
SHORT REST SOLUTIONS IN CORPORATE SETTINGS

35.2% of adults in the US say they get less than seven hours of sleep per night -which is defined as short sleep duration by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).^[i] The consequences of sleep deprivation can be harmful both for employees and employers. Through lower productivity and higher absence caused by fatigue, sleep-deprived workers cost the American economy as much as \$411 billion per year, roughly 2.28% of the country's GDP.^[ii] In 2019, representatives from the American Academy of Sleep Medicine (AASM), CDC, and Sleep Research Society (SRS) published a review with a series of guidelines and resources to help organizations support sleep and recovery of their staff. Among these, short naps and adjustments to work environments have been advocated to mitigate the risks of sleep deprivation and improve the overall wellbeing of employees.^[iii]

SLEEP IN THE US

A global study conducted in 2021 across 63 countries found that 42% of office workers reported poor sleep quality. Only 17% of office workers reported getting sufficient sleep, highlighting an issue pervading the working population. According to experts, a widespread performance culture which sees long hours as a badge of honor is the culprit of the sleep epidemic affecting the American workforce.^[iv]

17%

wake up in the morning
feeling refreshed

Remote working has blurred the boundaries between professional and private life, leading to longer work hours. As found by a study conducted by Microsoft, exhaustion has pervaded the global

workforce, and 54% felt overworked under the pressure of upholding productivity.^[v]

Professionals in the banking and financial sector have been identified as one of the most sleep-deprived groups, with junior bankers reportedly working an average of 95 hours a week and getting only five hours of sleep.^[vi] Specifically, the Worldwide Sleep Census found bankers to regularly lose their temper (65%), suffer a lack of productivity (30%) or be late to work (19%) due to fatigue.^[vii]

65%

Regularly lose their temper due to
overwork and sleep deprivation.

Sleep during COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has worsened American's sleep patterns, with 1 in 4 people suffering from insomnia (up from 1 in 6 before the crisis) as a result of disruption in social and working lives. U.S. search queries for insomnia rose by 58% during the first few months of 2020 alone. Women and mothers have been put at a greater disadvantage, widening the disparity in sleep deprivation among genders: the percentage of those experiencing poor sleep was 49% compared to 35% for their male counterparts.^[viii]

1 in 4

Americans suffering
from insomnia

58%

Rise in U.S. search queries for insomnia

CONSEQUENCES OF FATIGUE

Sleep deprivation and work performance

Fatigue has been found to negatively affect cognitive and psychomotor performance, resulting in impaired decision making and reduced alertness.^[ix] Specifically, studies have found that individuals sleeping less than 6 hours a night for over a period of two weeks perform as poorly as someone who has been sleep deprived for 48 hours, as their memory and concentration are significantly compromised.^[x] According to office workers taking part in a survey by the US National Sleep Foundation, inadequate sleep makes it harder to read business documents for at least 1 hour without feeling sleepy (68%), take on additional tasks at the end of a regular work day (66%), listen carefully to others (62%) and produce quality work to the best of their ability (61%).^{[xi] [xii]}

61%

Struggle to produce quality work

In addition to undermining productivity through reduced performance, sleep deprivation also leads to excess absence and increased risk of workplace accidents, costing companies money. ^[xiii] Further, job satisfaction as well as career progression have been found to be negatively impacted by poor sleep quality.^[xiv]

Sleep deprivation and mental health

In the past few years, America has witnessed a surge in mental health issues with an increase in anxiety, stress and depression among the population. 1 in 5 adults experiences a mental health problem in a given year, and more than 50% of Americans will be diagnosed with a mental illness or disorder at some point in their lifetime.^[xv] Moreover, half of U.S. workers agree they have felt burned out from their job in the past two weeks.^[xvi]

Lack of sleep has been identified as one of the main contributors to the mental health crisis, with adults reporting increased feelings of stress and overwhelm, irritability, and anxiety due to poor sleep. Sleep deprivation sets the stage for negative thinking and emotional vulnerability: when getting less than 6 hours of sleep per night, people are 2.5 times more likely to have frequent mental distress than healthy sleepers.^[xvii] For individuals with pre-existing mental health issues, lack of sleep can be particularly dangerous as it lowers the threshold for suicidal thoughts and behaviours.^[xviii]

2.5 times

Higher likelihood of experiencing mental distress when getting less than 6 hours of sleep

BENEFITS OF SHORT REST

While working from home, 45% of people picked up a new habit: a daily nap. With no external pressure to stay awake, individuals have become more conscious of their need to rest, and have experienced the great benefits of napping for their energy level and productivity.^[xix] Short rest has in fact been proven effective in mitigating the consequences of insufficient sleep. Studies have found brief naps (<30 minutes) to improve alertness (+54%) and cognitive performance (+34%) for a period up to 3 hours, with greater benefits experienced by those who regularly nap.^{[xx] [xxi] [xxii]}

54%

increase in alertness
After a <30min nap

34%

increase in cognitive
performance

Similarly, increased attention to detail and decision-making proficiency have been measured, as well as improvement in memory and learning; following a short nap, information retrieval has been found to increase five-fold.^[xxiii] ^[xxiv] Moreover, naps are more effective than caffeine - which is often consumed for its stimulant properties - in improving performance.^[xxv]

The effects on mental wellbeing and mood have also been explored. Napping for as little as 10 minutes improves mental state by increasing feelings of relaxation and joy while reducing sadness.^[xxvi] Moreover, short rest reduces impulsivity and promotes tolerance for frustration, fostering higher emotion regulation.^[xxvii]

RESTWORKS SOLUTIONS

Corporations are progressively waking up to the detrimental effects of a lack of sleep, and are increasingly adopting rest solutions to promote healthier habits for their employees. Restworks

supports organizations in a wide range of sectors by providing tailored sleep technology and equipment that can be part of improving wellbeing in the workplace. Our signature product, the EnergyPod, is the world's first chair for napping in the workplace, and represents an innovative solution which allows businesses to convert virtually any space into a rest area.

In its US headquarters in the Silicon Valley, Google has installed nap pods among other facilities such as wellness centers and swimming pools in an effort to encourage creativity and learning among its employees.^[xxviii] Cisco is another company that has chosen to make use of nap pods at their facilities. Since install, the pods have been used extensively, reflecting the great benefits experienced by employees.

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[iv] For example, it has been estimated that if managers sends e-mails during off hours and multitasks during meetings, their employees are likely to do so too. See Harvard Business Review (2018). 'If you multitask during meetings, Your team Will, Too. <https://hbr.org/2018/01/if-you-multitask-during-meetings-your-team-will-too>

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