



# The best way to work

## Working too hard?

describing a typical day  
articles

### Start up

- 1 Look at the pictures of the products and read what their inventors say. Discuss with a partner what you think their products are and why they are unique.



My name's Arnold du Toit, and I founded a company called Drive Daddy when I was 21 years old, after studying Design Engineering at university. Then I did a Masters Degree, which teaches you to run your own business, and that's when this concept turned into our first product – it's the world's first ever .....<sup>1</sup>, and it took two years to bring it to market. We use social media a lot to communicate our brand, and now we're taking it around the world.



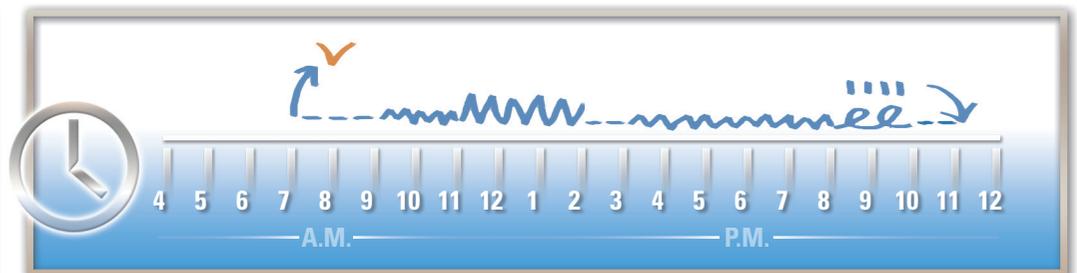
My name's Emma-Jayne Parkes. I met my business partner when I was studying Product Design and Development at college, and that's when I came up with the idea of .....<sup>2</sup> which .....<sup>3</sup>. We started our company, Squid London, and we tested the market with just 100 .....<sup>4</sup>, and, fortunately, we had a fantastic response, and sold out in 11 days. Then we started looking for clients who were interested in placing large orders. Now we're adding to our product range.

- 2 2.1 Listen and complete the texts.

### Listening

- 3 2.2 Listen to Arnold talking about his typical day and look at his timeline. Then complete the key on the left with the symbols from the timeline.

	get up / go to bed
	desk work
	out-of-the-office work
	other activities
	free time
	food / drink
	meetings



- 4 Listen again, and note down food/drink details above Arnold's timeline.

- 5 2.3 Look at Emma-Jayne's typical timeline, showing when her day starts and finishes, and when she's working at her desk. Listen to Emma-Jayne talking about her typical day. Complete the rest of the timeline with symbols for free time, out of office and other activities.



- 6 Compare your answers with a partner. Then listen again and note down food/drink details above the symbols on Emma-Jayne's timeline.
- 7 Would you enjoy Arnold or Emma-Jayne's lifestyle? Why/Why not? Tell your partner.

**Vocabulary**

- 8 Complete the phrases with the verbs in the box. Check your answers against audioscript 2.2 and 2.3 on page 119.

check   deal with   get   get together with   go for   go to   grab   return   set   sort out



- |                           |                             |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 ..... my alarm for 7.00 | 6 ..... other entrepreneurs |
| 2 ..... emails            | 7 ..... a drink             |
| 3 ..... phone calls       | 8 ..... eight hours' sleep  |
| 4 ..... something to eat  | 9 ..... orders              |
| 5 ..... networking events | 10 ..... emails             |

- 9 Complete a similar timeline for your typical day. Explain your timeline to your partner, including some of the vocabulary from 8. Draw your partner's timeline as you listen, and note any details. How similar are your days?

**Grammar**

- 10 Complete the sentences in the questionnaire with *a*, *the* or *—* (= no article). Look at the Grammar Reference on page 110 for help.

Are you working too hard?



- 1 ..... people tell me I work too hard.
- 2 I sometimes think I'm ..... workaholic.
- 3 I often take ..... work home with me.
- 4 I sometimes go to ..... office when I'm ill.
- 5 ..... culture at my office is to work late.
- 6 I don't have energy to do anything in ..... evenings.
- 7 I don't have time for ..... hobby.
- 8 I sometimes lie in ..... bed at night, thinking about work.
- 9 In my job, I have to work late when there is ..... deadline.
- 10 I don't move much from my workstation during ..... day.
- 11 I can't remember the last time I took ..... time off to do something fun.
- 12 I find it hard to relax and just do nothing, even when I'm away on ..... holiday.

**Speaking**

- 11 Complete the questionnaire in 10 about yourself. Write *T* (true) or *F* (false) in the boxes.
- 12 Compare your answers with a partner and discuss whether either of you works too hard.



## Start up

- 1 Complete tips 1–8 on ways to be as productive as possible at work with the verbs in the box.

cross off   do   focus   remember   timetable   take   schedule in   tackle

	Arnold	Emma-Jayne
1 Keep a calendar to <u>timetable</u> your work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 ..... regular short breaks.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 Don't multitask – ..... on one task at a time.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 ..... high-priority tasks first.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 Set alarms to ..... appointments.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 ..... time for uninterrupted work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7 Make a to-do list and ..... tasks as you do them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8 ..... regular exercise.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9 .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10 .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- 2 Work with a partner. Add two more tips in 1.  
 3 Which of the ten tips do you do? Which do you think you should do?

## Listening

- 4 2.4 Listen to Arnold and Emma-Jayne from pages 12–13 talking about how they keep productive at work. Tick the things in 1 each of them does.

## Grammar

- 5 Read *Words before nouns* on page 110 and complete the sentences from 4 with the words in the box.

all (x2)   both   each   every   most   neither   that (x2)

### Arnold

- 1 I put everything into the calendar app on my phone, no matter how small, and ..... calendar's shared with the rest of the team ...  
 2 ... so ..... of them know where I am and what I'm doing 24/7.

### Emma-Jayne

- 3 we have a joint calendar ... so ..... of us know when the other person is free.  
 4 So, ..... of us has our own schedule ...  
 5 Emails never stop coming in, and ..... of us likes to leave them too long ...  
 6 I go to the gym for an hour ..... days – ..... way I can switch off for an hour.  
 7 I don't like sitting at my desk ..... day without a break, so ..... hour I either go and make a coffee, or go for a five-minute walk.

- 6 Look at audioscript 2.4 on page 119 and check your answers.



Reading

7 Read the article and put the sentences a–f in paragraphs 1–6.

- a Most of us would see procrastination as a bad thing.
- b Slow Workers tell this old story:
- c Try this.
- d In the short term, the human contact will send you back to your desk with a little more enthusiasm.
- e But there is a growing movement that takes a different approach.
- f So, how can this help productivity?



procrastinate – to delay doing something that you have to do



TO GET MORE WORK DONE – slow down and procrastinate

‘Time-saving’ inventions, from the steam engine to the typewriter to the smartphone, have in fact sped up work to unimaginable speeds. Even by missing lunch and making ourselves available 24/7, it is impossible to deal with all the emails and phone calls that just keep coming in, and the never-ending to-do list.

.....<sup>1</sup> The Slow Movement, which evolved from a protest against the opening of a fast-food restaurant in the historic centre of Rome, believes that in order to be more productive at work, we need to slow down.

.....<sup>2</sup> The next time you have a question for a colleague on the next floor, don’t just send them a quick email; instead, go and see them. Take your time, have a friendly chat and enjoy the trip.

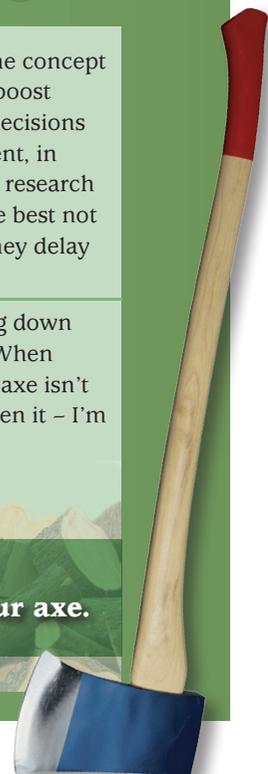
.....<sup>3</sup> According to psychologist Dr Karin Wood, ‘Slowing down gives you time to recover from stress and keeps your body’s immune system stronger, making you less likely to burn out early.’

.....<sup>4</sup> Maybe the chat and the change of environment, or even the fact of stopping work for those few minutes, will let you see a problem from a different angle, and trigger a solution. How many good ideas have you had when you are completely away from work, maybe jogging or in the shower?

.....<sup>5</sup> However, Slow Work introduces the concept of ‘planned procrastination’ as a tool to boost effective work. The idea is not to make decisions deliberately until the last possible moment, in order to maximise thinking time. Recent research has shown that top tennis players are the best not because they move faster, but because they delay their decisions and make better choices.

.....<sup>6</sup> A farmworker was working cutting down trees, but every day he cut down fewer. When the farmer asked him why, he said, ‘The axe isn’t sharp any more, but I can’t stop to sharpen it – I’m too busy cutting down trees.’

**So give it a try. Slow down.  
Enjoy your work. Sharpen your axe.**



8 Complete the sentences with a word or phrase from the text.

- 1 Most of us have a ..... list of things we need to do.
- 2 A slower lifestyle is good for your ....., some doctors believe.
- 3 We tend to have more ..... when we are not working.
- 4 If we give ourselves as much ....., as possible, we make better decisions.
- 5 The story suggests we are often ..... to think about how effectively we are working.

Speaking

9 Discuss the questions with a partner.

- Do you think the advice in the article would work for you?
- How naturally well-organised are you?
- What habits do you have to help you keep productive?
- How do you stop procrastinating?
- What could you try to improve your productivity?

## Start up

- 1 Discuss the questions with a partner.
  - 1 Read the quotes. Which one do you agree with most?
  - 2 When did you last receive face-to-face feedback on your work? How did it make you feel?
  - 3 When did you last have to give someone negative feedback? How did it make you feel?



I like criticism. It makes you strong. (LeBron James)

Honest criticism is hard to take, particularly from a relative, a friend, an acquaintance or a stranger. (Frankl P. Jones)

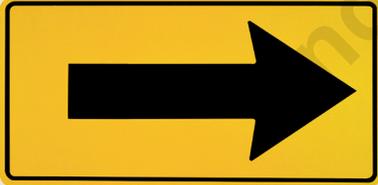
To avoid criticism, do nothing, say nothing and be nothing. (Elbert Hubbard)

## Reading

- 2 Read the text and answer the questions.
  - 1 Which two benefits from A–G do you think are most important?
  - 2 Which two pieces of information from H–M do you think are most interesting?

### Performance reviews: good or bad?

#### A good performance review will ...

- A** ... improve the employee's performance.
- B** ... detect and remove barriers to effective performance.
 
- C** ... prevent good employees leaving by allowing them to express dissatisfaction.
- D** ... focus people's efforts in the right direction.
 
- E** ... motivate people to work towards important goals.
- F** ... help workers develop the skills they need.
- G** ... celebrate people's successes.
 

**H** 87% of employees and managers believe that performance reviews are neither useful nor effective.

**I** 55% of workers think that performance reviews are not accurate.

**J** 24% of workers hate having their review more than anything else.

**K** 30% of performance reviews result in decreased employee performance.

**L** Neuroscience research has shown that negative feedback causes actual physical pain to both the person giving it and the person receiving it.



**M** Psychologists say we instinctively hate being judged. We react as if we are being attacked and prepare to defend ourselves. Any negative feedback is unlikely to increase motivation.



- 3 Compare your answers with a partner and explain your choices.

## Speaking

4 Discuss the questions in small groups.

- 1 If you had your own company, would you have annual employee performance reviews? Why/Why not?
- 2 What other ways of feedback do you think would be effective? Brainstorm ideas, then choose the best three.

## Functional language

5 Work with a partner. Read the different ways of giving feedback 1–7 and discuss whether A or B is better in each case. Explain why.

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | A | Your work has been great – just fantastic.  |
|   | B | I've been especially pleased with the way you've dealt with customers.                      |
| 2 | A | You should set an alarm when you need to remember an appointment.                           |
|   | B | I set an alarm when I need to remember an appointment. You might find that helpful, too.    |
| 3 | A | I'm concerned how much time you spend away from your desk, talking.                         |
|   | B | I think you spend too much time socialising instead of working.                             |
| 4 | A | I think your organisation has room for improvement. What are your thoughts?                 |
|   | B | I think your organisation is, frankly, pretty poor.   |
| 5 | A | So, to summarise, we're going to take the following steps to help you prioritise better ... |
|   | B | So, to summarise, you haven't prioritised well at all.                                      |
| 6 | A | You always arrive really late for meetings.   |
|   | B | You were ten minutes late for the meeting last Friday.                                      |
| 7 | A | Why did you forget the meeting with the customer last week?                                 |
|   | B | I understand you missed a meeting with a customer last week. What happened?                 |



- 6 2.5 Listen to Human Resources consultant Donna Webb explain her choices for the same exercise. Note down the answers and the reasons she gives for them.
- 7 Using your own and Donna Webb's answers in 5 and 6, work with your partner to write three rules for giving feedback.

## Speaking

8 Work with a partner. You need to give feedback (both positive and negative) to an assistant in their review. Write two pieces of feedback which follow the rules you decided in 7, and one which breaks the rules. Then, tell another pair your feedback. They have to identify the one which breaks the rules.

## XtremeLids

You started your own specialist sports equipment company, XtremeLids with a partner six years ago. You design and manufacture extremely high-quality (and expensive!), state-of-the-art helmets for professional cyclists, skiers, skateboarders and other athletes. Times have been hard recently, however, and your business partner has decided to move on. Sales are down and you badly need a new product – and for that, you need new investment. You can't afford to keep all four of your highly-talented employees, and have to let two go. Out of the two you keep, one will be promoted to run the company with you.



- 1 Read the situation above. You're going to complete the table on page 19 with information about the four employees. Work with a partner. Read about the four employees, and agree what to write about each in the 'positives' column of the table.



**TOMEK BEREZA**  
ran his own very successful sales consultancy before joining you four years ago. His marketing skills have built a large and loyal customer base.



**MONTSE VÁZQUEZ**  
previously worked in quality control in a top engineering company, and handles that essential aspect of your business. She also designed and runs your award-winning website.



**JOSEPH SISSOKO**  
won numerous awards while studying Design and Engineering at university. He chose to join your company because of his specialisation in sports equipment.



**FATIMA ALPAY**  
has helped several startups become successful with her fundraising skills. Thanks to her, your company has always found investors.

- 2  2.6 Listen to your five voicemails and answer the questions.

	Who is the message for/about?	What's the main message?
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

- 3 Compare your answers with your partner. Discuss what positive/negative qualities each voicemail shows about the employee referred to. Note down the qualities in the table on page 19.

- 4 Read the emails and put any relevant information in the positives and negatives columns in the table.

Hi Boss  
It's getting really hard to work in this office with Montse around – she always seems to start arguments with everyone! She's always telling Fatima that she doesn't do enough work. (Actually, I agree, but she needs to be more tactful about how she says it.) And she was shouting at Tomek this morning, telling him he talks too much (again – she's not wrong!). All this fighting is really affecting the atmosphere in the office – should I say something to Montse, or do you want to?  
Joseph

Joseph, teh figurs on the spreadsheet you sent mw are all wrong – again! Please plaese can you dobule-check them before sendinh!  
Fatim

Hi Tomek  
Could you do the quality control on the latest helmets at the factory tomorrow morning, please? We're having a planning meeting, and we want Montse to be involved because, as you know, it's a strong point of hers.  
Thanks – don't forget to complete the admin this time!

- 5 Work with a partner. Look at page 97. Read the notes from the employees' performance reviews. Find clues about their positive and negative qualities and add them to the table.
- 6 Based on the information you have collected, decide with your partner who you will let go, who you will keep, and who you will promote. For the two you keep, decide on a two-point action plan to help them improve their weak points.
- 7 Share your decisions with the class.
- 8 Write an email to the person you promoted with news of your decision, and an explanation of the action plan you have decided.

	positives	negatives	keep? / let go? / promote?	action plan
Tomek				
Montse				
Joseph				
Fatima				