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## **BRITAIN'S WORKERS ON SIX DAY WEEKS TO KEEP JOBS**

### **£200 million in overtime a week helping to get Britain back on its feet**

Overtime is becoming the norm for almost 50% of staff since the financial crisis began, according to new research from BT Business\*. More than a third of those Brits feel compelled to work over their contracted hours every week because of the current climate, with most working an average of 7 extra hours per week – the equivalent of an extra day - and collectively putting £200 million in extra hours into the British economy each week.\*\*

The findings also show a clear gender split with men more likely to be putting in the extra hours. Over two thirds of men (66 per cent) stated they are working over the recommended 48 hour week.

More than a third (37 per cent) of the 4000 survey respondents are putting in extra hours to cope with growing workloads. Colleagues being made redundant (41 per cent) and a renewed focus by companies on improving customer service (35 per cent) were cited as the top two reasons for this. However, over 40 per cent also cited that this situation was being exacerbated by time being wasted in the work place because staff are not equipped with the right tools to do the job.

“These findings reflect the length that employees are willing to go to, to keep Britain’s economy afloat, said Bill Murphy, managing director, BT Business “Employers should look to match these efforts by equipping staff with what they need to become more efficient. Financial incentives may not be an option, but companies should consider how working practices can eliminate wasted time and boost productivity. Using technology to support practices such as flexible working can help companies strip out the fat as well as helping their staff become more efficient with a better work life balance.”

The research also revealed a drastic change in the office atmosphere with 37 per cent of workers stating there is less laughter in the workplace compared to over a year ago and greater pressure on staff to perform. Nearly half of respondents (43 per cent) believe that the offer of flexitime would help to create a better working experience. Flexible working including the option to work from home and improved technology (33 per cent) also equally factored highly in people’s aspirations on how they’d like their workplace to change.

Workers showed a clear willingness to go that extra mile to impress the boss. Almost half (43 per cent) respondents admit to being motivated to work harder to keep their jobs, with 60 per cent feeling very lucky to have a job. Over a third (34 per cent) of those surveyed admit to turning up earlier for work and a similar number (39 per cent) admit they are being more proactive and have generally pulled up their socks to keep in the bosses good books.

**Other key findings from the research included:**

- Increased stress (36.5 per cent), a negative impact on relationships with friends and family (33 per cent) and deteriorating health (18 per cent) were cited as the main affects of working extra hours.
- Middle managers appear to be feeling the most strain with workers earning between £41,000 and £51,000pa the most likely to be working overtime since the financial crisis began.
- One in ten people would consider taking a slight pay cut to keep one of their colleagues from being made redundant.
- One third of people surveyed were concerned that they may lose their job by the end of the year
- Over 40 per cent of people plan to look for a new job when it looks like we are pulling out of a recession
- One in five people would prefer to work for a smaller business, set-up on their own or take a second job citing a change in view on what would make an ideal role for them
- Most people said that their management had offered changes to staff. 18 per cent were in companies that had offered part-time work, one in 10 had been offered sabbaticals or asked to work for free for a period of time, and nearly a third had been asked to change job description

The research is being launched at BT Business Experience, a free week-long event held in London from 29<sup>th</sup> June – 3<sup>rd</sup> July. As well as leading entrepreneur Peter Jones, leading business experts will also be on hand to offer one-to-one advice on key issues facing the SME (small and medium sized enterprises) community in these difficult times and how they may be able to use technology previously only available to large companies to help them succeed and thrive. For further information and to register your place please visit [www.btbusinessexperience.com](http://www.btbusinessexperience.com).

**Ends.**

**Notes to Editors:**

\*The research was conducted for BT Business in June 2009 and surveyed 4000 people.

\* \* Based on minimum wage of £5.73 per hour for workers aged 22 years and older.

According to the Office of National Statistics there were 29,108,000 people employed (aged 16 and over February to April 2009

A regional analysis of the results is available on request

**For further information**

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