-workweek-40-percent-increase-in-productivity-2019-11>  
<https://edition.cnn.com/2019/11/04/tech/microsoft-japan-workweek-productivity/>  
<https://news.yahoo.com/microsofts-japanese-division-switched-4-123757914.html>

# PHRASE MATCHING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/1911/191107-4-day-work-week-5.html>

## PARAGRAPH ONE:

- |                               |                          |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. trialed a                  | a. the effects           |
| 2. the tech giant's Tokyo     | b. practices             |
| 3. every Friday off as        | c. headquarters          |
| 4. Analysts monitored         | d. and overtime          |
| 5. Productivity rose          | e. four-day working week |
| 6. workers expressed their    | f. by 40 per cent        |
| 7. Japan's infamous workplace | g. paid leave            |
| 8. long hours                 | h. satisfaction          |

## PARAGRAPH TWO:

- |                            |                   |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. each employee can       | a. were down      |
| 2. a diverse and           | b. of 30 minutes  |
| 3. the length of           | c. input          |
| 4. a maximum               | d. meetings       |
| 5. chat online rather than | e. the experiment |
| 6. electricity bills       | f. flexible way   |
| 7. Microsoft will repeat   | g. face-to-face   |
| 8. It asked for employee   | h. choose         |

# LISTEN AND FILL IN THE GAPS

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/1911/191107-4-day-work-week-5.html>

Microsoft (1) \_\_\_\_\_ a four-day working week in Japan. It saw improvements in workers' productivity and job satisfaction. The trial took place at (2) \_\_\_\_\_ Tokyo headquarters. Employees had every Friday off as paid leave in August. Analysts (3) \_\_\_\_\_ of a three-day weekend on workers' performance. They found the shorter working week resulted (4) \_\_\_\_\_. Productivity rose by 40 per cent and 92 per cent of workers (5) \_\_\_\_\_ with the trial. It could change Japan's infamous workplace (6) \_\_\_\_\_ hours and overtime.

The trial was called the Work-Life Choice Challenge. It (7) \_\_\_\_\_ an environment where each employee can choose a (8) \_\_\_\_\_ way of working according to the circumstances of their work and life". It included shortening the (9) \_\_\_\_\_ to a maximum of 30 minutes and asking workers to (10) \_\_\_\_\_ than face-to-face. In addition, Microsoft said electricity bills were down by 23 per cent and 59 per cent (11) \_\_\_\_\_ printed compared with August 2018. Microsoft will repeat the experiment in Japan later this year. It asked (12) \_\_\_\_\_.

# PUT A SLASH ( / ) WHERE THE SPACES ARE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/1911/191107-4-day-work-week-5.html>

Microsoft has successfully trialed a four-day working week in Japan. Its aim was to improve workers' productivity and job satisfaction. The trial took place at the tech giant's Tokyo headquarters. Employees had every Friday off as paid leave in August. Analysts monitored the effects of a three-day weekend on workers' performance. They found the shorter working week resulted in several benefits. Productivity rose by 40 percent and 92 percent of workers expressed their satisfaction with the trial. It could change Japan's infamous workplace practices of long hours and overtime. The trial was called the Work-Life Choice Challenge. It aimed, "to create an environment where each employee can choose a diverse and flexible way of working according to the circumstances of their work and life". It included shortening the length of meetings to a maximum of 30 minutes and asking workers to chat online rather than face-to-face. In addition, Microsoft said electricity bills were down by 23 percent and 59 percent fewer pages were printed compared with August 2018. Microsoft will repeat the experiment in Japan later this year. It asked for employee input.

# WORKING SURVEY

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/1911/191107-4-day-work-week-4.html>

Write five GOOD questions about working in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper. When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

|      | STUDENT 1<br>_____ | STUDENT 2<br>_____ | STUDENT 3<br>_____ |
|------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Q.1. |                    |                    |                    |
| Q.2. |                    |                    |                    |
| Q.3. |                    |                    |                    |
| Q.4. |                    |                    |                    |
| Q.5. |                    |                    |                    |

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

## WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student A: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a) \_\_\_\_\_

b) \_\_\_\_\_

c) \_\_\_\_\_

d) \_\_\_\_\_

e) \_\_\_\_\_

f) \_\_\_\_\_

*A 4-day work week in Japan increased productivity – 7th November, 2019*  
More free lessons at [breakingnewsenglish.com](http://breakingnewsenglish.com)

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## WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student B: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a) \_\_\_\_\_

b) \_\_\_\_\_

c) \_\_\_\_\_

d) \_\_\_\_\_

e) \_\_\_\_\_

f) \_\_\_\_\_

