

4-Day Week Rollout Programme

Frequently Asked Questions

Why move to a four-day week?

The benefits of a shorter working week are numerous and have been demonstrated in [multiple trials, studies and pilot programmes in the UK, the US, Ireland](#) and elsewhere.

- **Productivity** – not only is labour output maintained, results show that productivity often increases with a four-day week. In a vast majority of companies, healthy business growth has been observed when the organisation moved to a four-day week (e.g. 35% revenue increase on average in 61 UK companies in 2022).
- **Staff wellbeing** – significant reduction of stress levels, burnout, anxiety and fatigue are consistently observed in organisations that implement a four day week (e.g. 71% reduction of perceived burnout by staff taking part in the UK's 2022 trial). The number of sick days and absenteeism also markedly decrease.
- **Staff retention and attractivity** – in the UK's 2022 pilot, the rate of staff leaving dropped by 57% compared with the same period a year earlier. 15% of staff said that no amount of money would induce them to accept a five-day schedule over the four-day week to which they were now accustomed. [Shorter working hours are particularly attractive for younger workers](#) (35 and below).
- **Reputation** – evidence shows that a shorter working week contributes to a decrease in your organisation's carbon footprint as well as positioning yourself as an innovative, ethical employer that values staff wellbeing.
- **Organisational efficiency** – moving to a four-day week is a great opportunity to review and improve your organisation's current ways of working.

Read more of Autonomy's research on the four-day week [here](#).

You can also consult the 4-Day Week Campaign's collated resources [here](#).



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How does it work?

The four-day week can take a variety of forms depending on your organisation's needs, business constraints, and staff preferences. The Rollout Programme will present you with the different implementation models available and help find the one best suited to your organisation, for instance:

- 4-day, 32-hour workweek
- Universal day off (e.g. Fridays off) vs rotation of days off
- Gradual reduction in hours
- Seasonal four-day week

Why implement a four-day week rather than just saving 20% of labour costs?

Simply put: it doesn't work this way.

The benefits you get from implementing a shorter working week relate to how productivity increases when people's free time increases. The 'carrot' of the extra day off generates productivity increases in two ways: firstly, people will work more efficiently in order to reach output targets when posed with the proposition of gaining an extra day off a week. Secondly, having more time away from work produces a positive feedback loop with regards to overall health (both mental and physical) and well-being for the people involved. A more rested and appreciative workforce is then capable of meeting the intensification of work over a shorter period of time.

If, however, you were simply to cut the workforce by 20%, you would see a negative feedback loop to productivity in the opposite direction, with staff morale and motivation diminishing with the increases to workload. These additional increases to workload would then be detrimental to staff's health and wellbeing, with the likely result being an increase in absenteeism, presenteeism and turnover in staff.

Is the Rollout Programme designed for small and medium-sized businesses as well as large-scale organisations?

The Rollout Programme is open to organisations of all sizes and designed to provide you with useful, actionable information no matter the context. Guidance will therefore be applicable across companies. However, size and organisational complexity mean there might be need for more extensive engagement in larger firms in order to support the shift in the working culture that comes with the four-day week. Don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions.



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Can it work for companies across all sectors?

Absolutely. [In the latest UK-wide pilot](#), 61 companies from all economic sectors successfully implemented a shorter working week. This includes firms in sectors like marketing, professional services, charity and finance, but also hospitality, manufacturing, healthcare, and construction. [In Germany](#), the IG Metall trade union won an agreement which resulted in 3.9 million metal and engineering workers being offered a four-day week with no loss in pay.

Certain parts of the business need to be maintained across the whole week. How can this work with a four-day week?

In some organisations, service needs to be maintained throughout the working week and sometimes beyond. If this is the case, hybrid models can be put in place across either the whole company or localised to the specific teams in question. Solutions to managing work time can always be found: it just requires planning and creativity in sourcing solutions to the issues posed. If staff buy-in to the idea and begin to experience its positive effects, they will be highly motivated to problem solve and ensure not only that customer service is maintained but, in many cases, improved.

How much time will it take?

The Rollout Programme is primarily designed for organisations interested in moving to a four-day week within one year. The eight-week workshop programme (1 hour per week) will give you all the information and resources you need to develop and implement your version of the four-day week. We provide a tentative start date for participating companies at the end of the programme, although there is no obligation to stick to this date. After the workshops, one-shot events will provide additional opportunities of engagement as you move forward with a four-day week.

What if it doesn't work?

The shorter working week has been a resounding success in nearly every organisation in which it has been trialled. Careful planning, staff engagement, commitment from management and performance measurement are the key to making it a success for everyone. The Rollout Programme is designed to help you determine the conditions of success specific to your organisation, and we are confident that with this advice and support, there is every chance it will work for



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you, too. And signing up means you won't have to do it alone: you will have access to a large group of like-minded companies with whom to learn and share your experience, to workshops led by the leading experts on the topic, and to troubleshooting sessions to help you work through kinks.

If, by the end of the programme, you still have doubts about your organisation's readiness for a shorter working week, you can always conduct further preparations or turn to a trial as a fallback option. There is no strict commitment to move to a four-day week within a year - you can go at your own pace to design the version that works best for your organisation.

We've only just started thinking about moving to a four-day week and are not ready to fully commit to this just yet. Should we wait longer before getting involved?

The Rollout Programme is designed to support you in your journey towards a four-day week no matter what stage you're at. It can serve to support your research by providing you with key information, guidance, and direct feedback from other organisations, and can help you start a conversation within your organisation about the benefits of moving to a four-day week. The information, advice and resources provided will be helpful to you whenever you decide to get going with implementing it.

Just the process itself of considering a shorter working week is always highly beneficial to organisations. It encourages a mindset that emphasises reflection on how people are working, a degree of scepticism about your current ways of working, and a willingness to try new things. It can therefore be a tool to improve processes, increase productivity and creativity, and spur better leadership and innovation. Not to mention, an opportunity to connect and share experiences with like-minded organisations in your sector and/or region.

How can I find out more?

Come to one of our information sessions to find out more about the programme and the opportunities you get when signing up.

If you are looking for a more tailored approach, you can always get in touch with the consultancy team at Autonomy: info@autonomy.work.



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