

AMERICANS WORK HARDER, *but accomplish less*

Doodle's latest survey shows how work, overtime, and inefficient meetings will continue to be a problem for the American workforce in 2020 — unless we make significant changes.

The start of a new year is always a time to reflect and set new goals for the months that lie ahead – especially when it comes to making the most out of the workday. But if 2020 is anything like years past, working professionals will quickly resort back to a routine of working harder, without seeing much impact.

And we would know. Doodle commissioned the survey of 100 U.S. executives at the VP level and above and 400 full-time U.S. employees at Fortune 500 companies to unearth factors that impact workplace productivity every day.

PART ONE — All that Effort and Nothing to Show For It

According to our survey, **40 percent of executives** experience tremendous pressure to work beyond normal business hours to advance their careers – a feeling that's not likely going to die down in the new year.

Our research found that while business leaders and top employees feel they are expected to be present and available at all times - joining meetings or calls while on vacation, answering emails or signing on after hours to show availability - there is little impact on actual work results. And this unwavering expectation to be always “on” is resulting in major consequences to life beyond the office.

Let's examine some of the more surprising insights about the modern workplace that we uncovered in our survey.

PART TWO — Key Findings

'Tis the Season of Work

The end of the year is upon us, and workers at every level should expect to wind down and prepare to spend time with their families, right? Not quite.

This pressure to work during downtime has broader implications. Not only does it affect the ability to spend uninterrupted time with friends and family, it means that even in scheduled time off — when people should be able to unplug from work pressures — a true work-life balance remains elusive and often impossible to achieve for executives and employees alike.

- ✔ Nearly all (**99 percent!**) of **executives** and **85 percent of employees** have joined a meeting on a day off, with **3-in-5 executives** and more than a **quarter (27 percent)** of employees joining a meeting during an appointment, or from a vacation (**57 vs. 40 percent**, respectively).



53% of executives



85% of employees

**acknowledged that they've
joined a work meeting during an
observed holiday.**

Working for the Weekend - And All Year Round

- ✓ Nearly **three-quarters (73 percent) of employees**, and nearly all executives (**80 percent**) say they regularly feel pressure to work beyond normal business hours if they want to advance their careers.
- ✓ In fact, **65 percent of execs and 44 percent of employees** responded that they work 10-19 hours more than their scheduled working

This number is based on an average of 12 hours of overtime per week, and that number increases among the executive-level respondents who average around 18 hours of overtime per week.

We're Missing Big Life-Moments ... to Work More

The modern worker feels compelled to be available to work around the clock, and by being unable to object to

meetings, or to staying late, work/life balance is dissolving.

Employee respondents say that, on average, they miss plans with friends or family because of work obligations **twice per month**. For executives, those statistics double.

- ✓ **20 percent** of exec respondents say they miss out on plans more often than employees, cancelling plans with friends or family to work on five or more occasions per month.

What's most upsetting to employees at all levels is that these statistics only highlight a fraction of the disruption job pressures have on private life. Those responses don't account for major milestone events — the once-in-a-lifetime moments that can't be rescheduled.

The survey revealed that about 26 percent of workers at the executive level are so busy at work, they miss their child's first words.

74%

of employees have missed major milestones in their lives due to work

50%

have missed a friend or family member's birthday

29%

have missed a friend or family member's graduation

28%

have missed a friend or family member's wedding

We're Showing Up, but Not Showing Up

So why the sacrifice? What is broken in the way American workers are doing their jobs?

Let's start by looking at the way meetings are handled. Attending plenty of meetings seems to be status quo in the workplace, but meetings have become so overscheduled, or poorly planned, that attendees aren't truly present. Despite feeling pressured to show up, if the meeting is run poorly, most attendees end up tuning out.

- ✔ More than **2-in-5 (44 percent) of executives** have seen colleagues watching a video, taking selfies (**40 percent**) or even falling asleep (**35 percent**) during meetings!

Employees gave similar responses, admitting to witnessing the same kinds of behaviors — just not as often as the people in charge.

- ✔ More than a **quarter (28 percent)** of employee respondents say they've been in meetings where colleagues watched videos, took selfies (**17 percent**) or fell asleep (**33 percent**).

During time set aside for everyone present to be attentive, it has become somewhat standard practice for meeting attendees to take that opportunity to focus their energy elsewhere. According to our survey, respondents of all level reported frequently witnessing displays of distraction during meetings.

- ✔ Two-thirds (67 percent) of business executives and 58 percent of employees admitted they've seen colleagues send a text, leave to take a separate call altogether (both at 59 percent), or work on other tasks (57 vs. 53 percent) during a meeting.

Employees' indifference towards meetings is rooted in poor meeting practices and unrealistic expectations. If everyone involved does not have a critical role to play and dedicated items to discuss, many leave confused as to why they needed to attend and what the meeting was called to accomplish.

The Workforce Has More Meetings Than Ever (But They're Less Effective)

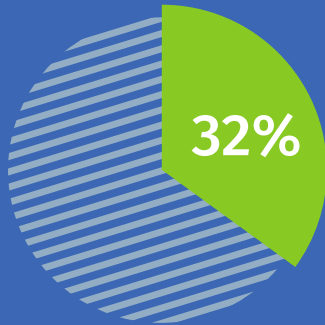
Meetings don't need to be a grind. A tight attendee list coupled with clear expectations about outcomes can be the recipe for collaboration and quick decision-making. But our survey found that employees feel compelled to attend an increasing number of meetings each week, making them feel like there's less and less time to be successful in their jobs.

By the 40 hour work week standard, that's nearly half of the time working to figure out how to get things done.

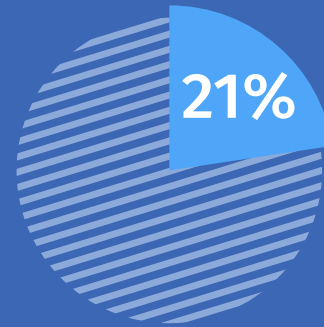
What's clear from the responses is that most employees believe meetings actually make it more challenging to be productive at work.

In 2019 it became clear that Americans are spending more time than ever at work and less time with loved ones. Workers are not only missing out on day-to-day activities, they are also missing out on major life moments as pressures mount to always be present. Americans are overworked, burnt out, and zoning out.

The impetus for change must start with businesses - changing expectations around availability and implementing stronger policies that respect the balance between personal and professional life. Our survey unearthed startling statistics on the prominent and systemic expectations that have become commonplace to American workers today - the veil has been lifted. Now it's on businesses to make true change.

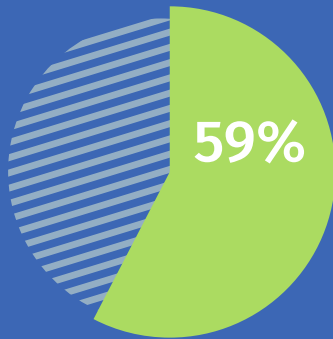


of executives

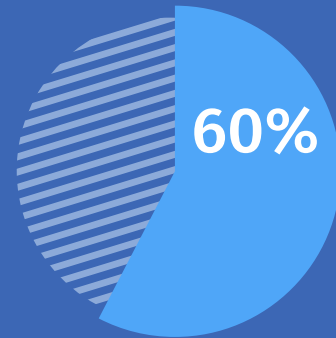


of employees

report they've spent 20 hours or more in meetings in a single work week.



of executives report that they have been brought into meetings that they **didn't have to actually attend in the first place**



of employee respondents report they've attended meetings that **didn't accomplish anything**

About Doodle

Doodle is the simplest way to schedule meetings with clients, colleagues, or teams. Find the best time for one-to-ones, team meetings, and more with our suite of user-friendly calendar tools.

The world's leader in online scheduling, Doodle is used by over 30 million people every month. Doodle AG is headquartered in Zurich, and has offices in Belgrade, Berlin, and New York City. Doodle is part of the Swiss media group Tamedia.

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