

# FOR WHOM THE CLOCK TICKS

Time – is it priceless?

BY BRYONY TAYLOR

Clocks are almost everywhere you go, on computers, in offices, on wrists, on mobile phones, in cars. In fact, you check the time so often that if you were asked to close your eyes and point to the nearest clock, it's possible you could do it faster than the time it would have taken your colleague to blink. It doesn't matter who you are or what job you do, the passage of time is inescapably important.

After reading the above, you're now twenty seconds closer to the next important moment of your day. And if you consider that moment to be when the big and little hands signal the end of the working day then you can probably consider yourself a clock-watcher. A clock watcher means one of those people who work no longer than their prescribed hours, get into work bang on time and, more importantly, spend all day thinking about how to get out of work bang on time.

With the technology of today you can now create preset playlists to accompany your journey to work beat by beat, minute by minute on your mp3 player; set your alarm to wake you up with your favourite

song, and ask your computer to remind you of diary events. There are days however, when such musical melodies no longer present a harmonious view of life to the bleary eyed; days when staring at a computer, or just getting out of bed is asking too much.

Achieving a good level of job satisfaction significantly impacts on a person's mood and productivity. When you're happy, people around you are happy, and time has a habit of moving by more swiftly. If you do enjoy your job it is perhaps surprising to find that in the UK 46% of the total working population say they do not achieve a good level of job satisfaction. What can then be done to help achieve this blissful happiness every minute of every working hour?

Time management can be a key obstacle on the path to workplace peace of mind. New research suggests that busy British professionals who exercise during the day feel more productive. A study of 200 workers who spent between 30-60 minutes a day exercising in their lunch breaks found that six out of ten felt their time management skills

improved on days when they exercised. Everyone has a life, hopefully, that allows a break from the sometimes monotonous routine of the daily job. And of course there is always the argument that if there is no extra pay, why should one stay longer in the office? In some cases, employers perhaps unfairly ask employees to stay longer, but generally such problems arise from poor time management, a problem that can be easily corrected. ■

## TIME MANAGEMENT TESTS:

- **NECESSITY:**  
Is every activity necessary?  
Reduce tasks down to essential elements.
- **APPROPRIATENESS:**  
Who should perform the tasks?  
Are tasks better performed by others?
- **EFFICIENCY:**  
Is there a better way to do a task?

## TOP FIVE TIME WASTERS...

1. MSN Messenger
2. Going for a fag
3. Annoying the person sitting opposite you
4. Making tea and coffee
5. Forwarding emails

