



Take Back the Lunch Break survey findings



Overview:

North American workers value their lunch breaks and feel more engaged and productive when they make the time to take a lunch break every day. At a time when companies are trying to find every little way to maximize the efficiency and productivity of their employees, the workplace norm around lunch breaks needs to be shifted from something that you are only able to do when you have the time, to something that you would be remiss to skip. This change begins at the managerial or even institutional level by actively encouraging lunch breaks rather than assuming employees will work them into their own schedules.

- I. North American workers who take a lunch break every day score higher on a wide range of engagement metrics, including job satisfaction, likelihood to continue working at the same company, and likelihood to recommend their employer to others.
- II. North American workers value their lunch breaks – both employees and their bosses.
- III. The majority of North American workers take lunch breaks regularly but would like to take them more frequently and for longer amounts of time – a trend that is even more pronounced among Americans than Canadians.
- IV. Despite valuing their lunch breaks and having a desire to take them more frequently/often, taking adequate lunch breaks is still not a top priority for North American workers.
- V. Bosses in North America claim that they encourage their employees to take a lunch break every day, but their employees are less likely to agree.
- VI. Despite claiming that lunch breaks are important and encouraged among their employees, some bosses look down upon employees who take regular lunch breaks when evaluating their job performance.
- VII. Personal workload is a much greater influence on whether or not employees take a lunch break than external pressures like their boss or company policy.
- VIII. Encouraging lunch breaks at the institutional level (i.e. common eating areas, mandatory lunch breaks, etc.) alleviates some of the employee-boss tension surrounding taking lunch breaks.

North American workers who take a lunch break every day score higher on a wide range of engagement metrics, including job satisfaction, efficiency, and likelihood to recommend to others.

All metrics increase among those who take a lunch break every day except for willingness to work late/on weekends (-4%) and flexible work hours (-4%), which indicates that those who take a lunch break every day are used to set schedules which incorporate a break.

Engagement Index:

Statement	Among those who take a lunch break every day	Among those who do not take a lunch break every day	Difference
Compared to my impression before taking the job, working for my employer has met or exceeded my expectations.	74%	66%	8%
I am as effective and efficient as I would like to be.	78%	71%	7%
I am satisfied with my current job.	88%	82%	6%
I would recommend my employer to others as a place to work.	79%	75%	4%
I feel valued as an employee.	75%	71%	4%
I have a strong desire to be an active member in my company.	81%	78%	3%
If I could change jobs tomorrow, I would not.	54%	51%	3%
I have a flexible work environment in terms of where I work, meaning that I am able to get parts of my work done remotely or from home if necessary.	44%	42%	2%
My current employer has won an award or been ranked on a list for 'best places to work.'	25%	23%	2%
I am excited to come to work every day.	63%	62%	1%
I am willing to work late or on weekends.	65%	69%	-4%
I have a flexible work environment in terms of working outside of normal hours (9AM-5PM).	61%	65%	-4%

Engagement among Canadian workers is even more influenced by taking a lunch break than among American workers.

Statement	US Difference (Lunch Break vs. Not)	Canada Difference (Lunch Break vs. Not)
Compared to my impression before taking the job, working for my employer has met or exceeded my expectations.	5%	12%
I am as effective and efficient as I would like to be.	5%	11%
I am satisfied with my current job.	3%	10%
I would recommend my employer to others as a place to work.	2%	9%
I feel valued as an employee.	2%	9%
I have a strong desire to be an active member in my company.	-1%	11%
If I could change jobs tomorrow, I would not.	2%	8%
I have a flexible work environment in terms of where I work, meaning that I am able to get parts of my work done remotely or from home if necessary.	2%	5%
My current employer has won an award or been ranked on a list for 'best places to work.'	2%	3%
I am excited to come to work every day.	-1%	7%
I am willing to work late or on weekends.	-4%	-5%
I have a flexible work environment in terms of working outside of normal hours (9AM-5PM).	-9%	4%

Research Methodology:

The Tork Take Back the Lunch Break survey was conducted between December 4 – December 12, 2017 among 1,600 North American employees across the United States and Canada. Respondents were asked questions centered on breaks at work as well as employee engagement, productivity, and job satisfaction. The survey has been planned, monitored, and analyzed by KRC Research with support from Jennifer Deal, Senior Research Scientist at the Center for Creative Leadership and Affiliated Research Scientist at the Center for Effective Organizations at the University of Southern California (USC).

KRC Research conducted a 10-12 minute online survey of n=1,600 adults in North America (U.S. and Canada), comprised of the following subpopulations:

Employees: adults employed full-time

- N=750 American employees
- N=500 Canadian employees

Bosses: adults employed full-time in a managerial role overseeing teams of at least 5 full-time employees

- N=750 American employees
- N=100 Canadian bosses