

**2013 DSE Paper 2 Q6****6. Learning English through Workplace Communication**

You are a human resources assistant. Your boss has observed that many people are leaving the office very late. He has asked you to write an article for the company newsletter describing the situation and discussing the negative effects. You have also been asked to give two suggestions to improve the situation. Provide a suitable title for your article.

**Are You Working TOO HARD?**

It has been noted that there has been a recent trend of people staying increasingly late at work. Whilst management appreciates this impressive work ethic and obvious dedication to your work, consider this: are you working too hard? You may not be achieving as much as you think by staying so late. Studies have shown that staying later at the workplace tends to have an adverse effect on efficiency. This article requests that you consider the negative outcomes of working late, both on yourself and your work.

Lack of sufficient 'down-time' is damaging both towards your health and your working efficiency. Firstly, the less important of the two: your efficiency at work. It has been scientifically proven that the longer the hours people work, the less efficient their output. This is because human beings appear to thrive on deadlines. When we know that a certain amount of work must be completed within a certain amount of time, we rise to the challenge and strive to achieve. In contrast, the current practice of some workers at this company — simply to work until the work is done — encourages procrastination and inefficiency. Furthermore, failing to spend sufficient time relaxing has been proven to be detrimental to your health. Long working hours have been connected to stress-related conditions, such as high blood pressure and even heart attack. Health is, of course, vitally important, and often something that we take for granted until we hit a snag. Don't let it get to that point.

So how can you change your ways? One thing to try is to ensure that you are working efficiently during normal working hours. Try some of the following tips: take regular, short breaks; drink plenty of water to stay hydrated and focused; set achievable, short-term targets in your work; turn off your personal phone if you tend to be distracted by taking personal calls; consider blocking websites that are irrelevant to work, by which you may be distracted. By taking these small measures, you may find that the amount that you are able to achieve during your contracted hours rockets, thus eradicating the perceived need to stay at work for so long.

Sometimes, no matter how efficiently you work, you may still feel overwhelmed by your workload. If you have tried the above tricks, yet still feel that you cannot achieve your work targets within your contracted hours, speak to your line manager. You should by no means feel ashamed to admit that you cannot cope with your workload; if you can show that you have been taking measures to work efficiently, your line manager will be sympathetic. S/He will be able either to suggest measures for

more efficient work, or to reduce your workload as a final resort.

It is simply not necessary to work far beyond your contracted hours. It is neither healthy nor efficient, and as such we do not want the employees of this esteemed company to create a damaging atmosphere, in which people feel under pressure to stay at work longer than necessary. Work hard, but not too hard!