

Working Life in a New Era

<http://allprofessionalenglish.blogspot.com/2020/06/working-life-in-new-era.html>



I Lead-in.

- What does a typical working day in an office look like? When does it start and finish? What can people do in an office?
- How did working life change during the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown? How did people work without going to their offices?
- What problems did people have working from home?
- What was good about working from home?

II Vocabulary focus. Match the words to their definitions. Use six words in your sentences.

1.	employee	A.	morally and socially good enough
2.	shift	B.	to stay away without permission
3.	to take advantage of	C.	to suffer something difficult or unpleasant
4.	broadband	D.	to not do something that you have to do
5.	manufacturing	E.	to demand something
6.	power cut	F.	a person who is paid to work for an organization or for another person

7.	to affect	G.	believing that you are more important than other people
8.	acceptable	H.	a change
9.	to bunk off	I.	to allow something to continue
10.	to insist	J.	to make good use of
11.	self-important	K.	the business of making things in factories
12.	to stuff	L.	a system of connecting computers to the Internet and moving information at a very high speed
13.	crowded	M.	a period of time when there is no electricity supply
14.	to endure	N.	to push something into a small space and fill it
15.	to sustain	O.	full of people
16.	downside	P.	to have influence on someone or something
17.	to skip	Q.	the negative part of something

III Follow the link below. Focus on the words and expressions (study definitions), match the terms to their definitions, solve the crossword puzzle, complete the quiz, chase down the correct answer to earn points, unscramble words and phrases (correct order of letters), type in words to fill in the blanks, test your knowledge of vocabulary.

<https://www.studystack.com/flashcard-3233559>

IV Look through the article. Nine sentence fragments have been removed. Read the article and choose from the sentence parts (A-I) the one which fits each gap (1-9).

Farewell BC (before coronavirus). Welcome AD (after domestication)

1_____, but people adapted. January and February seemed like an ancient era – the BC (before coronavirus) to the new AD (after domestication).

The shift may look a lot like great workplace transformations in the 19th and 20th centuries. In the past factories were designed around one great power system. Then electrification allowed individual machines to have their own power source. But half a century went by 2_____.

The current, rapid shift to AD was possible for several reasons. First, broadband services are quick enough 3_____. Second, advanced economies revolve around services, not manufacturing. Back in the 1970s, when Britain adopted a three-day week, there were power cuts and home life was severely affected as well. The pandemic has not turned the lights off. Not only that, the lockdown has made remote work seem both normal and acceptable. 4_____ had to overcome the suspicion that they were bunking off. Now those who insist on being at the office sound self-important.

Although offices will not disappear, 5_____ that working life will return to BC ways. For more than a century workers have stuffed themselves onto crowded trains and buses, or

endured traffic jams, 6_____, five days a week. For the past two months they have enjoyed the break.

Another aspect of the AD era may be the disappearance of the five-day working week. Even before the pandemic 7_____. In the AD era the barrier between home and working life will be even harder to sustain. 8_____, with the company video call the only fixture. The downside, however, is that the rhythm of life has been disrupted and new routines are needed: as Madness, a British pop group, sang, people are “trying different ways to make a difference to the days”.

Looking further out, the AD era may bring other changes. Some may decide to live in small towns where housing costs are lower, 9_____. Men will have fewer excuses to skip cleaning or child care if they are not disappearing to the office. In a sense, this is a return to normal: until the 19th century most people worked at or close to their homes. But social historians may still regard 2020 as the start of a new age.

- A. since they have no need to commute
- B. it is hard to imagine
- C. In future employees may work and take breaks when they please
- D. many workers took phone calls or answered emails at the weekend
- E. to get into the office and back
- F. In March a lot of employees left their offices with no date for a return to the workplace in sight
- G. In the past employees who stayed home
- H. before factories were reconfigured to take advantage of electricity
- I. to allow for document downloads and videoconferencing

V Comprehension check. Answer the questions.

1. What meaning can the abbreviations BC and AD have in the modern world?
2. What workplace transformation does the shift to working from home look like?
3. How is 2020 workplace transformation different from the changes that happened in the past?
4. Why were people and economies able to adapt to new working conditions very quickly?
5. Did current workplace and working week transformations affect home life?
6. How have attitudes to working from home changed because of the lockdown?
7. What may happen to the five-day working week and barriers between working life and home after the pandemic?
8. What other changes may life after pandemic bring to employees?
9. Is working close to home a completely new idea? Why or why not?

VI OVER TO YOU. Get ready to discuss the questions:

- a) What are the attitudes to working from home in your country?

b) How has office workers' life changed because of the pandemic? How do you see the office of the future? What will a typical working week look like?