

Example of essay on persuasive draft: the need for siestas in the american workpl...

[Science](#), [Biology](#)



Currently, American workers are being overworked, which is leading to greater stress, which leads to more distraction, less productivity, and greater morbidity. Americans are sleeping less than they did 50 years ago (Lambert, 2005). Poor quality sleep has been linked to work overload and an increase in work stressors, which then diminishes productivity (Knudsen, Ducharme & Roman, 2007; Naska et al., 2007). The American workplace is stressful and full of high pressure situations, which brings about this greater stress. Given the problems of workplace stress, lower productivity and the need to facilitate more beneficial sleep, invoking a mandatory Spanish-style siesta is the suggested solution to the problem of workplace stress and productivity. The Spanish siesta has existed for millennia, and the biological need for sleep is accommodated through this ritual. This phenomenon is a common occurrence among sleep cultures like Spain and Italy, in which naps are taken for up to two hours during the hottest parts of the day. The siesta is commonly associated with countries in which there are high temperatures, as well as heavier food intake during the middle of the day; these conditions encourage such midday naps. However, there are other benefits to the siesta besides geographical and cultural ones, which can be easily applied to the American workplace and culture (Smith, 2005).

Research shows that we have a biological need for midday sleep, according to our circadian rhythms. "Sleep bulimia" is a phenomenon in modern society, and human beings are not sleeping as much as they used to, or should (Lambert, 2005). Because of the advent of electricity and the increasingly fast pace of the modern lifestyle, mankind's ability to sleep has diminished as the days have been lengthened thanks to electric light. Fewer

people sleep now than they did fifty or 100 years ago, sleeping an average of 6.8 hours on weeknights, which is much less than the 8 hours that is required for proper, restful sleep (Lambert, 2005). Siestas would provide the proper amount of sleep needed for human beings, and solve our 'sleep bulimia' problems.

Siestas would also reduce employee stress, which would turn into greater health benefits and more productive and profitable workers. The aforementioned presence of sleep bulimia leads to greater amount of stress; Knudsen, Ducharme and Roman (2007) performed a study in which poor sleep quality is directly connected to job stress and negative work and health outcomes (2007). People who sleep less have a greater likelihood of cardiac-related comorbidity, which could be solved with siestas; a study of Greek adults who took midday siestas showed a 30% reduced likelihood of dying of heart disease (Stein, 2007).

The aforementioned biological need for sleep would be met, people would be more energetic in the afternoon, and productivity would subsequently increase. Siestaawareness.org notes that siesta provides 30% more energy, 100% more alertness, and lowers heart disease risk and stress by 34% (siestaawareness.org, 2014). Naska et al. (2007) performed a study in which siesta for healthy individuals was examined, showing that people who performed systematic siestas were 37% less likely to die of coronary issues. Because of this research, the health benefits to the siesta are just as clear as the economic ones.

There are some counterarguments to the notion of the siesta. First, implementing an American siesta would involve changing the logistics of the

workplace to make it feasible for people to sleep at work. Furthermore, the tradition of the siesta is beginning to disappear in countries where it is already used; to that end, the legitimacy of the siesta may be in question. There may also be a temptation of workers sleeping too much, which might affect working hours and the labor market.

These concerns are valid, but not to the point at which siestas become no longer feasible. The cultural steps away from siestas have less to do with their benefits and more to do with the fact that other countries are following American models of daylight and productivity, which is affecting their sleep as well (Lambert, 2005). As for the workplace applications of the siesta, businesses could be suggested to allow an extended lunch break, essentially from 12-2pm, to allow for both a quick lunch and the subsequent nap. Facilities would be required to be provided to the employees to allow for on-site comfortable rest, so that they could get back to work immediately. Companies would be free to change their operating hours accordingly if they feel they need to maximize productivity.

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