



Good morning. My name is Gregory Ciupka and I'd like to thank you for joining me today to explore the concept of a 4 Day Weekend. I hope to inspire each of you to apply these ideas at your workplace.

## Working For The Weekend

HRPA 2019  
ANNUAL CONFERENCE  
& TRADE SHOW

- “Where is everybody?”
- “waiting for the weekend”



Everybody's Working For The Weekend, the lead single on an album by Loverboy planted the seed way back in the 80's.

Apparently the groups lead guitarist Paul Dean was at the beach one weekday afternoon and wondered, where is everybody? He concluded that they were, quote, “waiting for the weekend”, end quote.

It got me to thinking, what could we do to enhance the weekend?

## This is a discussion

- Highlight possibilities
- Not prescriptive
- I welcome your input

A couple of things before we get started. My presentation challenges the traditional approach to work. While I use specific examples, they are not intended to be prescriptive. As Human Resource Professionals, your guidance and support is key. I've reserved 20 minutes for discussion at the end of the presentation and look forward to your feedback. Ultimately, any changes must satisfy the needs of your business, your staff and your customers. And governments have a major role to play, defining enabling legislation and hopefully leading the way in their capacity as major employers.



For most of my career, I worked the traditional 9-5 routine. As Dolly Parton and her friends noted - what a way to make a living. Critically, there is no magic or natural law that defines 9-5. It is simply a default arrangement distilled over many years.

## 4 Day Weekend - Key Ideas

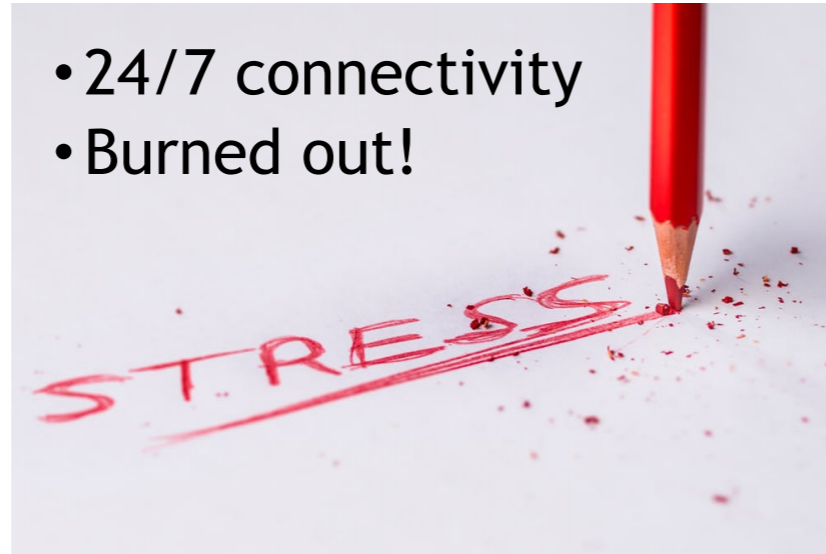


- optimize work hours
- minimize commuting
- re-think concept of vacations
- re-visit delivery of education

The key ideas here include illustrating the impact of optimizing our work hours and the significance of minimizing commuting frequency. Then we'll revisit the concept of vacation. And finally we'll raise important issues with our education model, which ideally will be addressed in concert with changes in the workplace.

## Workday Today

- 24/7 connectivity
- Burned out!



Technological developments promised to ease our workload, but it seems many of us are working longer than ever, often suffering high levels of stress. If you are anything like me, between work commitments and home life, there are just not enough hours in the day. It seems that technology has failed us, but I say that we have yet to reorganize our routines to take advantage of it.

## 4 Day Weekend and 3 Work Days x 2



- fewer
- longer
- more productive



Let's start with the basic concept. Imagine dividing your staff into 2 groups. The first group, represented in blue, will work three days starting Monday. The green group will work the next three days ending on Saturday. Each group is committed to working for 3 days followed by a 4 day weekend. And the same pattern repeats each week.

My first inclination to address the reduction in the number of days worked, was to increase the length of each workday, but I quickly reconsidered. I noticed that we are programmed to measure time from a young age - you can play for another 15 minutes before bedtime, you need to practice your piano for half an hour each day and so on. It is a measurement system based purely on time and fails to consider productivity.

Another downside, in my experience, task completion often expands to fill the time allocated. By focusing on productivity we ensure better results.

## Camilla Kring, PhD Work-Life Balance Expert



- Circadian rhythm
- A-persons - early risers
- B-persons - night owls
- productivity peaks vary by genetics and age

According to Dr Camilla Kring, an expert in Work-Life Balance, we all have a natural preference to either rise early or later, and our preference has a direct correlation to productivity. When most of us were farmers, it was necessary to rise early, an A person preference, regardless of our predisposition, just to ensure our very survival. Today, despite industrialization and advances in technology, the constraints of the traditional work week, mean most of us cannot choose a work schedule that leverages our natural predisposition. Dr. Kring's research shows we need to change our deeply ingrained culture, to rise early for work or school, in recognition of our individual circadian rhythms.



# 168 Hours In Your Week



sleep	work	commute	personal weekday	personal weekend
		(4)	(28)	32
56	36	10	34	32

As a retired accountant, I needed to look at the figures, to see how working 3 days per week might look. I created a spreadsheet and made a bunch of assumptions. Let me explain what I found.

Starting from the left, the pink column reflects sleeping time - just a place holder here. Of course it will vary for each individual and change over time. Next, the blue column represents work time. I think there are good reasons to consider reducing the total number of hours worked, but I've assumed no changes for this illustration. Continuing across the chart you see columns representing commuting and personal time during the week.

Moving from 5 to 3 work days, automatically reduces commuting time by 40%. If your commute is one hour each way, that would represent a savings of 4 hours per week. Note that this savings is also available for telecommuters.

Personal time during the week moves to the proposed 4 day weekend. The browned out areas represent these time shifts, moving to the bright green area on the far right.

The 4 commuting hours represent a real savings, while the 28 hours represent only a shift to weekend time. In this example, the effect is to double your weekend waking hours, as expected. I call this shift, a concentration of free time.

What would you do with all that free time - 4 days to spend as you like, every week?

## Existing Work Models



- essential services - 24/7
- health care - 24/7
- retail/grocery 7 days a week

The concentration of free time might be an easy sell. But we also need to address the fact that we will be working fewer days. Let's consider the worst case, making the 3 workdays longer to compensate for this change. Is such a shift possible? Can people tolerate longer work days in exchange for longer weekends?

The reality is, we already have many sectors that are organized around longer work days. Essential services need to be available 24/7. Many police forces for example operate on 12 hour shifts. Similarly, health care professionals in hospital settings do the same.

My own conversations with individuals required to work longer shifts have a common theme. They all love the concentrated free time that shift work provides.

Retail services and grocery stores offer their services over extended hours and experience peak demand on evenings and weekends. This happens because most of their customers are working during the day - recall the Loverboy inspiration. I mention this to bring your attention to the fact that our schedule affects not only our work time but also our activities during the off hours.

We've already talked about reducing the work week to 3 days to minimize the commute. But we should also acknowledge our circadian rhythms to optimize personal productivity. Let's incorporate individual preferences and look at that impact.

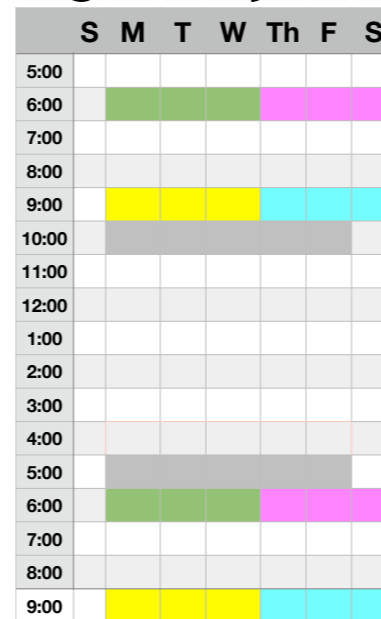
## 4 Groups Working 3 Days Each



A persons  
(early)

B persons  
(later)

Small change,  
big impact



40% less travel


75% less  
congestion


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This chart illustrates the start and end of work days for 4 distinct groups. Two groups, illustrated here in green and yellow, start their week on Monday. And the pink and blue groups start their week on Thursday. Similarly, two of these groups start their day earlier in the morning while the other two start a little later.

This design accommodates the circadian rhythm highlighted by Dr. Kring. Note the impact on traffic congestion. We see an immediate 40% reduction as a result of working fewer days. But congestion is also reduced by as much as 75% as a result of varying the travel times. Staggering work hours to a greater degree will result in a much better use of our built infrastructure.

If your routine includes a lengthy commute, imagine three quarters of the number of people & vehicles you encounter during that commute disappearing. You will be bound to find a seat on the bus or subway. Traffic will move more safely and more quickly. Even parking will be less of an issue.

<b>Today</b>		
Vacation		<b>Individual</b>
Statutory days ~11		= (52 x 5) - 30
10-30 days ~16		= 260 - 30
0-6 Sick days <u>~3</u>		= <b>230</b> days
Total ~30		about 1600 hours
		<b>Organization</b>
		= (52 x 5) - 11
		= <b>249</b> - 8 hour days


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We've looked at concentrating free time to create the 4 day weekend and staggering work schedules to disperse 75% of the traffic volume. Now let's look at the annual schedule.

At present, we have a variety of non work days. Statutory Holidays or compensation in lieu are defined by legislation. They accommodate celebration of Christian holidays and important historical people and events. Then we have personal vacation days. Most individuals are initially allocated 2 weeks and this can grow to several weeks based on seniority and other recognition. Some sectors, such as educators typically enjoy a winter and spring break in addition to extended time off during the summer. Sick days and time for professional development may also be granted by some organizations.

I did some more calculating and made a few more assumptions. Currently, there are about 260 potential weekdays each year. Adjusting for non work days, most of us are committed to working about 230 days. Based on 7 hours per day, this represents about 1600 hours annually. Note the definition of a work day does vary by employer.


By my calculation, adjusting for statutory holidays, the typical organization operates for 249 days, while funding the full 260 days plus any additional costs to cover employee absence during vacations.

It is important to note that all vacations, as we know them today, are funded by the employer. As a result the employer awards the personal vacation days and maintains a great deal of control over them. Ironically, as a person becomes more valuable to an organization and earns a commensurate increase in allocated vacation days, they are actually scheduled to work less.

## Tomorrow

**Vacation**

- 2 weeks statutory (**floating**)
- Personal time - create your own vacations (**not** funded by employer)




**Individual**

= (52 x 3) - 6  
 = 156 - 6  
 = **150** days (~10:45 hours\*)

**Organization**

= (52 x 6)  
 = **300** - 15 hour days?



If time was the only consideration, the length of each workday would need to increase by nearly 4 hours to 10 hours 45 minutes. Quite a long day. At the other extreme, daily productivity would need to increase by about 50% to maintain the status quo. Theoretically any combination of more hours and increased productivity per hour would satisfy this metric.

From the organizations point of view, it could be open for business for an additional 52 days per year as a result of adding Saturday to their weekly schedule, not to mention extended daily hours.

In my 4 Day Weekend illustration, I've invented floating Statutory Holidays to provide for spiritual celebrations. This would be 6 work days in the world of 3 day work weeks. Full time employment would be defined as actually working 150 days annually.

Important National and Provincial Holidays could be celebrated on Sundays, similar to the way we celebrate Mothers Day.

The schedule for individuals drops from 230 to 150 somewhat longer work days. The organization would function in some capacity for up to 300 days that can each be about twice as long when compared to the current 249 days of operation.

Dramatic changes to be sure. But we still need to address vacations. I'll get to that next.

## Back to back 7 days off, every 2nd week?

	M-T-W	Th-F-S	Su
WEEK 1			
WEEK 2			
WEEK 3			

Most weekends last 2 days. In the proposed structure, the new standard will be 4 days. Already a dramatic increase. But what happens if you want more than 4 days off?

Let's start with a back to back schedule. If you start your 3 day week on Thursday and continue working through Wednesday the following week, you then enjoy a full 7 days off potentially every 2nd week, and all with full pay. Really unbelievable!

If you are able to work 6 consecutive days, what I call doubling up, the result is actually 8 days off. Either way, it sounds like an extended weekend potentially every 2nd week.

Let me illustrate what happens if you follow a back to back work schedule. Consider the weekend trek to the cottage. Friday evening, many people pack up the family SUV and head north, creating traffic congestion. Imagine if three quarters of that volume could be displaced. Some might go up Wednesday afternoon. Others would leave Saturday evening. Traffic volume you experience would be greatly reduced and the trip up and back would be a little easier. And your time at the lake or on the ski hill could be up to 8 days long depending on your schedule.

An added bonus in this example, you only endure the drive north once every 2nd week, cutting your weekend travel time in half.

# Double-up Extended Vacation



WEEK	M-T-W	Th-F-S	Su
1	Red	Red	Green
2	Red	Red	Green
3	Red	Red	Green
4	Red	Red	Green
5	Green	Green	Green
6	Green	Green	Green
7	Green	Green	Green
8	Green	Green	Green

The double up approach provides 8 consecutive days off, every second week, as often as you like, with negligible cost to the employer. But what if you wanted to take a longer vacation - a month travelling across Canada, for example. Is it possible for you to double up, work 6 consecutive days for 4 weeks, and then take the next month off? Of course it depends on the nature of your work. Can you trade shifts with a coworker with similar skills? If your work is unique and only you can do it, can you get ahead by doubling up your weeks. Ideally the answer is yes in both cases, making it possible to create extended holidays of the desired duration. If not, you will be limited to 4 day weekends every week, which is still pretty special. In all cases you will still earn your full wage. It is truly, like having your cake and eating it too.

## Vacations

- based on personal needs/wants
- up to 26 weeks annually
- need flexibility to coordinate with family & friends



Once people realize that it is possible to concentrate free time based on their needs, I think they will be extremely motivated to find ways to keep up their end of the productivity bargain - the rewards are dramatic. The 4 day weekend approach opens the door to wonderful new opportunities.

Consider a person just starting out. They are already working but want to complete some technical courses to upgrade their skills. Since they have a 4 day weekend every week, they have the time and the necessary energy to enrol and excel in suitable courses.

Another example might be an individual with an ailing parent that needs assistance getting to a health care appointment. Instead of calling in sick or taking time off, the extended weekend will provide the flexibility to support their parent on their own time. How much vacation you book becomes a personal preference, up to six months annually - without burdening the employer with the cost.



## Productivity Opportunity?

Americans spend nearly two hours a day shopping online at work, study suggests



CNBC

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A report by CNBC suggests our neighbours to the south spend almost two hours of their work day shopping online. Of course this never happens in Canada, but it is an excellent example of why it is important to measure productivity. In the CNBC example, people are putting in the time, but the expected productivity is not there. But we can address this gap by measuring productivity. If the work is completed as assigned and deadlines satisfied, why does it matter how long and when?

## Everyone Is Not The Same



- infants
- children
- young adults
- families
- empty nesters
- seniors

adjust **your** schedule  
to suit **your** needs

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Here is another reality, life is a cycle, and we need to incorporate that fact into our work schedule design. Parents with infant children may choose to work opposite shifts or alternating days so that their kids can spend time with at least one of them every day.

As the children get a little more independent, the parents preference may change to having coordinated schedules - school and work on the same rotation. Then the whole family can enjoy a 4 day weekend together every week. What would that do for the family experience?

In the career cycle, granting parental leave is a great start, but raising children is a lifetime commitment. The level and type of parental support needed changes over time. Our work schedule should incorporate the necessary flexibility to provide this support.

The preferences of young adults and empty nesters will differ from families. Their personal schedule is likely to have more flexibility. Some may be available to pick up extra shifts while others might be happy to be on call to resolve scheduling conflicts. We need to work together.

## School Terms



- elementary - 10 months
- secondary - 9 months
- post secondary - 8 months
- night school

Start too early?

Start too late?

Let's take a closer look at the school system. School days typically start after you leave for work and end before you get home. And school terms vary from 8 to 10 months plus summer and other holidays. All of this causes endless scheduling conflict for parents, especially when the children are younger.

And night school after a full day at work is unnecessarily challenging, at least in my experience as an early riser.

Is it possible that our education model is not optimized to maximize learning outcomes?

Recall our good friend, Dr. Kring and the circadian rhythm. It turns out most youth are B type individuals, meaning they function best a little later in the day - don't force them to wake up to an alarm if you want to maximize their performance.

## School Breaks?



- summer vacation counter-productive

I learned that teachers spend much of September re-teaching what was forgotten over the summer months. And we can all remember how little was accomplished in late June when anticipation of the pending summer vacation provided a powerful distraction. How did we get into this situation? Apparently when it came time to define the school year, 10 months was a compromise with farmer/parents, who needed their children to help with the harvest. Remember, that was back in the day when most people were farmers and the combine tractor did not exist.

## School Grading



- based on time, not mastery
- Khan Academy

Most education is based on time, at the extreme, scoring 50 or 100% plays a minor role. Complete grade 7 math and you will advance to grade 8. If you struggled in earlier years, by the time you get to grade 10, frankly, you don't stand a chance. A much better outcome is possible if we measure mastery of a subject and advance the student only when they demonstrate proficiency. Check out Khan Academy online if you are interested in more on this topic.

I think it would be much better if sufficient flexibility was built into the school system to accommodate student and family needs.

## What a school district learned from a 4-day week



### BENEFIT

- save 3-hour bus ride
- improved attendance
- cost savings & consistency
- added sports
- added music

### REQUIRED CHANGE

- longer days
- shorter recesses

Can we try 3-day weeks?

PBS

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Adapting the school routine is not unprecedented and can be instructive. Let's check some real life examples. It turns out that many rural school boards in the US and at least one in Canada, where the school bus ride can be one and a half hours each way, have trialled 4 day school weeks. A great start.

The results were interesting. Grades were generally not impacted, a key consideration. Attendance improved, especially among teachers, reducing the need for substitute teachers. This is not only a cost saving but also ensures consistency in the classroom - another win.

Interestingly, other activities like team sports, music and other arts programs were spontaneously organized by teachers and parents on the fifth day. This is instructive. Concentrating free time creates new opportunities to participate in activities that were previously inaccessible.

The biggest issue was complaints from parents who needed to resolve the resulting child care issues on the fifth day.

In this example, the changes required to implement a 4 day school-week included extending the school day and shortening the recess periods. Seems like a reasonable compromise.

I would love to see 3 day school weeks matching the parents work schedule. And forget about summer vacations, they are counter-productive. Building in significant family time consistently over the year would be an immeasurable benefit to society, in my opinion.

## Factors To Consider

demographics

automation

sustainability

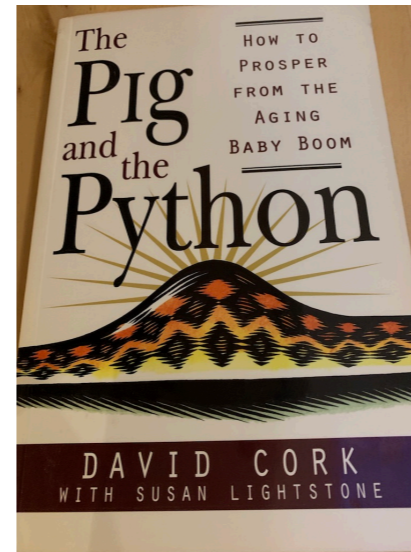
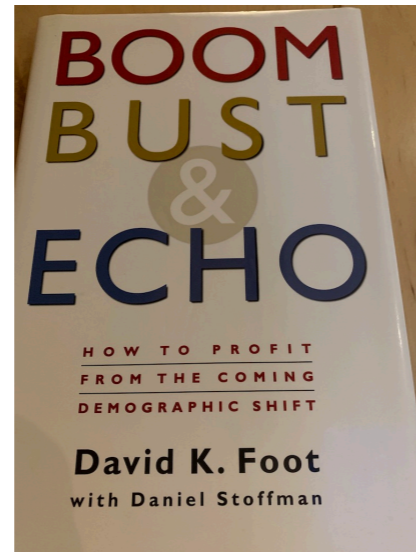


Dealing with change is not new. Remember the farmers that negotiated 2 month school vacations for their children. At that time, farmers represented 52% of the population and they needed help with the harvest. Today less than 2% of the population supplies our food and the process is highly automated. Things change and new opportunities are created.

In my experience, initiating a change is difficult. Resistance is natural, but ultimately it is better to actively participate and guide the change to our advantage.

Improving the quality of our lives is the primary goal. The factors we need to consider in designing our workweek include demographics, automation and sustainability.

## Remember Demographic Davids?



I was born at the peak of the baby boom. There were more babies born in Canada that year than ever before or since. The themes of these books are still relevant today, my cohort is ramping up for their third act.



## Demographic Shift

Canada 2017	Millions	
0-19	7.9	on deck
20-44	12.5	at bat
45-64	10.1	older
65 plus	6.2	wiser

Statistics Canada

For reference, I've summarized the latest Canadian population statistics. Let me highlight a few interesting facts. Over the next 20 years, more than 10 million of my peers will be eligible for Old Age Security. They will be replaced by fewer than 8 million potential workers, representing a 10% reduction to the working age population.

## Retirement Looms

...as of the November 2018 jobs report, 21.5 per cent of the jobs in Canada were held by someone aged over 55.

The Globe and Mail



The Globe & Mail reported that 1 in 5 jobs were held by people over age 55. These are your most experienced staff. Many are thinking about retirement and things other than work. Offering them a 3 day work alternative might be an excellent retention strategy.

## Senior Dependency Ratio



The rate of individuals 65 years and older relative to the population between 15 to 64 years

- projected to increase from 25.2 to 45.6 per cent

The Globe and Mail

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Also reported by The Globe and Mail, the senior dependency ratio, a measure of the number of retirees compared to the working age population is projected to almost double. Conventional wisdom anticipates slowing economic growth as a result, but Baby Boomers rarely conform to conventional wisdom. I see significant growth opportunities for personal services demanded by this cohort.

# Automation

1/3 of Canadian workers will be automated out of a job by artificial intelligence and robotics



McKinsey Global Institute

McKinsey reports that one third of Canadian workers can expect to be automated out of a job in the next 15 years. Last year, The Globe and Mail reported a figure as high as 40%. The transition is bound to be difficult, but I believe that automation represents a powerful opportunity that we need to harness.

## Pending Shifts

%	jobs	workers
automation	(40)	
retirement		(10)
new services	+?	

So, automation may displace up to 40% of the labour force. At the same time, the workforce is shrinking by 10%, offering a partial offset. It is likely that new staffing will be required for personal services demanded by aging baby boomers. Considering these factors, it seems that less total effort will be required to maintain our standard of living. This happens to fit nicely with the proposed 3 day work week.

# Sustainability



Reduce carbon emissions by 40%

The **Paris Agreement** is an agreement within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), dealing with **greenhouse gas emissions**, mitigation, adaptation, and finance, starting in the year **2020**.

It seems everyone is talking about the Paris Agreement. And we have deliverables dealing with reducing greenhouse gas emissions. I think we can make significant progress quickly and economically in this area by implementing variants of the 4 Day Weekend.

## Specific Impacts

- individual
- employer
- society

Let's look at the 4 Day Weekend from each major stakeholders perspective. The individual. Your organization. And finally, society as a whole.

# Individuals



## Near Term

- convenience
- family time
- time for exercise
- reduce stress
- flexibility

## Long Term

- improve health
- extend vacations
- new skills
- adventure
- flexibility

Individuals will experience increased convenience in the near term due to more flexible service hours. In the long term, we can expect people to acquire new skills, and experience more adventure. There is no end to the way people might spend their new found free time. The key for individuals is to maximize flexibility over their schedule.

Today it is a significant challenge to spend quality time with family and friends. By doubling the length of a weekend, in a real sense, we create more time. The general level of stress can be greatly reduced thanks to traffic relief and the potential for exercise and leisure activities. This may even lead to an improvement in the general level of health.



## Employer



- 50% real estate cost reduction
- extended service hours
- Improved attendance
- Productivity improvements

Turning to the organizations perspective, if your staff work shifts that do not intersect, for example starting Mondays and Thursdays as described, you can reduce your real estate facilities by 50%. Alternately, you can grow your business by up to 100% without increasing real estate costs. These are dramatic opportunities, not incremental changes.

Staff attendance will improve in two ways. Vacations will now be scheduled, at least in part by trading shifts between complimentary staff. Secondly, sick and personal care days should decline significantly. If staff are present and engaged, productivity is certain to follow.

## Society - The Bigger Picture



reduced carbon emissions?  
healthier citizens - reduction in sick days  
happier citizens  
new services - economic growth

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From societies perspective, reducing the workweek from 5 to 3 days, will reduce automobile related carbon emissions used for commuting by 40%. Sure, this may be offset in part by new activities undertaken by these same individuals in their new found time. In my view it means healthier and happier living and less sitting in traffic.

Shifting activities in the manner described will inevitably generate new demands for services, be they entertainment or recreational activities. Skills upgrading and enrolment in personal interest courses will become more accessible. Sounds like plenty of new business opportunities & economic growth.

## Transition - Where To Start



- Accelerated project delivery
- Accommodate rapid growth
- Telecommuting

Making significant structural changes in society requires considered thought and validation. You are in the best position to promote these opportunities. Consider using the double up approach to accelerate project delivery timelines. And alleviate real estate constraints by shifting part of your workforce to off peak hours. Consider introducing or expanding telecommuting programs.

## It Is Already Happening



Telecommuting on the rise to meet challenges of real estate market, labour shortage

CBC

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Our own public broadcaster reported recently that telecommuting is one way that organizations are dealing with real estate constraints and as incentives to attract employees.

Telecommuting eliminates the commute, an excellent first step, but keep in mind that it does not concentrate free time to create the longer weekend.

# Leap Of Faith



Who gets more done —  
office workers or telecommuters?

CBC

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I encourage you to resist the temptation to discount telecommuting. In case you are worried, another article from CBC reports that given the right mix of staff, telecommuters can be more productive than on-site employees.

## Competitive Advantage



Most Canadian employees are **ready to quit** their jobs, survey find

CBC

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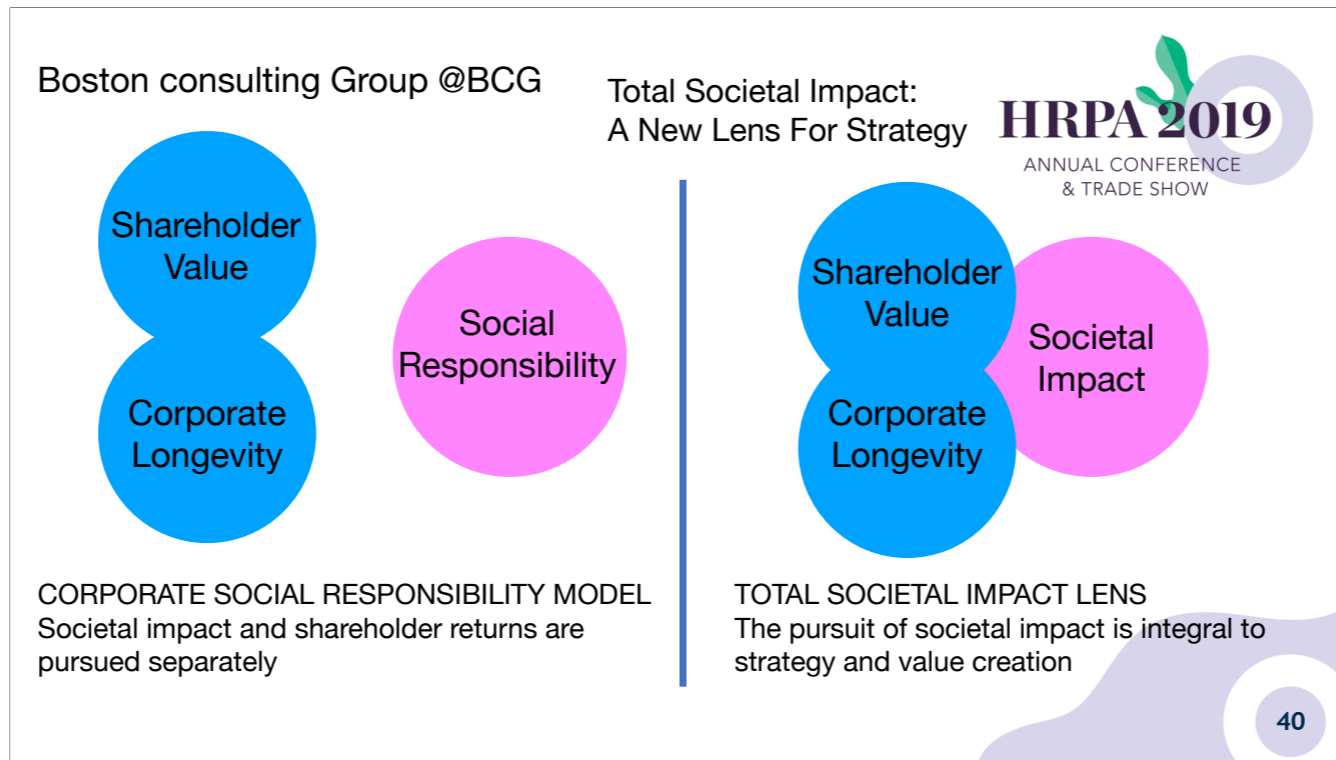
And if you are still not convinced, according to the CBC most employees are ready to make a change. Redefining the work week provides an opportunity to act proactively to address this issue.

## One More Thing



- ✓ \$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$
- ✓ Support each other
- ✓ Enjoy the trip!

One more thing. How much will this change cost? The cost of changing a schedule might be a stroke of a pen. And labour related legislation will require amendment. Some jobs will be displaced. Ultimately, the biggest cost will be supporting people and organizations during the transition. The 4 Day Weekend represents a massive change.



In a tweet last year, The Boston Consulting Group introduced a concept described as Total Societal Impact: a new lens for strategy focused on positively impacting the bottom line and the world at large. The left side illustrates the old lens where shareholder value and corporate longevity do not intersect with social responsibility. The right side illustrates the new lens, where societal impact is fully integrated with both value and longevity. I think they are on to something.



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I've included a list of sources for the materials quoted today. The conference posts these slides on their website for 6 months for your reference.



I hope that you have been inspired to revisit the work schedule at your organization. It can have a significant positive societal impact. Thank you for your attention. I'll be happy to take questions.