How to Apply the 4-Day Work Week

According to LinkedIn's latest [Workforce Confidence survey,](#) over half (54%) of U.S. workers chose a 4-day workweek as one of the top three benefits they'd like offered by their employer. The only option that ranked higher was greater flexibility (63%).

The 4-day work week may not be for everyone, but for some startups and small businesses, it has the potential to change business practices. However, implementing this type of change means you need to understand the nitty-gritty of how it works and will prove beneficial for your company. A 4-day work week can be a massive change in the workplace, especially if your employees are accustomed to the typical 9-to-5 work schedule.

If you're a small business owner, you know how hard it can be to balance work and family. Between the two of them competing for your time, there are never enough hours in the day. The problem lies in small businesses that employ five or fewer people forced to keep 5-days a week because of the [Affordable Care Act](#) (ACA). The ACA defines a full-time employee as an individual who works an average of at least 30 hours per week.

How to make the 4-day work week happen.

When most people talk about a 4-day work week and small businesses, the typical response is, "small businesses won't be able to hire enough people to cover the hours."

Let's look at how to make the 4-day work week come together. Laying the foundation is the first step. No matter what the work week looks like, these are standard steps to run a great business.

1. Create a positive work environment and culture.

To apply the 4-day work week, you need to create a positive work environment and culture. Here are some tips on how to create that:

- **Trust:** Create a thriving company culture through trust. Trust is the foundation of any successful business, and a 4-day work week helps create this in an organization. By giving employees more time off, you're demonstrating that you trust them to get their work done without constant supervision or review from above. Trust builds communication between team members and makes them feel more loyal and less likely to look elsewhere for employment. Make sure your team members feel like they can come to you with problems or concerns without fear of being reprimanded for doing so.

- **Transparency:** Be transparent about your goals as an organization and how your team contributes to those goals (and vice versa). Share information regularly—from financials to employee onboarding documents—so that everyone has access to the latest updates about the company's progress and direction.

- **Respect:** Treat employees as equals; treat everyone fairly; don't expect more from one person or group than another based solely on their title at the company or what department they belong in; don't play favorites when it comes time for promotions, raises or bonuses because someone did something above-and-beyond expectations of them during their tenure.

- **Communications**: Communications must be clear and consistent across all departments and levels, mainly if multiple teams work on different projects under different managers. Managers conduct regular meetings, ensuring everyone understands what's going on with each project in detail.

2. Develop clear performance expectations.

Performance expectations should be clear to your employees. They should have personal goals, targets, and objectives they can use to measure their performance. These are essential to help them know how they are doing so they can improve in all areas of the business, including:

- Productivity and efficiency

- Motivation levels and teamwork skills

- Customer service and quality of output

3. Managers work more flexibly.

Managers need to work more flexibly. Because they are in charge of the team, they should be able to schedule their hours. For example, if a manager has an important meeting that cannot be moved or rescheduled, they may want to work late at night so that it doesn't interfere with the rest of his employees' schedules.

Managers also need to be more flexible with their employees' schedules and needs. If one employee needs extra time off due to illness or another emergency, allowing them this flexibility will demonstrate care for employees and their well-being—and it will help ensure that they'll continue working hard for you!

4. Keep a consistent cadence and routine.

Consistency is key to keeping employees engaged. This is true for most things in life, but especially for a team that is on a 4-day work week. If employees know what the daily routine will be each day and what their responsibilities are, they'll be much happier with their time off.

A 4-day work week might not be so ludicrous if employers consider using [agile sprints](). The word 'agile' refers to moving quickly and easily. Therefore, an agile approach enables project teams to adapt faster and easier than other project methodologies. Sprints break down a project into bite-sized chunks. Teams plan a single sprint at a time and adjust future sprints based on the outcome of the previous one. It's an effective process that helps team members focus on their tasks and is an efficient, cost-effective way to run a business.

5. Be accountable

Accountability is the ability to be responsible for your actions, and it's a critical factor in increasing productivity, engagement, and retention. You know the expectations

when you're accountable, and there will be consequences if you don't meet those expectations. Your role model the behaviors you expect from your employees.

By setting clear goals and expectations, team members can work together to achieve those goals. In this way, everyone knows where they stand with each other—and whether or not they're achieving their goals and can review daily.

6. Create and implement the right policies.

The 4-day work week can be imagined and implemented in various schedules. Examples include 4/10-hour work days, paying employees 40 hours but working 32, sticking with a five-day workweek but getting the green light to work fewer hours each day, or working a 30-hour week, which is still considered full-time.

There's a lot to love about a 4-day work week. Employees can have more extended weekends, senior staff can maintain focus and productivity, and small business owners can afford to pay their employees more because there are fewer days to work.

You can plan for a 4-day work week if you're a small business owner. It won't make you rich, but it will give you more time to focus on your family, health, and personal hobbies. And who doesn't want that?

Consider making this change at your business a lesson in self-discipline and self-motivation, and you can make the switch from a 5-day to a 4-day week. Just be sure that you have everything under control because there's a vast difference between working fewer hours and fewer days due to a lack of preparation or planning.

Whether it's to increase productivity, help your employees have a better work-life balance, or improve overall employee loyalty, the 4-day workweek can work for even small businesses. The long-term benefits of this can be astronomical and can outweigh the implementation costs. Some companies have chosen to take on this challenge, and you should know as well.

There are dozens, if not hundreds, of successful companies that have successfully adopted the four-day work week into their business models. If a startup like Buffer can make it work, there's no reason for your company not to either!

If you adopt a 4-day work week, you'll be able to spend more time with your family while still achieving the same results. If you're interested in switching to a 4-day work week, here are seven tips on doing it correctly.

Though I don't think the 4-day work week will take over the world at large, the ideas behind it—simplified schedules and stress reduction—are both valuable. Focused productivity may not be possible, but I do believe that everyone could stand to benefit from a long weekend once in a while.

After looking at many businesses, this schedule works best for companies that sell primarily to local customers. Unfortunately, this format can be difficult to apply if you run a business that relies heavily on the internet. While you may not need a physical location for your products or services, it is still essential to have an active social media presence, which takes time to build. Overall, though, this is an excellent setup for a small business. It allows owners to have plenty of time with their families, allowing them time to concentrate on personal endeavors. I would highly recommend trying this out if possible!

The best thing that you can do to start with is to look into the current work schedule of your employees. The ideal situation will be if they have enough time to give you what amounts to a day off on Friday, which leaves you with Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday off.

To make this work, you'll need a data-driven approach to your productivity and make sure that your money-making activities don't take up your time or can be done in about an hour. You'll also need to be able to release control of some regions of the

company to focus on the main things that aren't time-sensitive. It may not seem like it at first, but it's much more feasible than you'd think.

The main takeaway from this article is a reminder that we should still be diligent and hardworking while also being realistic in terms of what we can accomplish in a work week. How productive you are will always depend on your working habits and expectations, but the point at which you become burned out is up to you. My advice is to pick a schedule that lets you accomplish everything important to you—be it your family life, professional goals, physical health, etc.—and then insist on sticking to it, no matter what.

Performance expectations should be clear by your employees. They should have personal goals, targets, and objectives that they can use to measure their performance. These are essential to help them know how they are doing so they can improve in all areas of the business, including:

Benefits of a 4-day work week
- **For employees:** Employees have more time for personal projects or hobbies! Having fewer commitments at work could help give the employee space to

explore those options without worrying about feeling overwhelmed by work responsibilities. Each employee's good physical and mental health is essential to the employer. Extra vacation time means extra rest from life's daily stresses—definitely something worth celebrating!

- **For employers:** Shortening the length of each employee's regular working hours may reduce turnover rates and, therefore, training costs. Examples include increased productivity from motivated workers who value their personal lives as much as they do their professional ones, resulting in improved teamwork skills, customer service, and quality output.

Supporting employees as whole people is the key to long-term, sustainable business success. Creating a Whole-Person Workplace helps you attract the best talent, who then want to stay, become increasingly engaged, and treat your customers as whole people.