

WORKERS BURNING THE MIDNIGHT OIL, AS TECHNOLOGY ERASES BOUNDARIES



For many workers a workday does not mean leaving the workplace after 8 hours of work, to a well earned rest and time with family and friends. It is seen that many workers, pushed by need and choice, are putting in late-night hours. Mario Contreras follows his eight hours at the office, by having an early dinner with the kids and after seeing them off to bed, opens his laptop and sends emails to his construction crew. His night might end hours later, before he finally manages to get some sleep. 32 year old Contreras, owner of 27 Charley's Grilled Subs, says his work routine has changed, as he commences his restaurants in new locations across the world. As his work increase so does his working hours. "I find you just can't clock out anymore," he says, as he connects with his teams who are helping him set up these new ventures. LinkedIn conducted a study and found that merely 11 percent professionals globally manage to accomplish their tasks in an average working day. Work continues well into the night and for many, dinner is 'simply a midday break.' Modern innovation has reduced boundaries, the smartphone, the laptop and the tablet have eased connectivity and professionals cannot resist the temptation of working from home at night. Workplace analysts are not sure whether such a hectic pace can be sustained and whether it is by need or by choice. Tim Geisert, chief marketing officer for Kenexa, a global recruiting and leadership development firm assets, "Today, jobs are more precious and the economy has driven that home. That has made people more willing to put in discretionary effort." Geisert acknowledges that he also works late into the evenings, reasoning that "Technology is an enabler. I'll spend my quiet evening time catching up on what didn't get done that day and trying to get ahead for the following day." Some of late-night workers says that there are too many daytime disruptions that eat into your time, phone calls, meetings, worker queries and people who just walk into your cubicle. "Night time is my think time. I save emails that take more thought and do that at night. I find online conversations at night are more fruitful." Valerie Mitrani a co-directors of educational services at the Center for the Advancement of Jewish Education in Miami says "Fortunately, with technology, everyone can work on their own time frame. I'd rather get home at 4:30, do homework and eat dinner, and then be more productive for another hour at night, rather than staying later, fighting traffic to get home and missing out on time with my kids." The recession has also played a major role in evolving this new work pattern for professionals. Grant Cardone, an author and international sales expert who provides sales training programs to businesses, says his work entails that he continues to work at night and feels that everyone's work should be such, that they do not get breaks. Cardone says, "I put a lot of time into work. People need to understand this is a very unusual, unique economy we are in. Everyone who wants to make money for their families will need to dig in and push hard right now." Cardone says that a after a hard day's work at the workplace, he returns home around 6, spends some time with the family over food and discussions and then works till 10 p.m. He warns that he is working on time that rightly belongs to the family, "If your spouse doesn't understand why you need to do this, it creates problems. You need to be on the same page." Miami plastic surgeon Michael Salzhauer says that the recession made his profession more competitive and he had to deliver that extra to stay in the competition. He performs surgeries during the day, then returns home, spends some time with the family and returns to the clinic in the evening for consultations with potential new patients. "As the marketplace became more competitive, I started to think I needed to make it as convenient as possible for people to come in for consultations." Now, Salzhauer says, the weekends are his hallowed family time. "For me, this is what works and I've worked my life around it."