

# TAKING TIME OFF — FOR REAL



Training by:

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# UPCOMING WEBINARS



THE BUSINESS *bite* 



**AUGUST 9:** TRANSITIONS  
ARE HARD — STRATEGIES  
TO MAKE THEM EASIER



**SEPT 13:** "HAVE YOU READ...?"  
A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
RESOURCE DISCUSSION

# WHERE ARE YOU CURRENTLY AT?



Rarely/never  
take time off

Take some  
vacation, but do  
work during it

Purposeful time  
off, during which I  
completely unplug



**WHOH...  
WE  
STRUGGLE  
WITH THIS!**





## **FINNISH OUT-OF-THE-OFFICE**

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**I'm in the forest for the summer.  
Please email back in September.**

## **AMERICAN OUT-OF-THE-OFFICE**

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**I've left the office for two hours to  
undergo kidney surgery but you  
can reach me on my cell any time.**

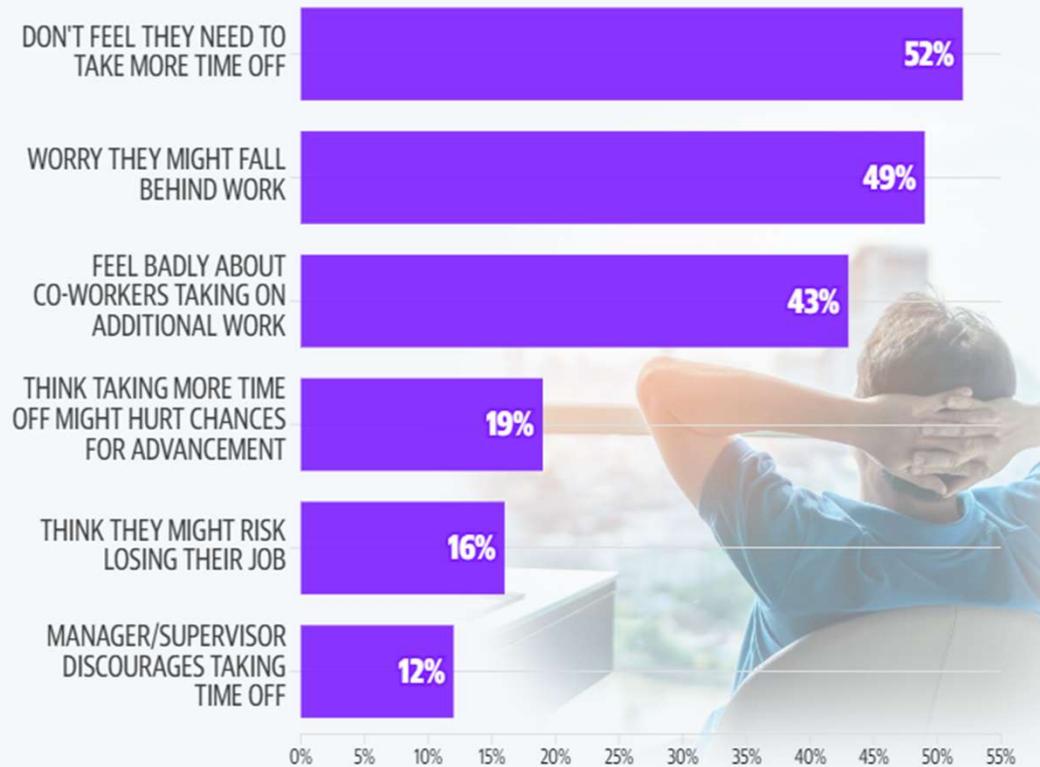
- 768 million vacation days unused in US in 2018, with 55% of workers reporting they didn't use all of PTO their job offered
- 24% of Americans have gone a year without a vacation.
- 12% say it's been three years or more since they took time away for a trip
- Employee burnout is high
  - 52% of respondents expressed feeling burned out
  - 67% believe the feeling has worsened over pandemic

<https://www.everydayhealth.com/self-care/why-taking-time-off-is-so-good-for-your-health/>

<https://www.indeed.com/lead/preventing-employee-burnout-report>



# WHY WORKERS DON'T TAKE ALL THEIR VACATION TIME



Source: Pew Research Center – Survey of US workers Feb. 6-12, 2023. “How Americans View Their Jobs” – Pictogram by Yahoo! Finance



# AND WHEN WE ARE OFF... ARE WE?



- 82% of people work while on vacation
- 42% take vacation days to catch up on work



# TIME OFF & HEALTH



# TIME OFF FROM WORK HAS A DIRECT IMPACT ON HEALTH

- Stress can exacerbate health conditions
- Study - Women who took vacations 2x+ per year versus:
  - 1 vacation every 2 years were 92% more likely to have depression
  - 1 vacation every 6 years were 97% more likely to have depression
- Framingham Heart Study – vacations can decrease risk of heart disease
  - Men who didn't take vacation for several years were 30% more likely to have heart attacks compared to men who did not take time off
  - Women who took a vacation only once every six years were almost eight times more likely to develop coronary heart disease or have a heart attack, compared to women who vacationed at least twice a year”

<https://www.everydayhealth.com/self-care/why-taking-time-off-is-so-good-for-your-health/>

<https://theculturetrip.com/north-america/usa/articles/how-using-your-vacation-time-can-change-your-life-for-the-better/>



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# MORE ON THE IMPACT ON HEALTH

- Reduces the risk for metabolic syndrome –  
a cluster of health issues including high blood pressure, high blood sugar, excess belly fat & abnormal cholesterol levels  
(all raise risk for heart disease, stroke & type 2 diabetes)
- Study found that those who vacation more frequently were less likely to meet the criteria for diagnosis
- Risk when down by 25% with each additional vacation taken!



# MORE BENEFITS OF TAKING TIME OFF



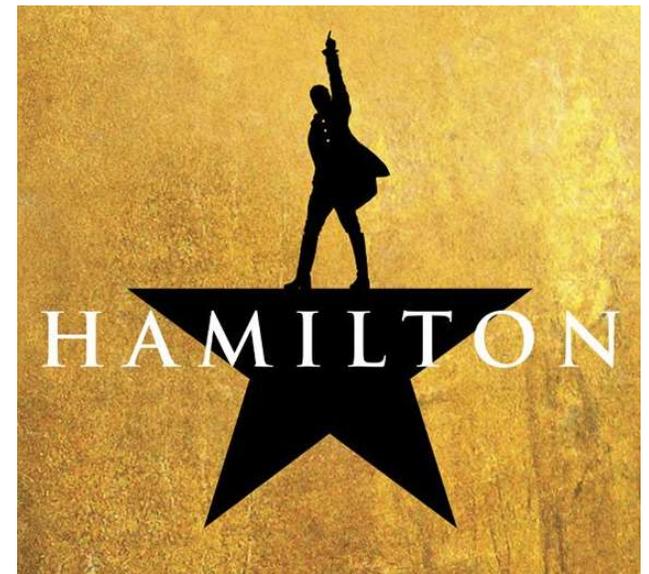
# VACATION BOOSTS BRAIN POWER

- Taking time off improves the capacity to learn.
- When your brain is completely relaxed, it consolidates knowledge and brainpower.
- “Neuroscience shows, through PET scans and MRIs, that the “aha” moment comes when you are in a relaxed state of mind. That’s why you have your best ideas on a walk, in the shower or on vacation.” - Bridgid Shulte

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/carolinecastrillon/2021/05/23/why-taking-vacation-time-could-save-your-life/?sh=1096407f24de>



**AMAZING IDEAS CAN COME WHILE UNPLUGGED...**



# VACATIONS POSITIVELY IMPACT SLEEP HEALTH

- Time off can help interrupt the habits that disrupt sleep
- Study found that:
  - After two to three days of vacation, participants averaged an hour or more good quality sleep & experienced 80% improvement in their reaction times.
  - When they returned home, they were still sleeping an hour more, and their reaction time was 30% to 40% higher than before the trip

# TAKING TIME OFF HELPS YOU REMEMBER WHO YOU ARE!

- Believe it or not, you are a person beyond an employee!
- Vacations help to remind you of your interests and hobbies.
- Can be a reminder of what to plug back into life



# **THE SCIENCE OF VACATIONS: A FORMULA TO MAXIMIZE YOUR TIME OFF**





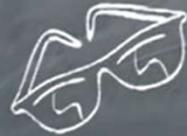
# VACATION HAPPINESS

ANTICIPATION



+

RELAXATION



+

CAPITALIZATION



= MAX

HAPPINESS



→

HEALTH



## Anticipation

- Biggest difference in happiness is actually before the vacation

## Relaxation

- Lasts up to 8 weeks post-trip

## Capitalization

- Remember to tell your stories



# WAYS TO PREPARE FOR BEING FULLY AWAY

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# MAKE A PLAN TO DISCONNECT

1. Inform everyone about vacation plans in advance
2. Divvy up your responsibilities
3. Set up your “out of office” auto response
4. Leave your work devices at work
5. Delete or sign out of work-related applications
6. Specify how to be contacted in emergencies & what constitutes one
7. Set aside a day to catch up with everything for when you return to work

**IF BEING  
FULLY “OUT”  
ISN’T  
POSSIBLE**



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# SOMETIMES, BABY STEPS ARE WHERE TO START

- While you're at work, look for mental or physical cues that you need a break – like taking longer than usual to write an email or tension in your body.
- “Ask yourself, what do I need right now? The key is to get ahead of the stress, to manage it before the stress manages us.” – Dr. Rachel Goldman
- In 2018 study, researches found that:
  - Informal “microbreaks” of just a few minutes throughout the day led to improved mood and job performance – provided that the workers spent this time doing something relaxing, social, or mentally engaging.
  - No benefit was seen, however, from taking a snack break, which suggests that at least some of the benefit from breaks comes from doing something else with our brain, not just stopping our work

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# REMEMBER, START WHERE YOU ARE



Rarely/never  
take time off

Take some  
vacation, but do  
work during it

Purposeful time  
off, during which I  
completely unplug



Please take a moment to complete the evaluation here:



SHRM Code: Activity 23-UVGRQ

Thank you!



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