

NewsRelease

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HIGH COST OF FUEL AND AIR TRAVEL AREN'T THE ONLY FACTORS AFFECTING VACATIONS THIS SUMMER

Most Americans take their work with them on vacation, says MRINetwork

Philadelphia -- An overwhelmingly large percentage of people in America work while on vacation, according to a recent survey conducted by **MRINetwork**, one of the world's largest search and recruitment organizations. Of the 647 survey participants, 36 percent said they worked occasionally during vacation time, while 49 percent admitted that they did so frequently. That leaves a mere 15 percent who vacation without working at all.

"Most U.S. employers expect salaried employees to work as many hours a week as it takes to keep their projects on schedule," says Michael Jalbert, president of **MRINetwork**. "Vacationers perform work-related tasks because of this expectation that they be available; or they worry about missing important information, or in some cases they simply enjoy staying involved."

In the United States, employees work, on average, considerably more hours per year than in any other industrialized nation; Europeans, on average, work the fewest hours, while Japanese employees work the second-highest number of hours. At the same time, most Americans also have the fewest number of vacation days.

According to the Families and Work Institute, it takes up to three days to relax when you go on vacation, and longer vacations -- seven days or more -- result in better psychological outcomes than shorter vacations. It's no surprise that laptops, cell phones, the BlackBerry and other electronic devices have enabled and accelerated the tendency to work on vacations. "These devices, while indispensable in some ways, serve to keep employees tied to their workplaces, says Jalbert.

"Planning ahead, managing expectations and setting boundaries with your co-workers are key to making sure you get the break you need," says Jalbert. To enjoy a stress-free and work-free vacation, he offers these tips:

1. Leave a roadmap.

A few weeks before you leave, start recording important information, key contacts and any deadlines that will come up while you are gone. If you leave co-workers with a guide that will help them address questions that arise and keep things moving forward, they will be less likely to contact you on vacation and you will be less likely to walk into a war zone when you return.

2. Stick to a schedule.

While it's best to leave the office at the office, if you must do work, set limits and boundaries for yourself and your co-workers. Don't let activities on vacation be interrupted by work.

Instead set aside a half hour each day to think about work and stick to it. Instead of having co-workers call you, tell them when you are going to check in, so you can control the time allotted.

3. Think big.

If you have a big project and a great vacation planned for the same week, you can expect one of the two to give. Schedule the dates before and after the big stuff to lighten your load and enjoy your time off.

4. What if you're the boss?

If you're working for yourself, make sure you anticipate your busy seasons by reviewing your previous sales and current situation. Save vacation time for slower periods and make sure to notify customers in advance.

"If you use your vacation time to recharge your energy and enthusiasm," says Jalbert, "going back to work will be satisfying and rewarding."

About MRINetwork:

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