

# 1 World of work

A My work is so rewarding



'I work in advertising. I love my work, which is really rewarding and stimulating. Originality and creativity are very important in this industry, of course.'

No two days are the same in my job; I could be contacting film companies for new advertising campaigns one day and giving client presentations the next. I like the client contact and I am very much hands-on - being involved with the productive work of the agency rather than managing it. When I joined the agency, I hit it off with my colleagues immediately and I still get on well with them. There's a very good rapport between us.'

## I like the team work

'I'm an aircraft engineer. I work on the research and development of new aircraft. I love putting ideas into practice. I like working on my own, but it's also great being part of a team. I like the team work and the sense of achievement when we do something new. And of course, the planes we produce are very beautiful.'

Is there anything I don't like? I dislike days when I'm chained to a desk. I don't like admin and paperwork - sometimes I feel I'm snowed under with it. And in a large organization like ours, there can be a lot of red tape and bureaucracy - rigid procedures that can slow things down.'

## I want to make a contribution

'I'm a secondary school teacher. It's a low-paid job but I want to help people and make a contribution to society. That's what gives me motivation. My job gives me a lot of satisfaction. The work can be stretching, taking me to the limits of my skills and knowledge. But it's great to see kids developing and learning. Of course, they can be very difficult and demanding, but sometimes we even get recognition from parents that we are doing a good job! But I don't like unnecessary interference - I don't like people breathing down my neck.'

- 1.1 Complete the sentences with expressions from A opposite.
- 1 Work that is interesting and exciting is .....and.....
  - 2 If you spend time with customers, you have .....
  - 3 If you have a good working relationship with your colleagues, you .....  
.....well with them.
  - 4 If you do the actual work of the organization rather than being a manager, you are
  - 5 If you want to say that work is not repetitious, you can say,
  - 6 ..... and .....are when you have new and effective ideas that  
people have not had before.

1.2 The aircraft engineer talks about his work. Complete his statements with expressions from B opposite.

Sometimes I work late at the office when everyone has gone home. I like.....

1 I love the .....  
involved when we all work together to create something new.

It's great to see what I learnt during my engineering course at university being applied in actual designs. I like.....

5 It's rare, but sometimes when I come into the office and see a huge pile of work waiting for me, I feel completely.....

6 When we see a new plane fly for the first time, we all feel a great.....

I hate it when there is a big stack of documents and letters on my desk that I have to deal with. I don't like .....and

I get frustrated when you have to get permission to spend anything over £50. I don't like.....  
and .....

1.3 Complete this table with words from C opposite and related forms. Put a stress mark in front of the stressed syllable in each word. (The first one has been done for you.)

Verb	Noun	Adjective
con'tribute (or 'contribute)	COJI+Г/'Ы+ЮJI	con'-bnbifboTij
demand		
motivate		
recognize		
satisfy		

Write a job description for your own job or one you would like, and say why you feel you are suitable for it.

# 4

## Employment and employability

A

### Outsourcing

Nigel, a 30-year-old information technology (IT) specialist, talks about his career so far:

‘I used to work in the IT department of a bank. All the IT work was done in-house. I thought I had a job for life. But then one day the bank decided to cut costs by outsourcing the work to a specialist IT company called IT Services (ITS).

Luckily, the bank didn’t make me redundant so I didn’t lose my job, and after a while I decided to work for ITS instead. At first, I didn’t know what to expect, but now I’m very happy. We work with a lot of different clients - I’m a consultant and I give them advice.’



### Employability

‘ITS put a lot of emphasis on professional development and we often go on training courses so we can keep up with current trends in the industry.

ITS tell us that although we may not have a job for life with the company, our up-to-date skills will mean that we will always be employable. Companies and governments talk about the importance of lifelong learning - continuing to develop our knowledge by going on courses and reading journals, for example.

I really enjoy my work but in the next year or two, I may make a career move and join another company.’

### Freelancers and portfolio workers

‘When I’m about 40, I want to set up on my own as a freelancer offering consultancy services to different companies. The idea of working freelance on different projects for different clients attracts me.’

The management thinker Charles Handy’ calls freelancers portfolio workers because they have a portfolio or range of different clients. Some experts say that increasing numbers of people will work this way in the future, as companies outsource more and more of their work because they want to concentrate on their core functions.

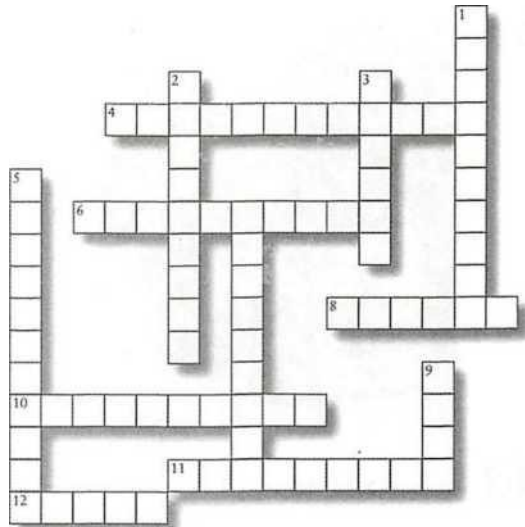
Note: People are called freelancers or freelances. The corresponding adjective is freelance, as in ‘freelance work’.

‘*The Age of Unreason* (Random House 2001)

4.1 Complete the crossword with appropriate forms of expressions from A, B and C opposite.

Across

- 4 Training courses etc. related to work: ..... development. (12)
- 6 What many companies no longer offer. (3,3,4)
- 8 and 9 down When you get a better job you make a .....(6,4)
- 10 Someone who offers professional advice etc. to companies. (10)
- 11 Companies that buy in services from outside suppliers.....these services. (9)
- 12 If you start work as a freelancer, you on your own. (3,2)



Down

- 1 Having the skills needed to get a job. (10)
- 2 and 3 Someone who does work for a number of different companies. (9,6)
- 5 The people in 2 and 3 down are also called ..... (11)
- 7 If you lose your job, for example because it has been outsourced, you are made ..... (9)
- 9 See 8 across.

4.2 Complete the sentences with appropriate forms of expressions from A, B and C opposite. (There are two possibilities for one of the gaps.)

- 1 There's a lot to be said for ..... I would encourage more working men and women to refresh their skills on university short courses tailored to their needs. That way they can keep up with ..... and make sure they are always aware of the latest thinking in their area.
- 2 I love my new job. This is definitely the best ..... I could have made.
- 3 The company fired 11,000 employees and sold several business units. Non-core..... were outsourced.
- 4 Some former advertising executives offer.....to ad agencies, bringing expertise the agencies do not have themselves.
- 5 Some 'creative' businesses, like design services, have hardly any permanent staff and rely on work done by .....
- 6 Of course, there are advantages to doing some things.....- .....: you don't have to explain to outsiders what you want them to do.

# 5 Flexibility and inflexibility



## Ways of working

Nordland is an advanced industrialized country. In addition to outsourcing some functions to freelancers (see Unit 4), many organizations there are looking for ways of having more flexible working, for example:

- temporary workers who only work for short periods when they are needed, either on a temporary contract with a company, or through a temp agency
- part-time workers who work less than a full working week
- job sharing, where two people share a particular job, each of them working part-time.

## Job flexibility

The government of Nordland is trying to encourage this kind of job flexibility, and it has passed laws that allow companies to hire and fire employees easily. When letting people go, companies only have to give them two weeks' notice and relatively small redundancy payments; one week's salary for every year worked is the norm.

The government has also reduced unemployment benefits, the money paid to people without jobs. They say that all these measures make for a flexible job market and encourage job creation. Critics say that this approach leads to job insecurity, with employers able to get rid of employees too easily.

## Job protection

Sudonia is an advanced industrialized country with a very different approach. Companies in trouble are only allowed to make employees redundant after a long period of consultation. If employees are made redundant, they receive generous redundancy payments and then unemployment benefits. The government says people need this sort of job protection, and trade unions are fighting hard to keep it.

Payments to employees such as sick pay, and parental leave when they have time off following the birth of children, are also very generous. Mothers get 18 months' paid maternity leave and fathers get six months' paternity leave. But the social charges which employers and employees have to pay the government are very high.

BrE: trade unions;  
AmE: labor unions

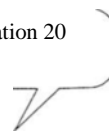
Critics say that this contributes to a rigid labour market, one with too much job protection. They say that this sort of inflexibility discourages job creation and leads in the long run to higher unemployment and slower economic growth. As a consequence, companies may look abroad for cheaper bases and workforces.

5.1 Look at A opposite. Which type of work is each of these people referring to?

1 ^ \ 2  
I work at the local council for two days a week, and my friend works in the same job on the other three days.



I work in a petrol station 20 hours a week.



..... ' ■  
I'm on a job at Clarkson's until the end of next week. Then I'll try and find something else.



5.2 Melinda and Nigel, two managers from Sudonia, are talking about the issues in B and C opposite. Replace the underlined phrases with expressions with items from those sections. Pay attention to the grammatical context. (The first one has been done for you.)

Melinda: It's ridiculous! We can't get rid of employees without a lot of meetings and discussion with employee organizations, government officials and so on. We have to keep even the laziest, most incompetent people.

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Nigel: I know what you mean. I don't have the opportunity to recruit and get rid of people as I want! This sort of rigidity must be bad for the job market. The number of people without jobs in this country is very high.

Melinda: It's a nightmare! If you do want to get rid of people, you have to tell them three months in advance.

Nigel: Yes, and you should see the amount of tax I have to pay for each of my employees just so they can get money when they fall ill, and so on.

Melinda: We should move to Nordland, where they have a job marker that gives employers a lot of freedom. The level of new jobs being created there is incredible. Sudonia should copy Nordland.

Nigel: I agree, hut it never will, until it's too late!

Look at the expressions in B and C opposite and say if these statements are true or false.

- 5.3
- 1 When companies let employees go, they make them redundant.
  - 2 One person's job flexibility might be another's job insecurity.
  - 3 In flexible job markets, hiring and firing is complex.
  - 4 Kmployee benefits are paid for through .social charges.
  - 5 'Rigidity' is another word for 'inflexibility'.
  - 6 When fathers take parental leave, this is called 'fatherly leave'.
  - 7 The cost of job protection might he higher unemployment.

## Over 'to Lpu

Is your country more like Nordland or Sudonia? What are the advantages and disadvantages of flexible working?

# 6

## Work-life balance

### A

### Stress

People talk about being under (a lot of) stress or pressure. They say their work is stressful and that they feel stressed or stressed out. They want to find ways to de-stress. They may complain that they have stress-related illness. Some people may suffer burn-out or a complete breakdown, which means they are no longer able to work.

'Stress' often occurs in these combinations:



stress	factor	something that causes stress
	symptom	a sign that someone is under stress
	toll	the total amount of damage caused by stress
	management	ways of dealing with stress
	industry	term used by critics to refer to counselling, research, etc. done in relation to stress

Note: 'Stress' and 'pressure' are both countable and uncountable: you can also talk about the stresses and pressures you are under.

### The causes of stress

The most common causes of stress are:

- heavy workloads: too much to do in the limited time available
- office politics: problems with colleagues who above all, want to advance their own position. These people like playing politics
- role ambiguity; responsibilities are unclear
- lack of management support: managers do not provide the necessary help and resources
- effort-reward imbalance: not getting sufficient recognition or pay
- home-work imbalance: not enough time for family, personal interests, etc.

### Quality of life

Some people are workaholics - they think about very little except work. Others are increasingly looking for quality of life: less commuting, more time with their families, etc. Journalists write about people downshifting or rebalancing their lives. They may work part-time, work from home, move to the country and so on.

In a recent survey:

- a 95 per cent of homeworkers said they have a better work-life balance or home-work balance than when they were in-company because they can spend more time with their families and on leisure activities.
- b 82 per cent said they have more autonomy and independence: they are able to organize their work and their time how they want.

But in the same survey homeworkers also complained that:

- c there is no boundary between work on the one hand and personal life on the other - the two overlap (73 per cent)
- d they feel lonely and isolated because they are out of contact with others and don't have colleagues around them (57 per cent).

6.1 Complete the article with appropriate forms of 'stress' from A opposite.

## Payouts predicted for stressed teachers

Teachers could win settlements of up to £250,000 over work-related (2) .....illness. (1) ..... Doug McAvoy, the general secretary of the National Union of Teachers, said: "This case is predicted, following last week's clearly a warning to teachers' £47,000 compensation deal for a employers that neglect Wirral secondary teacher made ill of a (3) ..... situation by overwork. .... could lead to significant medical damage. They must not allow that For those who believe that teaching is an easy life, the story of Muriel Benson came as a reminder danger to develop and destroy a of the pressures. She was forced to teacher's career. We know there are hundreds of teachers out there who retire three years ago from a senior are feeling (4) ..... and post at Prenton High School pressured. They can be protected if because her health could not stand they come to us for help." up to a 66-hour weekly workload. But Neil Fletcher, education Wirral council is refusing to discuss secretary of the Local Government Benson's case, but, according to Association, said: "There is no her side of the story, the breakdown evidence that teaching is becoming that led to her early retirement also more (5) ....."

*The Guardian*

- 6.2 Which two of the causes of stress in B opposite are specifically mentioned in the article above?
- 6.3 Match the statements (1-4) to the findings in the survey in C opposite.

Sometimes I wish I was working every day as part of a team in an office.

Yes, my boss isn't breathing down my neck the whole

I see much more of my children.

I work in the living room, and the work is always there, waiting. I can't get away from it.

### Over 'to ipu ^

Look again at the article above. Do you think that working 66 hours a week is always stressful? Why / Why not?

What are the main causes of stress in your job or one you would like? How do you combat stress?