

Working weeks

[Business](#), [Work](#)



In New Zealand by Altering Working Weeks If I could change one thing about the world of business and organizations, it would be to alter the generic 40 hour working week for New Islanders. I would define this key strategic issue in two particular contexts; the first of which being how the generic working week is structured, and the second being the average amount of normal weekly hours a full time worker must work to maintain a livelihood. It is imperative that both areas of this Issue are addressed in order to benefit employees, societies and corporations.

This can be done by combating society Issue of growing unemployment to generate a sustainable employment future for all kiwis, while still benefiting employers by Increase efficiency and effectiveness within our economy. This particular Issue Is Important to me because I have now been unemployed for seven months and have found it extraordinarily difficult. I often worry about how my children will handle employment in the future along with the inevitability that it is to only bound to be worse for them. Increasing population vs.. Creasing amount of jobs is to blame for this rising trend towards future unemployment. Population is increasing at an exponential rate which is driving unemployment up, but is not as easily addressed as the issue of decreasing Jobs. It is widely known that globalization has been a number one driver in unemployment. Fifty percent of Jobs that were available thirty years ago no longer exist due to technological advancement or 'machines taking over' (Rotten, 2013). Jobs are increasingly being replaced by robots to improve efficiency, and a technology advances; so too will this issue.

I worked as a checkout operator at New World Metro for five years and during this time we introduced self-service lanes, which dramatically decreased New World's need for checkout staff. I was trained as a self-service supervisor and my job was to look over eight of these machines and help if any issues arose. Technically, my job replaced that of eight checkout operators. It is not to say that people were fired during this time of transition, but when people left; many were not replaced due to lack of demand.

This example from my prior work experience can be applied to majority of firms these days. It is an issue to be addressed in all industries, at both ends of the spectrum, from supermarkets to law firms. Many have predicted computers to take the place of lawyers in the next 10 - 20 year because of their capacity to hold information from millions of books (Lick, 2013). However, increasing technology is not something that can be, nor should be stopped, as it helps economies grow and become more efficient and effective. It is improvements in the way we work, that may be able to address this issue.

There are various ways we can look at combating unemployment and increase efficiency and effectiveness within the New Zealand structure. New Zealand currently adapts an eight-hour-a-day, five-day week. This leaves workers with only two free days a week, implying 30% free time, which just does not feel like enough. It is depressing to think that as a human we spend 70% of every week of our entire life working. Changing to a 10-hour, 4-day ratio means free time is increased to 42.8% of every week; which is a whole lot closer to half way.

Using this structure, workers can still work the same amount of hours while earning the same income but gaining an extra day of free time to spend doing the things they enjoy. This will improve each individual's general mood, thus creating happier working environments, which could generate more efficient and effective workplaces. It is also inevitable that work places would become more efficient under this system, as projects would get completed at a faster rate. Companies would gain two extra hours a day of an individual's time to complete each project, thus completing jobs at a higher frequency in the same amount of working hours.

The 10 hour: 4 day week could also impact positively on unemployment, as companies gain an entire day of working hours where cover must be found a week. Fortunately this extra day does not come at the expense of decreasing anyone else's hours, thus an entire new job is formed. This idea comes under the assumption that majority of companies are open seven days a week. Consequently, each organization would need to increase their weekend staff to cater for this extra day. Additionally, this structure could also help job-share equality in the workplace; implying two days each for each worker.

Therefore this 10 hour four day week would not only be beneficial for full time employees by increasing their free time, and job share employees by creating an equal split, it would also benefit corporations by increasing productivity and efficiency, and society by decreasing unemployment. The next area to look at when addressing issues surrounding unemployment and effective workplaces, would be the average amount of normal weekly hours full time workers work. New Islanders currently adapt a 40 hour average

working week, with many (particularly in trade areas) working 48 hour weeks.

There seems to be a trend towards employees working larger amounts of hours as there is a higher demand for these kinds of workers. Unfortunately, this system favors corporations at the expense to employees and societies. This is an area which must be addressed in order to maintain equality between the three. If we continue with our current system, issues surrounding this inequality will only get worse. Results could possibly lead to a future where our children would be considered (in today's society) as slaves.

The number one way to address this would be to somehow prove to organizations that decreasing employee's average hours, would benefit their company in the long run. We can look to countries like Germany and France for particular examples of decreased hours benefiting economies. France currently adapts a 35 hour working week with longer holiday periods. They work the least in the world but have one of the highest productivity rates, working less but working better valuing quality over quantity (Businesswoman's, 2013). Germany on the other hand, also adapt a 35 hour working week and maintain a low unemployment rate of 5. % (Rheostat, 2014) compared with New Zealand's 5. 9% (Businesses, 2014). The British Economics Foundation makes fair point in their book 'time on our side' that the optimum working resources, reducing greenhouse gas, benefiting employee's general health and fix unemployment by creating new jobs. I particularly agree with the issue of benefiting employee general health. I have previously argued that increasing employees free time days will

improve their mood, but will also improve their general health, whether it mental or physical.

It is evident that SSH accidents increase as an individual's amount of hours worked increases, stress and fatigue being general causes (OCHS, 2012). This is neither an efficient or effective way of working and is a particular issue in trade industries, as many opt for increased hour working weeks to keep up with demand. Companies should decrease employee's hours in order to decrease work place accidents in order to promote efficient and effective workplaces. A final point to note is that, decreasing the average working week will generate new jobs which is the number one issue at hand in my argument.

Altering the generic 40 hour working week is key to combating unemployment and increase efficiency and effectiveness within the New Zealand economy. We can do one of two ways; how the working weeks are structured and by looking at how many hours people work. I argued that in re-structuring to four ten hour days provides far more benefits for employees, societies and companies than five eight hour days in a working week. My final argument proved that the inequalities between these three parties must be addressed now in order for future generations not to be taken advantage of and this can be addressed by decreasing working weeks.

I feel that there is a high likelihood that measures to alter working weeks will be addressed in the future, as issues surrounding increasing population vs.. Unemployment due to globalization grow. However, barriers to addressing this would surround individual's right to choose how much they want to work.

As the working economy gets more competitive people will want to do more to get on top. If that means working more, than this issue has the potential to get a lot worse. References Businesswoman's. 2013, 12 13). Is the 40-hour Workweek Too Long?