

# Persuasive Speech Rough Draft

## Specific Purpose

To convince my audience that the standard 40-hour American work week is often excessive and should no longer be used as a standard.

## Central Idea

American companies should either cut the number of hours employees are expected to work without lowering pay, or offering more vacation and holiday days.

## Introduction

Pop quiz: How many of you thought as a kid that adults were boring? Do any of you still do? I know that I certainly think that adults and adult life are sometimes boring, and I think the reason for this has been told to us in that old adage, "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." As adults, we're expected to spend a tremendous part of our lives at work, especially here in America where the standard full-time work week is a third of our day, five days a week. I think it's absurd that so many people spend so much time doing tasks that they often find menial or unfulfilling just to make ends meet. Even for those of us who love our jobs, I think our time spent at work should be driven more by our passions and projects than by the expectation that you're not a real professional unless you do something for exactly 40 hours every week. All in all, I think the expectation of a standardized 40-hour work week has stayed past its prime, and we need to consider its replacement.

## Body

1. Attention: We work too much
  1. Work is a significant source of stress for American adults.
  2. We are expected to work more hours per week than other Western countries. (Citation here)
  3. We spend a lot of wasted time at our jobs.
2. Need: American 40-hour Work Week Needs To Die
  1. Productivity is no longer a function of time. (Citation here)
  2. Working any number of hours per week should not determine your benefit eligibility.
  3. Single parenting is becoming more common, and a 40-hour work week takes time away from family.
3. Satisfaction: Change the Way We Think About Work
  1. Work should be about making valuable contributions to society.
  2. Work should not be about meeting basic human needs such as food and shelter.
  3. It's cheaper to only pay employees for time they're being productive in.

4. Visualization: Spend Time With our Families and Passions
  1. People who love their jobs will spend a lot of time working at them, but not at a flat rate per week.  
(Citation here).
  2. An adaptable work schedule lets us spend our time where it's most needed, be that at work, with our family, or pursuing our passions.
  3. As long as the 40-hour work week exists, the rich will always have more power to change the world than the poor.
5. Action: Give up the idea of a standard 40-hour work week.
  1. Not another problem that happens to other people, or that we can't change.
  2. Already a cultural push towards more flexible working locations.
  3. Especially need young people to give up the idea that a 40 hour work-week is mandatory.

## Conclusion

In the end, maybe I'm wrong. Maybe there is some cosmic power behind the number 40 that makes it the perfect number of hours to work in a week. But I know that the way we approach that number is certainly flawed, and that the cultural expectation of the 40-hour work week is crushing us and our families under a burden we don't need to bear. If we're willing to let go of our addiction to metrics and timecards and let people work at the pace and in the times that are best for them, I know we can find a society that is infinitely more productive and satisfied. If we cannot, I worry that we'll forever be trapped as slaves to "the machine", or "the man", or whatever else we decide to call it. All work and no play doesn't just make Jack a dull boy, it also harms his health, strains his family, and literally kills children's dreams of the future. It's time we put an end to that.

## Works Cited

<https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=ANHRS>

[http://www.oxfordmartin.ox.ac.uk/downloads/academic/The\\_Future\\_of\\_Employment.pdf](http://www.oxfordmartin.ox.ac.uk/downloads/academic/The_Future_of_Employment.pdf)

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