

Four-day week priority over relationships with colleagues, survey finds

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A new Robert Walters survey has revealed 71% of professionals would give up work socials and relationships with colleagues, in favour of a 4-day working week, showing the extent of how a shorter working week has become a workplace priority.

The survey of over 3,000 working professionals shows that while professionals would give up the social side of their working lives, only 13% are inclined to forego hybrid work arrangements, and only 7% would sacrifice training opportunities in favour of less working days.

Suzanne Feeney, Country Manager at Robert Walters Ireland said the long-term impact of 4-day work weeks “is hard to ascertain – but with 71% of professionals willing to forego socials and business relationships, companies should be mindful that a poor company culture can be costly.”

“As with what we experienced with remote working and then the move to hybrid, any change in the workplace brings about its challenges – and a 4-day week will be no different, business leaders need to tread with caution”, she said.

Some 91% of professionals would be keen for their employer to implement a 4-day week. Around half of respondents said a 4-day week would appeal to them most on a job description, followed by the ability to work from anywhere (35%).

With half of professionals who would like a 4-day week expecting their full pay to remain the same, Robert Walters comments that debates have begun on whether the post-pandemic workforce are ‘the most entitled yet’ – with fewer professionals feeling responsibility for the financial health or stability of their employer.

Just 15% of professionals stated that they would take a 10-15% pay increase over the option of a 4-day week, and it seems office-based soft perks such as work socials or complimentary lunch or breakfasts, are less appealing in the face of fewer working days – with just 1% stating that they would opt for this over a 4-day working week.