

It's not “Part-Time,” it's “Right-Time”

For those of us who work the traditional 8 to 5, it can be shocking to take a step back and realize how much our daily schedule influences every other facet of our life. This rigid grind influences when we eat, when we sleep, when our kids go to school, how long we sit in traffic during rush hour, etc.

New tools and technologies are empowering workers within many industries to take their work schedule into their own hands and ditch the 8 to 5 grind for good. Some labor experts even believe that this routine is already a thing of the past.¹ Over the last few years, a shift within the workforce for more flexibility and work-life balance has accelerated.

But which model of scheduling works best for the workers that don't fit the traditional model? Is it better to have a set daily schedule? Or is 'structure' just another word for 'constraint' for some? And how does this impact their productivity? What does “true” flexibility mean?





Types of Scheduling

Full-time scheduling is your typical 40-hour work week. This has been the norm for the majority of the workforce over the last 80 years since the “8 to 5” work day was established. Historically this type of scheduling leaves little flexibility within working eight consecutive hours. Not surprisingly, productivity during these hours is not typically 100%, some studies showing as low as three hours of productive time in an eight hour workday.²

Part-time is a common answer to implementing more flexibility into the workforce. These workers work less than 35 hours per week, however the scheduled work hours are still dictated by the organization, often in shifts working consecutive hours. This works for many people, however it doesn’t meet the need for full flexibility where people may need to work small chunks of time throughout the day.

Flexible/Right-time scheduling gives the worker control. The autonomy of building their own schedule allows them to determine how work balances into their lives, with family and personal motivations the first focus for scheduling. For some, this is working 40 hours, but in disparate times to meet the demands of their personal lives. For others, this could be 20 hours a week, fit into three days. The structure of “right-time” scheduling is the lack thereof - the worker defines when they work.

	FULL TIME	PART TIME	FLEXIBLE/RIGHT TIME
Work 40 hour week	X		X
Work less than 40 hours/week		X	X
Schedule set by organization	X	X	
Worker chooses schedule			X

1 - <https://www.vox.com/22568452/work-workweek-five-day-four-jobs-pandemic>

2 - <https://www.inc.com/melanie-curtin/in-an-8-hour-day-the-average-worker-is-productive-for-this-many-hours.html>

What the Data Tells Us

Within their eBook Redesigning Work for a Hybrid Future³, technology research and consulting firm Gartner dispels the myth that employees are less productive when working remotely. Rather than responding to a monitoring system from a central work location, Gartner finds that it's radical flexibility that drives high employee performance.

In this study, radical flexibility is defined as the ability of the employee to not just determine where and when they work, but also how much work they accomplish per day. From a survey of 5,000 employees worldwide, Gartner discovered a 40% increase in high performance from workers who utilize the radical flexibility model.



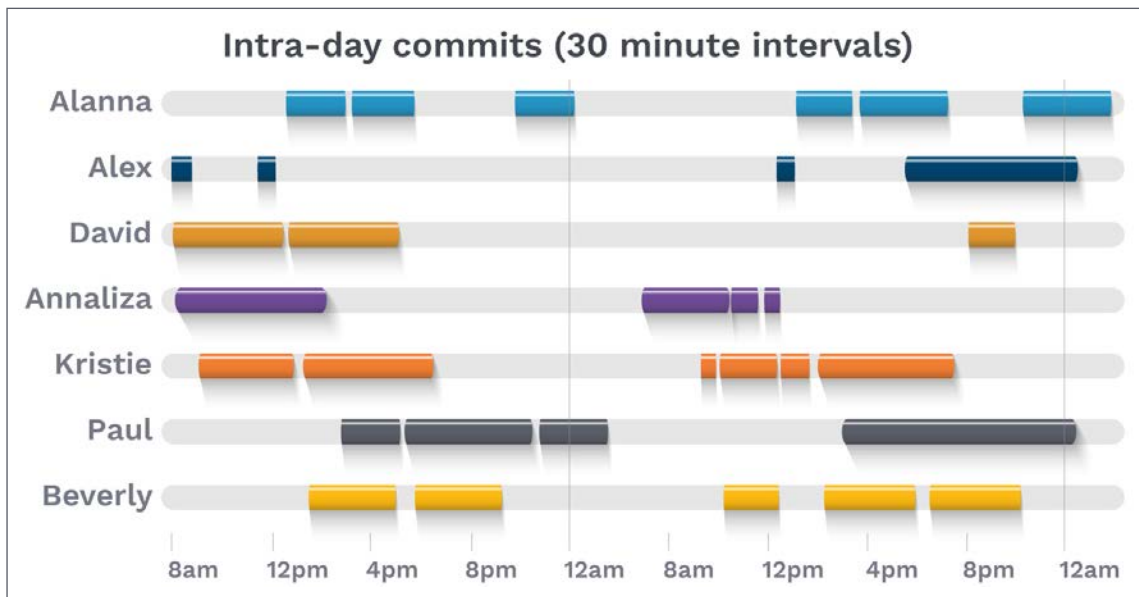
According to Forrester Consulting's research paper, Build An Anywhere Work Strategy to Drive Business Success⁴, 93% of high-satisfaction employees polled believe that their organization's remote/flexible work policies have improved their ability to provide a good customer experience. Of the same group surveyed, 86% believe that flexible hours have increased their productivity, and 78% feel more proud to work for their current employer after transitioning to a remote setup.

3 - https://emtemp.gcom.cloud/ngw/globalassets/en/insights/documents/future-of-work_ebook.pdf

4 - <https://lmistatic.blob.core.windows.net/document-library/logmein/pdf/en/forrester-logmein-remote-work.pdf>

Liveops: A Case Study in Flexibility / “Right Time”

At Liveops, we call a truly flexible schedule working “right time.” Agents work around their lives, committing in 30-minute blocks around the demands of their everyday lives. Whether they are caring for a family member or child at home, or they are passionate about making time for their hobbies. Liveops Agents have the flexibility to structure their work around their life to meet their personal needs.



The 8 to 5 structure tends to limit our ability to make appointments, stay active, and spend quality time with our loved ones. Especially when we factor in long commute times, and the sobering fact that 48% of US workers tend to stay at the office longer than expected.⁵

“Right time” scheduling allows Agents to take breaks or end their workday on their terms, giving them availability to pick up the kids from school, go to the gym, run errands, or make dinner. For more than 20 years, this flexible schedule has attracted skilled professionals to Liveops. They have the autonomy to work when they want to, from their own home offices.

5 - <https://content.timesjobs.com/more-than-48-of-individuals-reveal-they-willingly-stay-late-at-work-timesjobs-survey/articleshow/67124136.cms>

The Future of the 40-Hour Work Week

Across the country, workers are rising up and demanding more recognition from their employers.⁶ Many of these widespread labor strikes are in response to unsafe work conditions, stagnant wages, and inflexible work hours.

In response, many full-time workers have transitioned to working part-time or freelance, eschewing the benefits of full-time employment for greater control over their schedules. The 2020 Freelance Forward Survey from Upwork shows 30% of new freelancers in 2020 left a job with an employer.⁷ Given the taste of flexibility, 89% of those surveyed said they'll remain contingent workers because working remotely has made them a more productive worker. Further, 60% of flexible workers said there is no amount of money that would lure them back to a traditional work environment.



But what about part-time work? Some businesses are trialing part-time schedules to accommodate the varying needs of work-life balance for their workforce. This strategy can be a welcome opportunity for people who are looking to work fewer hours, but still desire a set schedule.

As per a survey conducted by the International Workplace Group⁸, 80% of all global workers stated they would turn down a job offer that did not offer flexible scheduling in favor of one which did. Additionally, 85% of workers believe they are more productive when given greater flexibility in their schedules.

The part-time or right-time lifestyle isn't tenable for everyone, but the schedules which our agents have carved out for themselves may offer a template on how in certain circumstances, work-life balance is easier to achieve than many have been led to believe. And that happiness doesn't need to be sacrificed for productivity.

6 - <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2021/10/31/faq-striketober/>

7 - <https://www.upwork.com/documents/freelance-forward-2020>

8 - <https://old.iwgplc.com/global-workspace-survey-2019>

liveops

Liveops, a virtual contact center, solves enterprise customer experience challenges by offering an agile, skilled workforce. This Virtual Flex model reimagines agent engagement and scheduling that attracts a better agent profile equipped to meet the fluctuations in contact volume at scale. Our 20 years of expertise pioneering a virtual model across industries is proven to deliver superior customer experiences, faster program readiness and increased revenue compared with traditional contact centers or other work-from-home models. Liveops exists to improve the lives of agents, our clients and employees.

[Liveops.com](https://liveops.com) | sales@liveops.com