

The Workliday

I have invented the word *Workliday*. The word is made up using the words *work* and *holiday*. The thing is these days how many of us actually switch off from the office when we go on holiday? The answer is probably very few people completely switch off. With the arrival of laptops, Blackberrys and now tablets, and the easy access most people have to the internet, makes it irresistible not to turn off completely. It's like a drug, a compulsion. We must access our emails or we might miss something. When we do check our emails we find probably not much has changed. However, there could be that important decision we are waiting on that could change our lives forever. Nevertheless, there are many professional workers who simply can't switch off when they take a break. They must take their mobile phone or tablet with them.

These days it is vital for some people to keep in touch with the office. People have to stay connected. They are completely lost without fiddling with something electronic. It is quite pathetic. I mean, can't the office manage without them for a few days? Whatever happened to the annual two week holiday when people actually did switch off from their job? Today people go for a walk by the sea then rush back to check their emails! However, many would say it is the age we live in. It is a must when on holiday to communicate with the office or to our friends via Facebook or Skype. Many professional people these days work from home. They can sit in the garden or on the terrace and do their work on their laptop, then email it to the office. The internet has revolutionised how we work. People who work in offices do need to recharge their batteries so taking a break is important. This applies especially to those who work fixed hours i.e. 9-5. But those people who work from home aren't under the same stress. Maybe there is less travelling to do i.e. just a weekly trip to the office. These days' people can adapt their work time and work at different time periods during the day.

This English lesson is a good example of all this. I write this in the early morning and will complete it in the evening during the school holidays. My job dictates that after a weekend away the first thing I must do is to check my emails. My mobile phone is normally on – just in case! How about you?

Category: English / Holidays / Working
Level: Intermediate / Upper Intermediate

EXERCISES

1. **The Workliday:** What is your understanding of the fictitious word *Workliday*? Go round the room swapping details.

2. **Dictation:** The teacher will read four to six lines of the article slowly and clearly. Students will write down what they hear. The teacher will repeat the passage slowly again. Self-correct your work from page one - filling in spaces and correcting mistakes. Be honest with yourself on the number of errors. Advise the teacher of your total number of errors. Less than five is very good. Ten is acceptable. Any more is room for improvement! More than twenty - you need to do some work!

3. **Reading:** The students should now read the article aloud, swapping readers every paragraph.

4. **Vocabulary:** Students should now look through the article and underline any vocabulary they do not know. Look in dictionaries. Discuss and help each other out. The teacher will go through and explain any unknown words or phrases.

5. **The article:** Students should look through the article with the teacher.

- a) What is the article about?
- b) What do you think about the article?

6. **The Workliday:** Think of five things you might do on holiday associated with work. Then add five things we do today we didn't do in the past. Write them below. Explain to your partner why you chose these.

Five things you might do on holiday associated with work	Five things we do today on holiday we didn't do in the past
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5

The teacher will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

7. **Let's think!** In pairs. On the board write as many words as you can to do with **The Workliday**. *One-two minutes*. Compare with other teams. Using your words compile a short dialogue together.

8. **Let's roleplay 1: Word FM:** *In pairs*. You are in the *Word FM* radio studio. One of you is the presenter; the other student is the guest (*Yourself*). Today's interview is: *The Workliday*. *5 minutes*.

9. **Let's chat!** *In pairs*. You are on holiday by the sea. Get talking about how you still connect to the office and why? Also, why you can't cut your ties while on holiday.

10. Let's do 'The Article Quiz': Have the students quiz each other in pairs. They score a point for each correct answer and half a point each time they have to look at the article for help. See who can get the highest score!

Student A

- 1) Name the electronic devices.
- 2) What two words are used instead of 'but'?
- 3) What is a good example of all this?
- 4) What do people do by the sea?
- 5) Who need to recharge their batteries?

Student B

- 1) What is a compulsion?
- 2) What could change our lives forever?
- 3) What has revolutionised how we work?
- 4) Name the social networks.
- 5) Explain the word Workliday.

11. Advantages and disadvantages! Think of three advantages and disadvantages of the *Workliday*. Write them below. Explain to your partner why you chose these.

Advantages	Disadvantages
1	1
2	2
3	3

The teacher will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

12. Electronic gadgets+: Explain the following to your partner: What do they do?

1	A Blackberry	4	A mobile phone
2	A tablet	5	The iPod
3	A laptop	6	The internet

The teacher will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

13. Let's roleplay 2: CNN Radio: In pairs/groups. One of you is the interviewer. The others are themselves. You are in the *CNN Radio* studio. Today's interview is about: *Electronic devices. 10 minutes.*

The teacher will choose some pairs to roleplay their interview in front of the class.

14. Let's write an e-mail: Write and send a 200 word e-mail to your teacher about: **The Workliday**. Your e-mail can be read out in class.

15. Sentence starters: Finish these sentence starters. Correct your mistakes. Compare what other people have written.

- a) The Workliday _____
- b) The holiday _____
- c) Communication _____

DISCUSSION

Student A questions

- 1) Is it fair on your family and friends if you go on holiday with them and then you keep running off to check your emails and chat on line?
- 2) Why have our attitudes on communicating with the office changed?
- 3) How do you recharge your batteries?
- 4) Do you work 9-5?
- 5) Do you prefer flexible working? Explain.
- 6) Do you use a laptop or tablet for work?
- 7) Would you like to work from home and travel to the office just once a week?
- 8) Do you own a tablet?
- 9) Are you taking a Workliday this year? Explain.
- 10) Do you go for a walk by the sea and then go home to read your emails?

Student B questions

- 1) Do you communicate with friends back home via Facebook or Skype when on holiday? If yes, why?
- 2) What do you think of the word *Workliday*? Explain.
- 3) Do you communicate with your office while on holiday? Why? Why not?
- 4) Do you have a compulsive need to fiddle with an electronic device while on holiday?
- 5) What device do you use while on holiday? Why?
- 6) Do you work from home? Explain.
- 7) What do you think about people who work from home?
- 8) Do you turn off when on holiday?
- 9) Have attitudes changed when people contact a person on holiday?
- 10) Did you like this discussion?

SPEAKING

Let's discuss! The Workliday

Allow 10-15 minutes – As a class / small groups / pairs / 1 to 1

Discuss the following:

20 things about Workliday's.

The teacher can moderate the session.

GAP FILL: READING:

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

The Workliday

I have invented the word *Workliday*. The word is made up using the words *work* and (1)____. The thing is these days how many of us (2)_____ switch off from the (3)_____ when we go on holiday? The answer is probably very few people completely switch off. With the arrival of laptops, Blackberrys and now (4)_____, and the easy access most people have to the (5)_____, makes it irresistible not to turn off completely. It's like a drug, a (6)_____. We must access our (7)_____ or we might miss something. When we do check our emails we find probably not much has changed. However, there could be that important decision we are waiting on that could change our lives forever. Nevertheless, there are many professional workers who simply can't switch off when they take a break. They must take their (8)_____ phone or tablet with them.

emails

holiday

internet

actually

tablets

office

mobile

compulsion

These days it is vital for some people to keep in touch with the office. People have to stay connected. They are completely lost without fiddling with something (1)_____. It is quite pathetic. I mean, can't the office manage without them for a few days? Whatever happened to the annual two week (2)_____ when people actually did switch off from their job? Today people go for a walk by the sea then rush back to check their emails! However, many would say it is the age we live in. It is a must when on holiday to (3)_____ with the office or to our friends via Facebook or Skype. Many (4)_____ people these days work from home. They can sit in the garden or on the terrace and do their work on their (5)_____, then email it to the office. The internet has revolutionised how we work. People who work in offices do need to recharge their (6)_____ so taking a break is important. This applies especially to those who work fixed hours i.e. 9-5. But those people who work from home aren't under the same (7)_____. Maybe there is less (8)_____ to do i.e. just a weekly trip to the office.

travelling

batteries

holiday

communicate

professional

electronic

laptop

stress

GAP FILL: LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

The Workliday

I have _____ *Workliday*. The word is made up using the words *work* and *holiday*. The thing is these days how many of us actually switch off from the office _____? The answer is probably very few people completely switch off. With the arrival of laptops, Blackberrys and now tablets, and the easy access most people have to the internet, makes it irresistible not to turn off completely. It's like a drug, a compulsion. We must access our emails or we might miss something. When we do check our emails we find probably not much has changed. However, there could be that _____ we are waiting on that could change our lives forever. _____ are many professional workers who simply can't switch off when they take a break. They must take their _____ with them.

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GRAMMAR

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

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however

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when



SPELLING TEST

The teacher will ask the class individually to spell the following words that are in the article. Afterwards, check your answers with your teacher, using the following ratings:
Pass = 12, Good = 15, Very good = 18, Excellent = 20

1	Workliday	11	trip
2	nevertheless	12	probably
3	however	13	irresistible
4	professional	14	compulsion
5	decision	15	electronic
6	actually	16	terrace
7	communicate	17	especially
8	revolutionised	18	author
9	batteries	19	completely
10	stress	20	pathetic

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