Addicted to Work

Workaholism is a term coined in 1971 by psychologist Wayne Oates. It describes a condition in which someone’s need to work becomes so excessive it creates disturbances or interference with personal health and happiness, interpersonal relations and social functioning. A study from University of Georgia researcher Malissa Clark examines workaholism and its effects it has on productivity. The research, “All Work and No Play?”

A Meta-Analytic Examination of the Correlates and Outcomes of Workaholism,” compares symptoms of the condition to other addictions. “Looking at the motivations behind working, workaholics seem pushed to work not because they love it but because they feel internal pressure to work,” Clark says. “This internal compulsion is similar to having an addiction.” The research also describes workaholism versus engagement. Clark explains while workaholics feel they must work because of an internal compulsion, almost like guilt, engagement occurs when one feels joy in work. So, workaholics might not really even enjoy the work that they do.

Research suggests that workaholics tend to be perfectionists with a type A personality. And, although one might assume the more hours worked, the more productive one is, this is not necessarily true. Clark says that unrelated to job performance, workaholism seems to influence aspects that indicate workers might not be as productive. These include greater job stress, greater work-life conflicts, decreased physical health and job burnout. Other research suggests workaholics have a hard time delegating work and are more disorganized, and, thus, less productive.

Cubicles Optional

Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that by 2020, 65 million Americans will be freelancers, temps, independent contractors and solopreneurs, making up 40% of the workforce. As this work is independent in nature, these professionals might opt for coworking, which gives them a working environment that warrants collaboration with others not necessarily in their same profession.

A Google search of the term coworking will tell you that it is the use of a working environment by people who are working for different employers (perhaps even self-employed), so as to share equipment, ideas and knowledge. As one Forbes article reports of coworking, “Professional, personal and social gains come as added bonuses that are more advantageous than working in a coffee shop or home office . . . these environments are not only stimulating, inspiring and fun, but also lead to new business development and collaborations, as well as increased levels of productivity and income as a result of being part of an expanding business network.”

When I work I relax; doing nothing or entertaining visitors makes me tired.

Pablo Picasso

Business Buzzwords

- hit the ground running
- visionary
- think outside the box
- innovate
- influencers
- pivot
- paradigm shift
- engagement
- value add
- pre-revenue
- growth hacking
- game changer
- synergy

“In deep.”

Photo from Howland Davis, McKinley Chapter