HOMEWORKING

"Don't work from bed. You want your bed to be a place of peace and calm, not work stress."

Liz Grossman Kitoyi, founder of Baobab Consulting

1. Homeworking Discussion

1. Do you have the opportunity to work from home? Did you have the opportunity to work from home before the global coronavirus pandemic?
2. Which do you prefer: homeworking or working in the office? Why?
3. When would it be impossible to work from home?
4. Do you feel more comfortable working at home or at the office?
5. What are the most important things you need to work at home?
6. How do you manage your time while working from home?
7. Do you work better or worse when you have no supervision? Why?
8. What are the main benefits of homeworking? What are the disadvantages?

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2. Homeworking Vocabulary

- **global workforce** (noun) – *a pool of workers able to be selected from anywhere in the world.*
- **productivity** (noun) – *the state of being productive or efficient.*
- **work-life balance** (noun) – *how time is divided between work and leisure.*
- **(technical) glitch** (noun) – *a problem or error in a system, usually in a computer or computer program.*
- **out of the loop** (adverb) – *without access to the information of a group.*
- **to take a break** (verb) – *to stop an activity for a period of rest.*

Using the vocabulary words above, complete the following sentences (remember to use the correct form of the word, e.g. verb conjugation or plural noun)

1. A _____ meant that staff could not use the videoconferencing software yesterday afternoon.
2. As more and more companies offer homeworking, they are able to offer jobs to people who are not even in the same country. In the future we will have a truly _____.
3. I haven't met with my team for an update in over a week so I'm feeling a little _____.
4. I've been working for five hours straight; I think I need to _____.
5. Spending two hours commuting to work each day has seriously affected my _____.
6. Too many distractions in the office are starting to affect the team's _____.

Homeworking vocabulary comprehension questions

1. Will homeworking create a global workforce? What effect will this have on employment and wages?
2. How does working at home affect your productivity? Do you find you do more or less work at home? Why is this?
3. How does homeworking affect your work-life balance? How do you balance your work time and personal time when you work at home?
4. What technical glitches have you had working at home? How did these affect your work?
5. Do you feel out of the loop when working at home? How can you remain in the loop?
6. How often do you take a break when homeworking? Is it more or less than at the office?

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3. Video: Tell Your Boss You're Working From Home

You are going to watch a TEDx Talk by Nicholas Bloom called "Go Ahead, Tell Your Boss You Are Working From Home."

Watch the video here: https://yourenglishpal.com/blog/business-english-conversation-lesson-plan-homeworking/

Watch the video and after, discuss the following questions:

1. Does homeworking have a negative image? If so, why is this? Why would so many people criticise working from home?
2. Does working from home save money? What costs are saved?
3. What are the benefits to a company of allowing their staff to work from home?
4. Do you find there are lots of distractions working at home? How do you deal with these distractions? What distractions do you have in the office?
5. Do you work longer hours at home or at the office? If longer, what are the benefits of working from home for the workers?
6. Why do people say the great enemies of working at home are the fridge, the television, and the bed? Are they your enemies when you work at home?

4. Homeworking Conversation Questions

1. What are some of the problems that people have when working at home? What problems do you have?
2. How do you communicate with your colleagues when working at home? How does this compare to when you are in the office?
3. What apps do you use to collaborate with your colleagues? What are the pros and cons of these?
4. How do you socialise with your colleagues if you work at home? Do you ever feel lonely?
5. Is it better to have meetings with clients using videoconferencing or is it better face-to-face?
6. Should staff be paid overtime if they work longer hours than they are contracted to at home?
7. How does homeworking affect a person's physical and mental health?
8. Will we all work from home in the future?

5. Homeworking Writing Task

Write a business case to your board of directors to explain the benefits of working from home. Try to use some of the vocabulary you learned earlier in this lesson. In your answer, include the following topics:

- The benefits for staff.
- The benefits for recruitment.
- The benefits for the business.

6. Homeworking Answers

2. Vocabulary

1. (technical) glitch
2. global workforce
3. out of the loop
4. take a break
5. work-life balance
6. productivity

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