

120-four-day-workweek-productivitycast

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SPEAKERS

Art Gelwicks, Voiceover Artist, Raymond Sidney-Smith, Francis Wade, Augusto Pinaud



Voiceover Artist 00:00

Are you ready to manage your work and personal world better to live a fulfilling productive life, then you've come to the right place. ProductivityCast the weekly show about all things productivity, here are your hosts, Ray Sidney-Smith and a Gousto pinout with Francis Wade and art Gelwicks.



Raymond Sidney-Smith 00:17

Welcome back, everybody to ProductivityCast, the weekly show about all things personal productivity. I'm Ray Sidney-Smith.



Augusto Pinaud 00:22

I'm Augusto Pinaud.



Francis Wade 00:24

I'm Francis Wade.



Art Gelwicks 00:25

And I'm Art Gelwicks.



Raymond Sidney-Smith 00:26

Welcome, gentlemen, and welcome to our listeners to this episode of productivity cast. Today, we are going to be covering something that I think is quite kind of interesting it will give us an

we are going to be covering something that I think is quite kind of interesting, it will give us an opportunity to really think through something that we have just kind of taken for granted, it kind of sits in the background. And that is the workweek, how we structure our lives is so built on the routine around this structure of really the eight hour work day. And the concept that we work, a regular set of hours throughout our work week and our weekends being structured to be this space where we rest between work. And the reality is, is that much of it is a bit of a farce. We spend so much of our time thinking inside and outside of work when we're on so to speak. And yet at the same time, we don't really recognize the fact that we are always working in a way, whether that be being applied to life work or work work. There's kind of both of those pieces going on. And I'm really curious from the ProductivityCast team hear our thoughts around this. And what piqued this was that autonomy, which is a consultancy, based out of the UK, they put out a recent study that discusses the profitability of UK businesses, if they were to implement this four day working week concept. So that came to prominence in my own mind, we've talked about this on in on ProductivityCast In the past, and now the study came out. And in essence, it covered some really interesting and I think compelling arguments for the case of having a four day workweek. And so what I thought we would do is cover kind of the big ticket items that the study identified, and then talk about how we all view the four day workweek in the context of the US and other jurisdictions how they would really apply this, and whether it would work for individual productivity, and then what you all could do, say, to get started to test whether or not a four day workweek would really work for you. And so the report was called the day after tomorrow, and the name being named because of the COVID 19 pandemic. And of course, the fact that a lot of businesses have been in some form of shutdown and reopening and shutdown and reopening, and the impacts of how the four day workweek could benefit companies post pandemic. But anyway, it's called the day after tomorrow. The subtitle is stress tests, affordability and the roadmap to the four day workweek. This was published in December 2020. And I'll put a link to this study in the show notes. So you can have that autonomy, who's the author of the study, they're an independent think tank based in the UK and they provide necessary analyses, proposals and solutions with which to confront the changing reality of work today. And so that's really their whole goal is to help us flourish in the face of all of this change the in the summary of findings, I'm just going to note these I think these are useful, and then we'll get into the particulars. The summary of findings notes, we It says we provide a conservative worst case scenario for the impacts on profitability of a suddenly implemented four day workweek in the private sector. They also find that a four day workweek, with no loss of pay would be affordable for most firms once the initial phase of the COVID-19 crisis has passed. On the other hand, some firms in some industries would experience cashflow problems if changes were implemented too quickly. A four day workweek, with no loss of pay will most likely be implemented in the public sector before the private sector. And then public sector organizations could influence private sector businesses through procurement policy and other indirect routes. The process of changing expectations and behavioral norms could be sped up by the creation of a more of more bank holidays and the reintroduction of pro union legislation. Even if a four day work week in the private sector took longer than expected a four day work week in the public sector could support the UK long term recovery out of this particular pandemic. This particular crisis

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Augusto Pinaud 04:26

Well I think the first question is where is work happening and on what on how we define work you know it's work they actually meet the people is actually doing the report at what level we're talking I'm all for to certain roles to be a four day work week. You know, we if we think when we came with the idea of this or when they came with a CDL, five days 40 hours a week

with the in implement on technology, efficiency, non technology. What we have gone is exactly the opposite way people must people in work in a lot more than those 40 hours a lot more than those five days. Even if you're talking public sectors, unless you are the person in the window, most likely you are working more than that. So I'm all all formed the question that I will have is, and and this is an American question, as an American culture is, are we ready to leave our addiction to work? Because the problem, when you look into the United States, specifically, there is some kind of an addiction to work, there is a badge of honor to say, Oh, I work 80 hours a week. You know, that doesn't happen in other cultures, you know, I make fun of some customers from Spain, and I make fun of them. Because, you know, we may be in the middle of a meeting, but it's time for a siesta. And that meeting need to stop, we hope to come back. And I remember when I begin working with them how difficult that concept was, for me thinking on the American way to work, you know, and how much they respect that hour. And that is a stop. And we continue after this yesterday, that was fine. When you go to other cultures, it is the same they have those rhythm that I have not found in, in the American working culture, you know, what I have found is let's see who can push harder. Let's see who can stay longer. Let's see who can work more, and is the exception to the rule. The companies who tend to work on those 40 hours a week.

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Art Gelwicks 06:34

Let me lay out some facts here because I actually did a little homework on this. Starting off the 40 Hour Workweek, I need to be clear about something we talked about the four day workweek, or a 32 hour workweek, because many cases, the four day work week is actually 14 hour days perceived. So you're not decreasing the number of hours, you're just compressing them into a shorter period of time during the week. That's a mixed bag. It's been documented as being a mixed bag, because anything more than eight hours has been shown to be not increasing productivity that goes back to the Henry Ford piece. But what's important to understand is where the 40 hour week came from, and it started well before Ford 1866, the National Labor Union asked for the eight hour work day It wasn't passed, but it started to increase public support. President Grant in 1869 was the first one to mandate eight hour work days for federal employees. And in 1886, the Illinois legislature mandated eight hour work days, this actually caused employer resistance resulting in worker strikes, including a bombing that killed 12 people, if you look up the Haymarket Riot of May 1, it's related to this whole thing. It goes from 1886, all the way up to 1926. Before we get Henry Ford included in this mix of popularizing the 40 Hour Workweek, and that's him saying, well, working more than eight hours, doesn't really benefit based on what he's seen. The Fair Labor Standards Act in 1938, required overtime for all employees working more than 44 hours a week, but was then amended two years later to be 40 hours a week. And in 1940, the 40 hour workweek becomes law. The reason why I wanted to go through that history is because it's it's important to understand that the 40 hour workweek was not created because it was optimal. It was created because it was mandated because employees were being abused. I mean, before this, when you look back in like 1817 Working conditions were 80 to 100 hours a week, it was insane level of work. And this was to create a more humane environment, not an optimal one. So we keep thinking about this 40 hour, five day workweek as being you know, this is good. And then you can have better, no, this isn't good. This is base level. And anything beyond that improves it. The second part I wanted to frame up is related to what Agusta was talking about and how other countries deal with this. Data from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development goes through and identifies the top most productive countries, the number of hours they typically work in a week and their GDP per hour. The most productive country in the world is Luxemburg 29 hours with a GDP of 93.4. What's interesting is the United States is 33.6 hours to get a GDP of 68. So when

you look at the next one after the US, which is Germany 26.3 hours to get a 65.5 So you're talking a dist, a difference of almost six hours a week and it's a negligible difference in the GDP, France is 28.2 to get a 65.6 So this idea in the United States that you work work work to generate more income more value. It's baloney. It is complete garbage. Because when you look at the target of optimal application, whether it's here in the United States or around the world, and the numbers reflect, it's the work that needs to be done, not the hours taken to do it. Now, that said, there are certain roles that there are certain types of jobs that do require time present, I'll take a retail store, I mean, I started working when I was a kid in a retail store, and you were there when the store was open. That's by the design of the job. And I think everybody understands that there are some jobs that are just time present. But it doesn't mean that those can't fit into this same thinking as well, where we start to adjust and calibrate and I'll flip it around, I'm not going into the whole politics or anything about it. But you look at organizations and companies that have reduced hourly wage hours to get below health care thresholds, well, you're pushing them to the level of almost a four day workweek, if you look at the math. So just I just wanted to lay out some some basic numbers to understand how we got here. And that what we're doing right now is not the best thing to be doing.



Raymond Sidney-Smith 11:22

What I wanted to just kind of give a little bit of a perspective here in terms of the numbers, and the sense that different organizations provide different views on how GDP and productivity per hour are calculated. And so you will see differing views on this across different organizations. And so it's just helpful to be aware of that. And so are is providing one set of numbers, you will see in some categories, Ireland is at the top of that list. And United States is like fourth or fifth in that category, with Luxenberg still beating us, for those of us in the States. And so we should be mindful of the fact that there are different ways that we can look at how we eke out productivity from every individual worker, and whether or not there is a reason for doing that. We tend to think about this from the perspective that the individual worker, at least the United States, because we are very individual, kind of individuality centric. But the reality is, is that if we care more about the organizational productivity, what its outputs are and the success of the organization as a whole, do we care about the innards necessarily, in terms of how many hours each person works, and that productivity per hour then looks at it from either a macro level or micro level? And we need to figure out what which which of those really makes a difference overall, in this kind of future of work, really, what what is the future of that kind of work look like?



Francis Wade 12:43

Are we looking to increase productivity? Or are we looking to keep productivity the same? And have fewer resources in office? Or are we trying to keep productivity the same and balance work life? And I think the or are we looking to set national policy, which is a an entirely different kind of question.



Raymond Sidney-Smith 13:03

autonomies argument has been a shorter working week that was implemented would have greater work life balance, it would improve mental health, and would facilitate greener meaning more environmentally friendly and presuming and healthier society. So it's kind of a

mixed bag, they've mashed together those pieces together to say this policy, this is a policy discussion is is capable of having these downstream positive impacts on society.

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Francis Wade 13:37

That's the part I don't like the the mashing together of the policy level and semi practical level. So someone who picks up this paper and they said, Oh, I own a company, I need to go to four days a week would probably be committing Harakiri it probably be a disaster. Because just because in theory, you can boost productivity in these ways in some industries, under some conditions, well, actually public sector doesn't necessarily mean it would translate into anything on the ground in a particular company. And the distance between coming up with a useful theory and showing that theoretically feasible is a long way from sending out a memo asking people to come in four days a week, there's a huge distance to travel between something that's mathematically feasible because you okay, I could buy the argument, you boost productivity. By this amount, it's possible that it would it would achieve the same output as the five day workweek. However, that's that's, it remains in theory. And at that level, it's it's nowhere near ready to turn into any kind of national policies that don't buy the argument that their company their governments that are ready to go to for the four days or four days of workplace Because I think the same problem, same problem that they are not tackling is the same one that a, let's say, in Jamaica, it would be a permanent secretary, that's the person who heads up a ministry. That's the person who would have to make that determination. And for them to go from a policy that the government said to changing the behaviors in their ministry, again, huge distance, the goal,

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Art Gelwicks 15:23

here's the problem I have with this, I challenge you to find one company, one organization, one group, who will encourage you to be more productive, so that you work every organization mandates, pushes, encourages, drives, hires, people like us to come in and make them more productive. Why so they can work more, so they can produce more, so they can generate more, not once will someone come in and say, Yeah, we want to do this, because we want to free up time for the people working. So they can accomplish the same thing in less time, what they want is they want that extra time to be able to fill it. And that's what that really burns my biscuits, to use a southern term, this kind of mindset has to be thrown in the proverbial garbage can. Because unless a job or a role has a mandated time schedule that it has to be available, the mindset has to change around production, delivery quality, not so much the number of hours it takes. And part of that that problem is is because so many, again, professionals like us build by the hour. So either the bill, the hourly rate gets bigger, or the number of hours it takes gets bigger. I mean, when you do price, when you do project costing, there's two types of costing really, you can either bid for a fixed charge project, or a time and materials, time and materials is always to the benefit of the person who's doing the work. Because if it takes longer you bill more fixed cost is always to the benefit of the customer. Because whoever is going to do the work, you're on the hook if it goes over.



Raymond Sidney-Smith 17:00

And isn't that kind of part of the problem, though, is that when we think about it from the person who's the employer, in any environment looks at the employee and they say, Okay,

person who's the employer, in any environment looks at the employee and they say, Okay, well, if we can pay hourly, then we can apply structure to be able to really cap the number of hours someone works in, say, a part time capacity in a salaried environment, we can then presume that we can push them to work more hours for the same price and, and get more out of them. And this is the abuse that I think happens that I think where this policy actually starts to step in and solve for that. And I think I'm probably saying a little bit of the same thing you are art. But I feel this sense that we don't value human life as a species. And the The goal here is to figure out on the individual level, let's take this from the policy level down to the individual level. If I want to be able to be more productive inside of an organization, it behooves me to push for something that's going to make me more productive. And what does that really mean? Like would a would a four day workweek make you more productive? And why? For

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Art Gelwicks 18:11

me, a four day workweek would be irrelevant. And this is just my personal context. When I was working in an environment where I had a fixed schedule, and it wasn't an option, you always look for that extra day off, I have to be at a certain physical location from 8am to 5pm. You know, I have that commute. Yeah, that extra day off had value because it was not something that I could consciously just go ahead and grab. It was a special event in a situation like I am now where I don't have that commute. I don't have those other things. I still like that extra available day. There's value to it. Does it change the quality of the work that I have on? And I'll use this context, if you have a week that has a bank holiday or a national holiday? Does it change the quality of the work? I do the four other days just to change the volume of the work? I do before that? Does it change my interactions with other people? No, it just makes me more cognizant of the fact of my time limited. If I know that there's going to be one day out of the week that somebody is not going to be available. I plan for that. I make sure that scheduled around. Now the arguments that you'll see contrary to this kind of thinking are oh, it makes scheduling so different, difficult. Well, no, it doesn't. Unless you just want to be lazy about your scheduling. It makes it difficult to communicate and coordinate. Well, maybe if we were all stilling you still using you know Telegraph's but we have this thing called the internet communication is not a challenge unless you are not willing to step up to the table and solve the issues around it. So for me, a four hour week or four day workweek. That's fine. One of the things we're not framing around this and again, this goes back to the whole title and Francis's point about mashing this stuff up. My four day work week, is truly thinking about that 32 hour week, which is, can I optimize? And that may be two days or four hours each. But to me that's limiting thinking. Because now I'm thinking, ooh, I have to work from eight to 12. And I'm going to sit there in the back of my mind, and that clock is going to be ticking. I'm not focused on just do the freakin work. And if I can accomplish the work in 15 minutes, instead of the two hours that you, Mr. CEO, think it should take me is that not a good thing? But to me, I wind up being penalized and say, Oh, wait, you're finished? Why aren't you doing other things, because I did what I need to do today, I can move on.

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Francis Wade 20:40

So I'm not like art in this respect, I have control over how I spend my days. And I'm as flexible as I want to be, I can choose to allocate time wherever I want. And sometimes that means seven days a week, that 780 It is a week, it's 10 minutes on one day, it's 10. And another 10 hours on another whatever it may be. But I think the challenge is that there's people who do work that is still seen as our hourly work, in the sense that I'm not I don't mean customer

service, folks. But even they do apply. There are jobs that companies believe are do only jobs. And the truth is there, there should not be any do only jobs in existence at this point in time. If you're treating someone like all the other job consists of is doing something that requires no thinking. And therefore no time away from the actual doing, then your sub optimizing the job like customer service, for example, I've worked a customer service people who, who, whose management believes that they need to be on the phone from eight to four. And they come in at one minute to eight, and they leave at one minute past four. And they take an hour or 45 minutes of lunch in between. And there is absolutely no time for any kind of training, planning, thinking, optimizing skill development, personal development, there's no time to manage people, there's no time for code, there's no time for anything else except the one thing that we're hiring you to do. So the job is designed in such a poor way that there's no optimizing possible, there's no changing possible, it's basically a slog, it's designed as a treadmill, and any company that sees its employees in that mode, and wants to keep them in that more than isn't enlightened enough to move them from that mode is not going to benefit from five Fors Bible, it doesn't matter because they're already stuck in the wrong paradigm, they won't get to the improvements I was talking about, because they don't have a pathway. So their their line of thinking has to change first, then other things become possible. If that line of thinking doesn't change, nothing will change. And there's a lot of companies that are stuck in that way of thinking, even knowledge companies for that,

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Augusto Pinaud 23:03

you know, and I agree with you in and that is the first problem that is the first problem. Even when you look into productivity, you know, when you look when you go to most basic concepts. Okay, let's go to the basic concepts of why to be more productive, and extract a little for a second, out of the discussion of the four day. What is the problem that people find in productivity? That yes, is true, they can now do more, but they feel in many cases, art was describing that they're getting punished, because now they can do more. And instead of use those efficiency to be able to do the work that was planned for eight hours in 6.4 or in two. Now, I have my supervisor my boss my, the company's looking like okay, now if you can do that work into why you don't, you know, spend the other six doing more stuff to what make people some of these people think then why do I want to be more effective, I'm going to make the same amount of money, then Joe is MK here who is completely inefficient and always late and he need one more hour, let's find a way to make look like I need those eight hours to do that two hours of work. And we see that over and over. And that is the first problem if we keep into the idea, okay, that comes from the industrial revolution that we need the people we we hired this person to do eight hour of work, but we don't think okay, what if these people have skills where these people can instead of eight hours, do it on two and leave and move from an hour base to a result based society? The Four Hour Workweek as much as I love it, it will not work because what allows Francis to do he's describing that he may work seven days in a variety of time is his result oriented okay? If he goes is a C and say, Hey, let me evaluate Francis wade in here. Well, that guy's you know, really 10 minutes. What's wrong with him? Okay, that is the mentality most corporations had Francis need to fire Francis. Okay, fine. Okay. But unless we turn into that result oriented, I wish to tell you it is only a problem in jobs or roles, or there is not easy to see that oriented base, do you see it? Again, I work with a lot of teams and sales teams, that is a completely resolved base, hey, if you don't do your work, you don't make your calls, you don't make the meetings, you don't make the sales you don't sell, you don't say you don't get commissioned, you don't get paid. I companies should not care if the guy doing that job, can do it on an email, or he need to do 200 calls. But companies do and the measurement is never the result is the process. And as far as we continue measuring that way for many of

the corporate organizations that we understand, it's not going to happen. And I tend to believe that part of what is pushing so hard this four hour weeks is the freelance industry. And we are seeing here in the United States and many other places. Okay, I really fight against that. Why? Because this is people who discover, okay, I can do the job, I can do a better job. And I can do it in a better way or a better rate. Okay, that being on the cog, and what is happening is some of this large organizations I fighting against it, okay, why? Because it's better to have these people producing eight hours, even if what they are producing because of that is a lower world

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Art Gelwicks 26:47

and out and I'll throw something out here, here's my hot take the eight hour day, 40 hour week, is designed perfectly for lazy management, because you have managers, especially middle managers, but even up through the organization that rely on that as part of their management technique. They can't figure out how do you manage somebody who doesn't have X number of hours for me to track against? Oh, you mean, I have to evaluate them on the quality of their work? That's a no, no, no, no, I can't do that. Because that means I don't have a timesheet to reference against and say, Oh, you did 37.5 hours instead of the 37.9. Therefore, you know it, you haven't done the quality of work. So that that's my hot take on that. But the second part that I wanted to go back and revisit is about, we're looking at metric driven organizations to the point where they have lost the human aspect. And honestly, I think in many organizations, they've never had that. But customer service, I'll go to that one, because that's near and dear to my heart, which would you rather deal with you call a customer service representative. And that customer service representative is in a positive, upbeat, focused attitude to be able to help you resolve your issue. Or that person is primarily focused on getting through your call to the next call. Almost all customer service organizations, especially call centers are focused around call volume and call traffic numbers to the point where I've seen organizations where they will measure literally percentage of calls answered within X number of seconds from the ring. We know that happens. But what kind of an environment does that create? What kind of a volume of traffic does it create? And the mindset if you've got somebody who's coming in and working eight to four every day or eight to five every day in that call center and must be answering calls the whole time and is measured on the time that they are not answering calls? Not so much when they are? Well? Have you allotted them time for training? Have you a lot of them time to do anything else? Aside from dealing with those problems? The odds are very good. No. And you're going to get the quality of work out of those people that you deserve at that point. Not that you've heard,

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Augusto Pinaud 29:06

don't go that far maybe because these two are really related. Customer service is dear to your heart sales is here to mine. Okay. And I have seen and and work and work with organizations where the sales team is punished for do customer service. The sales team is punished to build that relationship. No, no, that's not your job you send it to the end of the queue. What produce that is a sales team that is incapable on understand the product, it's on capable on solve the most basic things on a sovereign and get it on my case is mostly software. Okay, but they are completely capable and my argument to upper management in those cases, if these people cannot solve as the salespeople the most basic problems, how do you expect them to be able on the fly? With a prospect to be able to get an example that the customer is bringing, and come with a solution, but it's still with that argument we come into, yeah, but their job is to sell

not to do customer service, to which I will disagree to the day I die, okay? Their job is to build a relationship and turn that prospect into a fan of your product. And the moment we don't make that change, customer service, as much as sales will continue being an issue.

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Art Gelwicks 30:31

I agree with you completely against it. Because in that context, that salesperson is not their job is not to sell from the customer's perspective, their job is to take their money. And that's the only thing they are contributing to the entire process. As a former pre sales engineer, understanding that process and that troubleshooting technique and all of that interaction involved and having watched so many salespeople over the years, who literally, that's the only thing they do they show up, right, the sales order, sign the deal. Walk off, and that's the last you'll ever see. Yeah, that makes the management happy. And that makes the bean counters happy but customer doesn't. doesn't appreciate that relationship. They look to the people who actually Oh, I don't know, the liver. And that's where when we talk about this go full circle back into does does a four day work week meet meet that and I have to Tim Ferriss, God love him. Four Hour Workweek just makes my teeth ache, because that's nothing but clickbait. But the concept. Let's take it to those basic concepts, taking the amount of time necessary to do quality work, whether it's one minute, one hour, one day, shouldn't matter should be objective base should be driven around deliverable and targets doesn't really matter how long it takes. And to use a Star Trek metaphor. It's like the Scotty syndrome, you know, how long is it going to take you two hours? Well, how long? Is it really going to take you about 15 minutes? Why do you do that? Because you have to because that's the environment and the world that we've established. And the Freelancer piece, I think is interesting. Gousto? Because that goes back to that whole lack of management freelancers, people like that concept of a freelancer because I don't have somebody leaning over my shoulder watching me to say, oh, you know, keep working, keep working, keep working. Yeah, most freelancers that you know, or anybody who's done independent work works a crazy number of hours, but they don't count the hours. The only hours they count are the ones that they have to build for if they're if that's the work they're doing. But if you look at a freelancer who's doing production work, or things like that, yeah, they're trying to optimize, but they know they control that, to work with things like we've talked about in the past, like their energy levels, and mental state and efficiencies in process. But none of this comes into this context.

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Augusto Pinaud 32:52

I agree with you that the Tim Ferriss book is a lot of marketing, but there is also a couple of good nuggets out of that book. And one is exactly that. Okay, it's about optimize what works for you. I don't think people mind working 20 hours and, and, or 100 hours or whatever, when that is your decision, because there is a lot of those hours that they don't care, okay, they are designing, okay, if you think on the Steiner designers work, if they will build you for every minute, they're thinking under design, nobody could pay for a designer to do any kind of work. Okay? That's a reality. But if you ask most of those designers, okay, they were not working. Okay? Because they are so passionate about it, that they're good. Okay, so they came with a mathematical thing to say, Okay, this design, it takes me X amount of hours. And I think when you get people to move them in that direction, you know, when when I work with sales teams, when I was a sales manager, I work a lot more hours and 40 the hours that I complained were never the the phone hours was never the sales was never the building was never the

engineering that deals. You were a sales engineer, okay? You never you never complain about the hours that you were looking at that piece of paper and trying to break your brain how you were going to make that work for the client. Those were never the hours that you count against. That's not what people I think, what people don't want to eliminate those. What people want is to be able to optimize the other ones, the ones that you know, are heavy on your shoulders that hours of report that hours of useless work of useless millions of useless things. Those are the ones that optimizable if you can optimize them, then it gets really interesting and I think that's when I read when I read the first time the four hour week. That's what I understood. How can I get those awful hours into four hours a week, if you can give me that, and I can spend the rest of my time doing the part I love about my job, I will be successful. I don't want the job that I do. Caught. Okay, in less hours, okay, when I do coaching, I can coach many, many hours. I love it. Okay. 90% of my coaching hours energize me not don't deplete me. Okay, when I'm writing something I can, I will love to have two more hands. Okay, I can write more because the fingers get tired. Again, I can't type anymore. But he's not. But I never if you asked me, how many hours? Did you write? Or do you? You know, how many can you get? I only write four hours a week? I don't want that. Okay, fine. I want to in my company, I want to do this account, I want to do less than the hours that are no, that passion is that fun component. And I think that's where this four hour comes? How can we reduce those hours, but maximize the other side, maximize when, as as you talk about sales, and we talk about customer support, there is people who is so passionate about customer support about getting that smile over the phone to the client, those people are not complaining that the call was long that the problem was difficult. They complain about the other ridiculous amount of things they need to do, that are not allowing them to do that. Those are the ones that I think we need to work into reduce.

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Francis Wade 36:34

So if there's one thing that all employees hate, and managers know that they hate, it's meetings to echo what we've been talking about. But there's, I can count on the number. Probably on one hand, the number of companies I've worked with, that are committed to producing the same output with fewer meeting hours, I monetize, I can't even think of a company that is actually measuring meeting hours. And that's an easy one to measure. And everyone agrees that they want fewer meeting meet hours and meetings. And they could be just as productive as they are, if they had less meeting hours. So that's a easy basic that companies aren't even doing. And I can only put it down to what we said before managerial laziness. And that's just one, one easy shared, everyone complains, metric, let alone the more complicated ones. But if companies could could commit to or let's go from five days to four and a half days, and we will get there is by eliminating 25% of our meeting time by having better quality meetings. And here are the metrics to measure the quality of the meetings. And here's the feedback to the person who called the meeting. And here's the here are the people who are calling too many meetings of low quality, they need to be trained. And here is our well established solutions that are just not being implemented. for other reasons, I think for political company political reasons. But that's my that's my suggestion is to go for the super low hanging fruit, which is just measure meetings, that's something everybody hates achieve the same level of productivity with less all,

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Art Gelwicks 38:14

here's, here's the trick, and no company is gonna do it. But for every minute of productivity

that a person recognizes, let them keep that minute, I challenge any organization to do that. If you find somebody who is able to shorten an hour out of their week, let them keep that hour, don't say, Go fill it with extra work, you will be amazed at the productivity gains you will make in short order, if that is the reward you give,



Raymond Sidney-Smith 38:39

mine's a bit of a corollary maybe to that process, which is that I feel the goal is to figure out how to at least in the autonomies perspective is work life balance and creating better workers, and hopefully better organizations and better society because of it. So if we can take the time that we would otherwise call call the five day work week, the regular Monday through Friday, and we take those eight hours that are associated with what is traditionally considered regular work. And we actually get rid of all of the detritus, all of the useless meetings, all of the useless email all of the useless chatter that happens on Salesforce and in other environments, like teams and otherwise. And we bundle all of that into development, whatever the whatever the improvement opportunities are for that individual. They want to learn how to use the CRM better, you know, they can invest in that kind of education if they want to become better managers, giving them that management training, giving them the opportunity to become better workers, but more it's a skills issue, right like leveling up their skills. Instead of saying, No, you just get this time for free. go do whatever you want, they're still focused on on the organization and building a better organization. But instead, we say that that time is, is dedicated to your development. And that that's going to be that time. And I know this is that's a transition piece, like it's not permanent. But I feel like that could be a nice middle ground for those organizations that are very focused on the fact that they don't want to give up the time for that employee. But it's time that they're already utilizing in other ways. So why not just put it into this, this one category of time, like kind of pulling the pieces from all over and put in mashing them together, and you're promoting a culture that develops its people. And I think that's, that's one way we could look at it. So that would be my suggestion is just take that if you have the latitude to be able to do that, take that time, and just consolidate it into that one day, per week. And it would be remarkable to take 52 weeks or 50 weeks, how many how much every time you take off every year. But taking that into this, you know, like what could you learn to be better at your job. If every week you dedicated eight hours to it. I mean, that's just a remarkable amount of time that you can, you could really focus on it. So that's my take,



Augusto Pinaud 41:15

I agree with art, let them keep that time and let them what you will find contrary to most people believe is not that the people is not going to work is that people are going to work on that part, that component of their job, where they are really passionate and really good at it. So your fear or their fear of people of losing productivity, it's actually the contrary, what you're going to find is that people are going to be getting and working hard to improve your systems to improve your methods to improve your corporation so they could spend more time doing what they love to do inside of your company. Not so they don't do anything.



Raymond Sidney-Smith 42:04

Thank you, gentlemen, this has been a great discussion. And I really appreciated everyone's perspectives here. With that we have reached the end of our time together. But of course. the

conversation doesn't have to stop here. Just because we all gave you our thoughts doesn't mean that we ended our thoughts on the topic. And we certainly don't think that we've heard all of yours. So feel free to visit our episode page on productivitycast.net. And there at the bottom of the page, you'll see a comment section, you can go ahead and leave us a comment, throw in your questions, and we'll be happy to engage with you there. If you are on productivitycast.net. On the episode page, you will find our show notes. Those include the links to anything we discussed in there, they will include a text transcript, just click the read more button and we'll expand it so you can see it. There's also a downloadable PDF so you can grab the machine generated transcript and take that with you while you're listening and any other resources that we provide there in the show notes that also includes a link to subscribe to the podcast so you can follow us in your favorite pod catcher app, and new episodes will just show up whenever you whenever we put them out. And then of course, there is the about page and that has information all about Augusto Pinaud Francis Wade in art Gelwicks, who joins me here each and every week for ProductivityCast and so thank you to them for their time and efforts. I'm Ray Sidney-Smith and on behalf of all of us here at ProductivityCast Here's your productive life.



Voiceover Artist 43:33

And that's it for this productivity cast the weekly show about all things productivity with your hosts, Ray Sidney-Smith and Gousto pinout with Francis Wade and art Gelwicks