

Downside Up

NOV 28, 2022

What if we only worked four days a week?



Speakers

Joe Biden, Recording, Barack Obama, Recording, Chris Cillizza, Clip from 9 to 5 by Dolly Parton, Anne Helen Peterson, Angela Garbes, Charlotte Lockhart, Sarah Quinn

00:00:05

Joe Biden, Recording

A job is about a lot more than a paycheck.

00:00:08

Barack Obama, Recording

If you work hard and take responsibility, you can get ahead in America.

00:00:17

Chris Cillizza

In 1940, the United States formalized a 40 hour workweek. It's been 80 years and not much has changed since. A 9 to 5 Monday through Friday workweek is still the standard. Just ask Dolly Parton.

00:00:29

Clip from 9 to 5 by Dolly Parton

Working 9 to 5, what a way to make a living, barely getting by. It's all takin' and no givin'.

00:00:36

Chris Cillizza

But let's be honest, most of us work a lot more than that. We're all working overtime. We've picked up side hustles and gig work. Forget about working for the weekend, a lot of us are working through the weekend. But what if we didn't have to work so damn hard? What would the world look like if we only worked four days a week? I'm Chris Cillizza and you're listening to Downside Up, a podcast from CNN that looks for answers to some of the world's big "what if?" questions. Today's thought experiment may actually be within our grasp. We're looking at what the world would look like if we only work four days a week. Some companies and even some countries have already started piloting a four day workweek. We'll learn a little bit today about how those programs are going and whether they actually make an impact on our overall culture of work. So join me as we turn our workplaces Downside Up.

00:01:31

Chris Cillizza

Many Americans have long defined themselves by their work ethic. We've got hard working roots here in the U.S.. If you go all the way back to when the Europeans first settled in New England, the Massachusetts Bay Colony actually had a ten hour minimum workday. And for more than a century, we've debated how many hours we should all be working every week. As early as 1817, labor unions were advocating for shorter workweeks.

00:01:58

Anne Helen Peterson

Well, it really, like there wasn't one day where people are like, okay, we're going to go to just 40 hours. It was the result of a series of reforms that were really the work of labor reformers advocating for a shorter workweek.

00:02:14

Chris Cillizza

That's Anne Helen Peterson, author of "Out of Office," a book about America's work culture in the 21st century and host of the podcast Work Appropriate. She studied the evolution of the American workweek.

00:02:25

Anne Helen Peterson

Used to be much more standard, especially during the 19th century or early 20th century, to work on Saturdays. And the only reason, honestly, that you get any time off on Sunday is because of religious maxims that say that it's the Sabbath. There was an idea that if you were able to work, then you should be working, right? Like if you could use electricity to be able to work in the factory longer, then as long as the human body could work in that factory, you should be working in that factory with little understanding of how that wears out the body. And so laborers came together and said, I know this is too much for what any human body should do, right? 'We should have 8 hours for work, 8 hours for rest, for sleep, and 8 hours for what you will' was famous labor rallying cry.

00:03:14

Chris Cillizza

Back then, people were regularly working 80 to 100 hour weeks. In 1866, Congress actually considered an eight hour workday bill, but it didn't pass. And then in 1926, Henry Ford actually implemented a 40 hour workweek in his factories because he thought that was the optimal work period for his employees. 12 years after that, in 1938, Congress passed the Fair Labor Standards Act, which required employers to pay overtime to hourly employees who work more than 44 hours a week. By the time that law was implemented in 1940, it had been reduced to a 40 hour week. Ever since then, it's been the standard for most people, but not for everyone.

00:03:54

Anne Helen Peterson

I mean, the way the labor reforms have always worked has been the workers that officials don't want to treat as valuable workers were exempted from that. So that was migrant workers, oftentimes until labor reforms within the agricultural market, but also people who worked as domestics in any capacity, so people who worked as nannies but also as housekeepers. And a lot of that was straight up racist, right? Like it was part of the deal of like, okay, we'll have labor protections for some people, but we can't consider people who work primarily in the home to be workers who are worthy, deserving of these protections, because if we did, then we'd have to pay all of these, specifically Black people, but also people of color, lower class workers and women, particularly the same wages we would pay someone who was working in a factory. I mean, all of this is so tied up in and race and gender and all of that history. So as much as these labor reforms did protect a lot of workers and ensure a 40 hour workweek and protections that went with it, that did not apply to everyone. So, again, totally arbitrary. Like there's nothing that says we should work 40 hours a week. That is what we work as people in the world today.

00:05:11

Chris Cillizza

Like a lot of the reforms from the early 20th century, labor protections often did not extend to people of color. Angela Garbes is the author of "Essential Labor," a book that challenges our assumptions about work care and domestic life.

00:05:24

Angela Garbes

Thinking about the New Deal, one of the things that came out of that was putting people to work, right? And there were protections that were put in place, a guaranteed sort of like family wage that was all built around a very traditional nuclear family structure. A man who goes to work, a wife who stays home, and a couple of kids. That was a good idea, but imperfect and sort of flawed in very, very American ways. Basically, Southern lawmakers didn't think that Black people deserved that guaranteed wage that white people had. And so the people who were exempted from that living wage were domestic workers who were predominantly black women and agricultural workers and pickers who were predominantly black men. So our definitions of work and our ideas of that have always been very certain realm of people, and they've excluded many people for a long time.

00:06:18

Chris Cillizza

And you see that disparity carry all the way through to today.

00:06:22

Angela Garbes

The median wage of any worker in any industry in America is \$20 an hour, which is barely enough to get by. But we see that dramatically dropped down when it comes to domestic workers, they make a median of \$12 an hour and actually the lowest paid worker median wage wise is a nanny who makes \$11.60 an hour. And child care workers, and anyone who's taken care of a child knows like it's not easy, it's very exhausting and it will drive many people to the brink of madness, like care work, taking care of a physical body, like seeing an infant through that vulnerability, like that's as real as it gets. And we don't value that. And it's very gendered. It's typically the profession of women.

- Chris Cillizza** 00:07:08
Angela believes that we should rethink what we consider valuable work in America because childcare workers and teachers make all other work possible. But they are some of the workers that slip through the cracks of American workforce protections.
- Angela Garbes** 00:07:22
Childcare workers, the majority of whom are women of color, and many of them are mothers themselves, they are three times as likely to live in poverty than any other worker in America. And so we're entrusting our future of the things the people we say are most precious to us, our children, to these workers and we can't pay them a living wage. That's very shameful.
- Chris Cillizza** 00:07:45
Anne Helen Peterson worked as a nanny right out of college and she points out that people in that position are working longer hours so that white collar workers can maintain their 9 to 5 lifestyle.
- Anne Helen Peterson** 00:07:55
When I was a nanny, I never worked a 9 to 5. I would show up at eight, usually stay until around six. That was the expectation because I was working for Microsoft employees. They needed to get there so that they could commute into the office. They needed to be there so they could commute home. So I worked more than a 40 hour work week.
- Chris Cillizza** 00:08:11
But let's be honest, these days, very few people actually work just a 40 hour workweek. Even salaried executives in the office. The hustle and grind culture leads to people working beyond their 40 hours, even when overtime laws don't apply to them.
- Anne Helen Peterson** 00:08:26
Most salaried employees, particularly people who are higher level office workers, are working far more than 40 hours because they are not paid overtime, and oftentimes working those incredibly long hours is the sign of dedication, devotion, you know, a sign that you should be promoted. And I think as much as people talk about the sanctity of the 40 workweek, they don't talk about the fact that we've already violated it.
- Chris Cillizza** 00:08:54
And if you think about the campuses built by some of the big Silicon Valley tech companies in the early part of the 21st century, American businesses had built a culture where employees were always expected to be working. The office had gyms, cafeterias, Ping-Pong tables, even barbershops, everything you could need so you'd never have to leave.
- Anne Helen Peterson** 00:09:13
People are like, Well, I work all the time because like I don't have anything. I don't have any other community that I'm bound to, like I don't have these other responsibilities. I don't have strong friendships even outside of my family. But part of the reason that they don't have those things, they don't have any hobbies is they don't know what they like is because they have worked all the time. And I don't think that this is like a personal failure. It's much more structural. But when people say, like, if I'm not going in the office, where am I going to make friends? Where am I going to be around other people? You know, the workplace is not responsible for a loneliness problem.
- Chris Cillizza** 00:09:51
But the COVID-19 pandemic abruptly made many of us rethink our relationships with work. Suddenly, it was unsafe for most people to commute to the office, and many workers, especially office workers, learned that they could do their jobs from home. And as the world open back up and employers ask their employees to come back into the office, they very quickly learned that people weren't going to do that.
- Anne Helen Peterson** 00:10:12
No one is going to go back into the office full time except if forced.
- Chris Cillizza** 00:10:17
You believe that? Interesting.

00:10:19

Anne Helen Peterson

100%. You can either try to figure out flex arrangements now or you can battle your employees for the next 5 to 10 years and then pay a consultant a lot of money to help you figure out what you should have started figuring out 5 to 10 years ago. And it's not that that means everyone needs to be fully remote. I think oftentimes this conversation becomes very polarized or binary in terms of like everyone should always be in the office or everyone should always be in the home. Most people want a compromise that somewhere in between they're like, I want to be in the office a couple of days a week because I like getting out of my home and I also understand that there's certain things that I do in my job that are a lot easier if we have co-presence for some reason. If that's drafting a document, having a brainstorm, whatever it is, people understand and acknowledge that. But they also don't want to be forced to go back into the office for two days a week and have that not be a time when their coworkers are there. And so they're just going back into that ghost office. And it feels totally arbitrary to be like answering emails from an office instead of answering emails from the comfort of your own home. And I think that there's real health involved in having that co-presence in the office and also in getting out of one's house and being around other people. But there is no reason for it to be, as you know, guided by specific commute times, and like it has to be Monday through Friday, people can figure out where work fits into their lives with some boundaries, right?

00:11:51

Chris Cillizza

And as people are rethinking how and where they should be able to work, many are also changing the way they think about when they should work. As artificial intelligence and automation increasingly enter the workplace, workers are becoming more efficient, able to get as much work done in four days as they used to get done in five. In fact, way back in 1956, then-Vice President Richard Nixon expressed his belief that automation would lead to a four day workweek. He said it would lead to a fuller family life for all Americans. Well, it's been 60 years, and that's still not the standard. But after the break, we'll take a hard look at American work culture and the problems that a 32 hour workweek can and can't fix.

00:12:46

Chris Cillizza

Welcome back to Downside Up, I'm Chris Cillizza and today we're looking at American work culture and how our lives might be different if everyone had a four day workweek. It's definitely an idea that's pretty popular with employees. A LinkedIn survey conducted this year found that 54% of U.S. workers chose a four day workweek as one of the top benefits they'd like offered by their employer. But employers have been reluctant to buy into a shorter week. Charlotte Lockhart is trying to change that. She's the founder of the nonprofit Four Day Week Global. She's also a New Zealander. And I started our conversation by asking whether she thought Americans would buy into this idea when work ethic feels like a core part of the American dream.

00:13:24

Charlotte Lockhart

Well, it depends on what you define as being work. And what is the dream. Through history, we have always wanted for our children to have better housing, better education, better food, better health. But in the 21st century, all we're really giving our children is more. And so when people say, well, the young ones these days, don't want to work as hard. Well, actually good on them, because actually what they want is more time because they want to have more time to work on the things that are important to them.

00:13:54

Chris Cillizza

And if you want evidence of that, Charlotte points to what Gen-Xers and Millennials called burnout, but Gen Z calls quiet quitting.

00:14:01

Charlotte Lockhart

So they say go to work and get paid thing, but then work asking for more, and this is where quietly quitting has become a conversation. How do we work on our families? How do we work on our health? How do we work on our education for ourselves? How do we work within our community? And how do we work on helping us save the planet? And so it's how we define ourselves in terms of our activities. We often describe everything about work as being this thing that we do when we're paid, but actually most of those other things in life actually require work.

00:14:40

Chris Cillizza

That echoes the phenomenon that author and Helen Peterson described. People spend so much time at work that they have little time to dedicate to anything else. In 2018, before she started a nonprofit, Charlotte was working at an estate planning firm in New Zealand. She started talking with her colleague, Andrew Barnes, about how they could spend less time at work.

Charlotte Lockhart

00:14:59
He read some research that said that people were only productive broadly less than 3 hours a day. So he was academically interested in what got in the way of people being productive and so he decided to try that if we gave our people more time in their personal lives, would that mean that they got a lot of that personal life and distraction out of their day? And we found that that was the success, and that's why we started doing this.

00:15:25

Chris Cillizza

So their approach was rooted in research about efficiency. People may be working eight or more hours a day, but they're only productive for three of them. And could you neutralize all that lost time by giving employees an extra day each week to focus on their personal lives? It was only after they implemented this new approach that they saw all the other benefits to working fewer hours and the results were so successful that Charlotte launched a New Four Day Week Global Nonprofit where she now works.

00:15:51

Charlotte Lockhart

But when we started, it was like, Oh, this looks quite good for gender balance in the workplace. Oh, look at what we're doing for the environment. Oh, my goodness. What are the things that are people doing with their time? They're using it for very life affirming things. And then, of course, there was all the mental health and all those sort of things.

00:16:12

Chris Cillizza

There's a lot to unpack there. So let's look at these one at a time when it comes to gender balance in the workplace. Charlotte's team found that creating a culture where everyone worked less made it easier for new parents, both moms and dads, to transition back into the office after parental leave or to take time out of their day to walk their kids to school and things like that. As for the environment:

00:16:33

Charlotte Lockhart

The most simple thing is a piece of research came out a little while ago that said that if the four day week was in the UK, it would be the equivalent to taking every single private car off the road.

00:16:44

Chris Cillizza

That's pretty stunning. So let's look at that a little deeper. It makes sense that if you reduce the amount of time people are commuting into to the office, that reduces carbon emissions. And if we use our offices less frequently, we also reduce the amount of power needed to keep all those lights on and the air conditioning running, which also reduces our carbon footprint. Now, a lot of that depends on what we'd all actually do with our four day workweek. If you go on a weekend road trip, you may actually be using more gas than you would just sitting in traffic. But another study from the University of Massachusetts concluded that just by reducing the amount of time we work by 10% would reduce our carbon footprint by 14.6%. And Charlotte says it's good business too.

00:17:25

Charlotte Lockhart

Our recruitment and attracting and retaining great staff became a big thing. And it's the number one reason why employers join our pilot programs. It's because they have this need to actually keep the staff that they've got and then hire in the great ones. And so there were all these other benefits that came out of it. But at its heart what we were looking at was, how do we improve productivity in the workplace?

00:17:50

Chris Cillizza

If you're skeptical, I understand. In America a lot of businesses have used reduced hours as a way to avoid paying people full time benefits like health insurance or paid time off. That's driven a lot of people into situations where they have to juggle two or even three jobs. But the companies participating in Charlotte's pilot programs commit to a six month trial period of 180 100 model, meaning they get 100% of the productivity in 80% of the time for 100% of the pay and their current pilot program covers thousands of employees across financial services, retail, health care and hospitality sectors.

00:18:26

Charlotte Lockhart

Very importantly, we are not about reducing pay. Your contract with your employee is not just buying time. You're buying them doing something with their time, a productive outcome. What businesses do when they join the program and it doesn't matter whether they're a manufacturer in hospitality, work in health care, or work in an office, what they're looking at is how do we define productivity within our business and how can we improve it? And if we keep productivity the same, why would we pay you less? So we very much advocate for not a reduction in pay.

- Chris Cillizza** 00:19:01
Basically, companies don't pay employees just to be in a building for 40 hours a week. They pay them to do something. And if you get all of that done in less time, then your pay should stay the same. And more than 70% of the companies participating in the current 4 day week pilot program said they plan to continue with the policy even after the six month trial period ends.
- 00:19:22
- Charlotte Lockhart**
There are thousands of companies that are doing this in the US and around the globe. One of those pieces of information that so many employers say to me is, You know what, it was actually easier than I thought it would be. That's because what we say is, don't try and decide how to fix this from the C-suite. Ask your people how they're going to do their job roles better.
- 00:19:45
- Chris Cillizza**
There's an idea in business called Parkinson's law, which basically says that work expands to fill the amount of time dedicated to it. So if you have a major report due in two weeks, it'll take you two weeks to do that report. Or if you have to make 100 widgets in 8 hours, you'll make 100 widgets in 8 hours. And the companies in Charlotte's program found that by talking with their employees, they could better determine how much time it took to actually complete assigned tasks and then adjust schedules accordingly, making everything more efficient. And she thinks it's time our work policies evolve to keep up with our technology.
- 00:20:18
- Charlotte Lockhart**
The question for us is, we've been working a five day week since the 1930s and certainly sustainably around the world since the fifties and sixties. Why wouldn't we look to change now? It makes no sense. We've got all this technology that we've brought in to our businesses and we have all these ways of measuring productivity and all of these enhancements.
- 00:20:39
- Chris Cillizza**
And for all the buzz we've heard about the gig economy in recent years, Charlotte thinks that gig culture actually offers a mirage of flexibility. Gig companies like ridesharing companies, for example, tell workers they can build their own schedules and choose their own hours. But importantly, they also consider those workers independent contractors, so they're not obligated to pay benefits like health insurance or offer paid time off. So oftentimes, gig workers wind up working more than 40 hours a week with fewer benefits.
- 00:21:07
- Charlotte Lockhart**
And the gig economy is a really interesting one. And it's a very American thing. I mean, if we think about what is the gig economy, the gig economy realistically isn't about me having flexibility with my hours. It's my previous employer having flexibility in terms of how they pay me. And so as a society, we're looking for, you know, how do we value people? We have things like superannuation and business and sick days and holiday pays and things like that, because as a society we have deemed that those are things of value to have for our society and the gig economy, as much as it has lots of benefits, disintermediates the fact that we were putting in these worker protections in the first place.
- 00:21:53
- Chris Cillizza**
In other words, Charlotte believes that businesses that rely on gig workers are promising flexibility, but really they're using it as an excuse to get around offering benefits. Anne Helen Petersen agrees and thinks that's part of an overall erosion of labor protections.
- 00:22:08
- Anne Helen Peterson**
I think one thing that we make really difficult in the United States is part time work, and a lot of that has to do with the desperation for health insurance. But like, if you look at Europe, there's a lot of people who work actual part time jobs, and they do that because their ideal scenario is providing part time care for their kids or for their elders. And they are able to have a sustainable life because there are social safety net things in place that make it feel like they're not spending massive amounts of their salary on additional childcare for the times when they are in work. They're not spending massive proportion of their existing salary on health care. And so I think, you know, one thing I hear a lot of people talk about, particularly women, but I think there are a lot of fathers and non-binary parents who also feel this way is if you could open up a way for there to be more part time work, then there wouldn't be such a frantic need to find full time employment at several jobs and then also cover that by paying people to take care of your children during those times when you're working, could be a much more even balance.

00:23:16

Chris Cillizza

Even under the best case scenarios, a four day workweek is going to be a panacea for American work culture. It could reduce the amount of people feeling burned down at work and lead to better mental health at home lives. Maybe it gives working parents an extra day to stay home with their children. But Angela Garbes, author of "Essential Labor," points out that at the end of the day, it's just an extra 8 hours.

00:23:37

Angela Garbes

I mean, it's certainly a four day workweek would give people more flexibility. I think that's undeniable. But, you know, we're talking about 8 hours here. Right. And I will say that that sort of logistical calculus, which if I had known that parenting would come, the amount of time that I would spend doing that sort of logistical scheduling calculus, I may not have had children.

00:24:00

Chris Cillizza

Even if we had a four day workweek, there's no guarantee that would address pressing issues related to jobs like the lack of affordable childcare in America or work being tied to health insurance and other benefits but Anne Helen Peterson has some ideas about what an ideal future of work could actually look like.

00:24:15

Anne Helen Peterson

My ideal future of work is one in which we decouple health insurance from employment so people aren't stuck in jobs that are bad just generally, or are struggling to put together enough money to cover premiums, like we make that part of the social safety net, and we also institute infrastructure for child care and elder care so that people aren't feeling like they're constantly under duress and trying to find solutions to their elder care and child care problems. We may or may not have a universal basic income in order to respond to the fact that a lot of these essential frontline worker jobs have become automated. The fact that at the grocery store there are fewer and fewer people with those high paying salaried jobs. The fact that at Target there's usually two lines open now and ten automated checkouts. I also think we have better worker protections. Just generally, the labor laws expand to account for the freelanceification of the labor force, which is an ongoing trend that we're seeing that's just going to intensify because places don't want to have full time employees anymore. They want to have contract labor.

00:25:26

Chris Cillizza

But Anne is also realistic about how rarely we update our labor laws in America.

00:25:31

Anne Helen Peterson

I think that there is very little willingness to protect our existing labor protections, let alone to expand or modify them to apply to the way that work is organized now. We have not updated our labor laws in any meaningful way. The state of California has tried their freelance laws like trying, and it actually kind of backfires. We need a lot of really smart people figuring out how do we actually protect work the way work is performed now. But we are currently a nation that doesn't really change. Right. We can we can fund built infrastructure, but we're not interested in innovation or anything approximating the sort of like death legislation that's going on in a place like the EU. I think companies and competitive industries are going to be forced to change and that's why you see the most interesting innovations in terms of four day workweek, in terms of flex. All of these things happening in the tech industry because they know that they have to be competitive for talent.

00:26:34

Chris Cillizza

So a four day workweek may be closer for workers in the tech industry or other white collar jobs than it is for positions like childcare workers or teachers, which is why Angela Garbes stresses that a world where everyone works only four days a week will require changing how we as a culture think about work.

00:26:51

Angela Garbes

All work is work, all work. Whether it's, you know, happens in an office and you're moving money around or you're engineering software, right, or if you're baking bread or if you're cleaning toilets, if you're stocking shelves like it's all work and people want to work. People want to feel useful, right? I think some people were a job so that they can, you know, noodle on their guitar in their free time. Some people work so they can take three months off and travel. Right. Like, I think it's just it's important that, like, no work is more important than other work. And that includes the work that happens in the home. That includes the work of taking care of people. It's the work of cleaning your home and keeping a household running. I really want to push people to think about how- what their lives would be like if they didn't have those things, and to see that as work and to start to really begin to value it. Financially and culturally.

00:27:56

Chris Cillizza

And now it's time for Charlotte Lockhart to join us for a round of trivia about work and culture. All right. Here we go, what U.S. president, who was also a civil war general, was the first to implement an eight hour workday for government employees.

00:28:14

Charlotte Lockhart

Oh, I don't know- that's a great- tell me.

00:28:17

Chris Cillizza

It's a good one, right? Ulysses Grant.

00:28:19

Charlotte Lockhart

Okay.

00:28:20

Chris Cillizza

Okay. Question two. In 2000, this European country mandated a 34 hour- 35 hour workweek in order to reduce unemployment.

00:28:30

Charlotte Lockhart

Yes. France.

00:28:32

Chris Cillizza

Correct. Nailed it. Yes.

00:28:34

Charlotte Lockhart

Now, so interestingly about that for your listeners. So France did that and it hasn't been a huge success for them. And the reason why is that just mandating a reduction in time doesn't mean that people are going to focus on productivity, so they had some really great benefits when they first brought it out, but then it's just evened out to being the new normal. So that's why when we're working with businesses, we're always saying, you know, these are the things, the tools you need to do to ensure that you don't settle into a new normal and that your productivity remains at the core of what you're trying to achieve.

00:29:09

Chris Cillizza

Right. Otherwise, it's just you've subtracted 5 hours than you haven't gained anything.

00:29:13

Charlotte Lockhart

Exactly.

00:29:14

Chris Cillizza

Yeah. Okay. Question three: before they're break out roles on the American version of the workplace sitcom "The Office," four of the cast members, John Krasinski, Mindy Kaling, Angela Kinsey, and Ellie Kemper spent time interning for what late night talk show host? We're looking for a late night talk show host.

00:29:32

Charlotte Lockhart

I'm going to have to pass.

00:29:34

Chris Cillizza

It's American TV. Conan O'Brien.

00:29:36

Charlotte Lockhart

Conan O'Brien. Okay. Yes, yes, yes. Sorry. I did watch the British version of that one, I haven't seen the American version.

00:29:44

Chris Cillizza

That- don't worry about it, they're very similar. All right. I worry about this for you. This question again, a little American culture centric, Ellie Kemper, who was in the office in America, her high school drama teacher's name was Jon Hamm, who is the star of what Emmy Award winning workplace drama that focuses on New York advertising executives. Do you know that show?

00:30:05
Charlotte Lockhart Mad Men.

00:30:06
Chris Cillizza Correct. Nailed it.

00:30:08
Charlotte Lockhart Good guess.

00:30:08
Chris Cillizza Boom.

00:30:09
Charlotte Lockhart Yeah. How's that for a crazy amount of work, what they did on that?

00:30:12
Chris Cillizza Yeah, exactly. They did- all they did was work. All right. Last question. This is a good one. What American company is the largest private employer in the world? What American company is the largest private employer in the world?

00:30:28
Charlotte Lockhart Ooh, I am going to say- American company, largest private employer in the world. I don't know because of course so many companies use other ways of employing people.

00:30:40
Chris Cillizza Correct.

00:30:41
Charlotte Lockhart Yeah. I don't know. Tell me, what- who is it?

00:30:44
Chris Cillizza You're going to kick yourself. Walmart.

00:30:47
Charlotte Lockhart Yeah, I can see that. Absolutely. Yes.

00:30:49
Chris Cillizza Okay. That round may have been a little unfair. I bet if we'd centered the questions around New Zealand pop culture, Charlotte would have aced it. Thank you to Charlotte Lockhart for joining us for trivia and for sharing her expertise about a four day workweek. And thanks to Anne Helen Peterson and Angela Garbes, for helping us rethink our work culture. To me, it feels like there's little downside to a four day workweek. It may not fix every problem in the workplace, but it's definitely a start. And why should we all be sticking to a work standard that was created nearly a century ago? What about you? How many hours are you working each week? What would you do if you were able to work fewer hours with the same salary? Let me know by tweeting me @ChrisCillizza. If you're liking our show, please share it with your friends and make sure you rate review and subscribe as well. Next time on Downside Up. What if we couldn't buy anything on credit?

00:31:43
Sarah Quinn So people often had access to credit in history. That access to credit wasn't always on great terms or particularly fair. And the question of who has access to fair credit? Who has access to credit that's not extractive or exploitative, that doesn't trap them in poverty, but then allows them to gain wealth or improve their world? That's often the real question.

00:32:10
Chris Cillizza Downside Up is hosted by me, Chris Cillizza. It's a production of CNN in collaboration with Pod People at CNN, our producer is Lori Galaretta and our executive producer is Abbie Fentress Swanson. Alexander McCall leads audience strategy for the show Tameeka Ballance-Kolasny is our production manager and Jamus Andrest and Nichole Pesaru designed our artwork. The team from Pod People includes Racheel King, Matt Sav, Amy Machado, John Hammondtree, Madison Lusby, Regina de Heer and Morgane Fouse. Theme in original music composed by Casey Holford. Additional music came from epidemic sound. Special thanks to Lindsay Abrams. Fuzz Hogan, Drew Shankman. Lisa Namerow, John Dianora, Katie Hinman, Robert Mathers and Sarina Singh.