

WORKFORCE INDEX

The data-driven secret to a productive work day

by the WORKFORCE LAB at  **slack**

**2 in 5 desk workers
say they regularly
work after hours**



**More
than**



say it's because they feel
pressured to, not because
they choose to



Employees who feel pressured to work after hours report 20% lower productivity throughout the day

Employees who feel pressured to work after hours experience:

↓ **2.1x** worse work related stress

↓ **1.7x** lower satisfaction

↓ **2x** worse burnout

The most common reason people work after hours is “not having enough time in the day”

Compared to those who log a standard work day, this group is

50%

more likely to say they have too many competing priorities





“We’ve long seen a focus on quantity over quality across many aspects of work, from how we spend our time to how we define productivity. Constantly feeling like you need to catch up is hurting employees and businesses. This underscores the importance of building a culture of trust where employees feel safe enough to speak up when they need help prioritizing and have the right balance of time in the work day to get work done.”

Christina Janzer

Senior Vice President of Research and Analytics at Slack and head of Slack’s Workforce Lab



Workers are struggling to balance their time

1 in 4

say they spend
too much time
in meetings

1 in 4

say they spend
too much time
in email

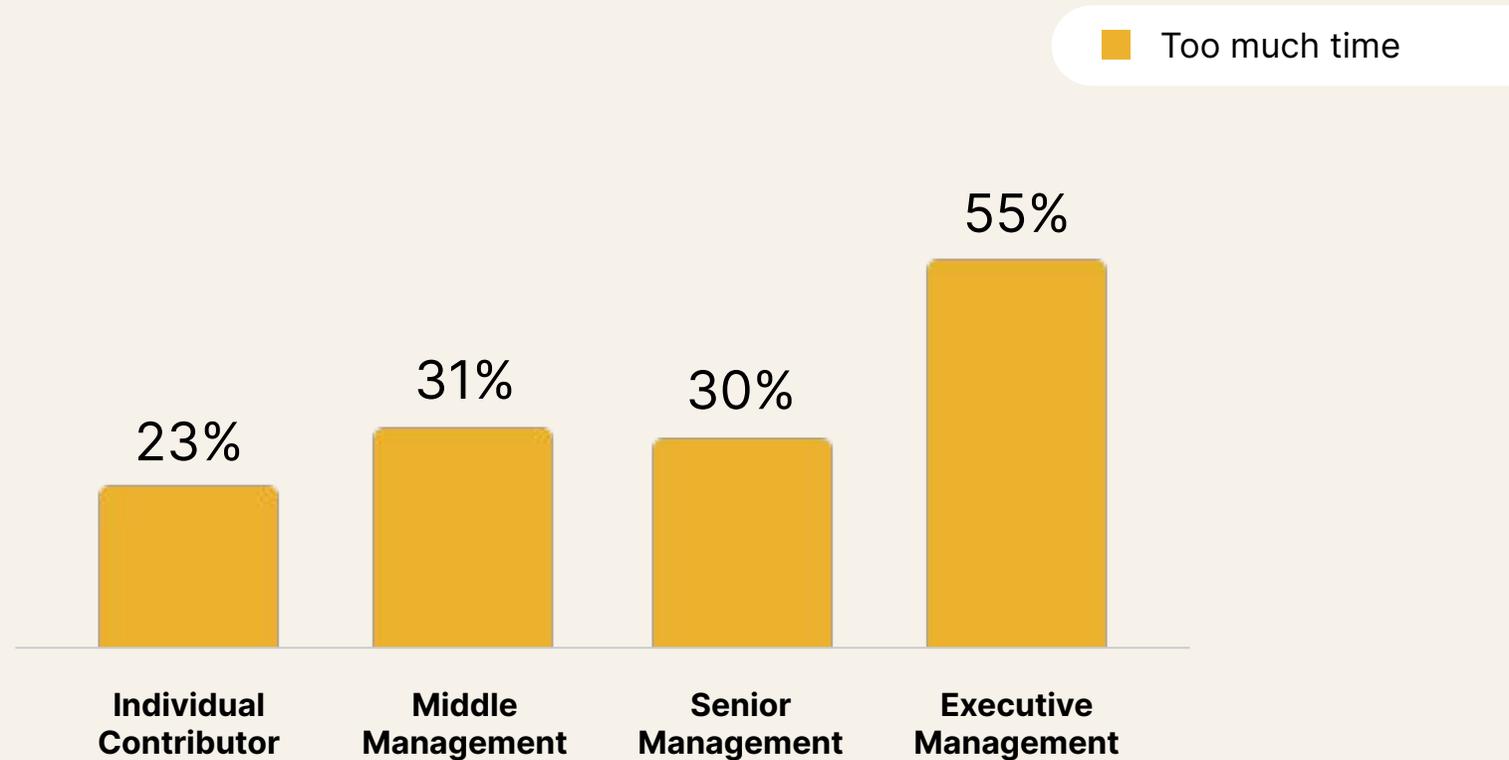
1 in 5

don't have enough
time to connect
with coworkers



The further up the management chain you are, the more you struggle with meeting overload

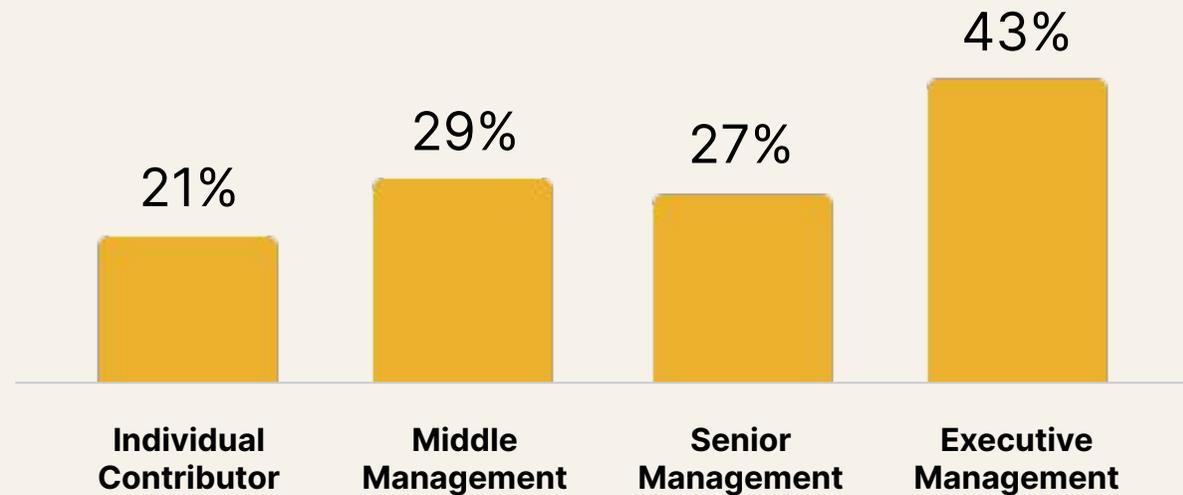
On average, how many people say they spend too much time attending meetings?



Executives are struggling most with email overload

On average, how many people say they spend too much time responding to emails or messages?

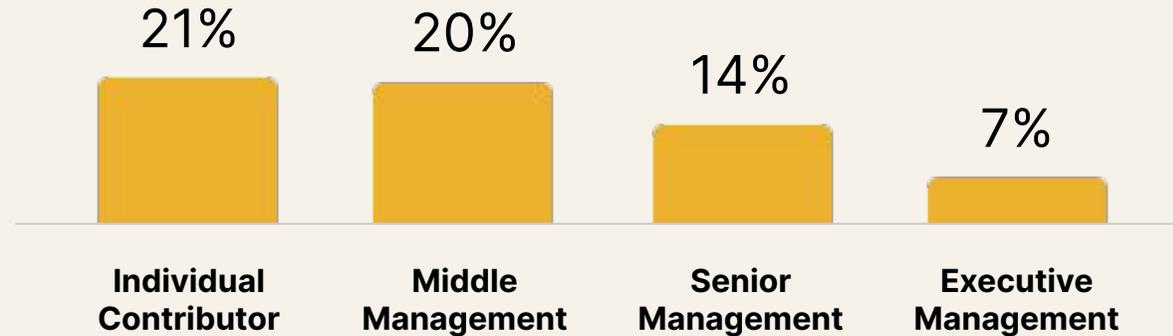
■ Too much time



Individual contributors and middle managers struggle most with finding ways to connect

On average, how many people say they don't spend enough time connecting with co-workers?

■ Not enough time



1/2

**of all desk
workers say**

they rarely or never
take breaks during
the work day

These
workers are

1.7x

**more likely to
experience
burnout**





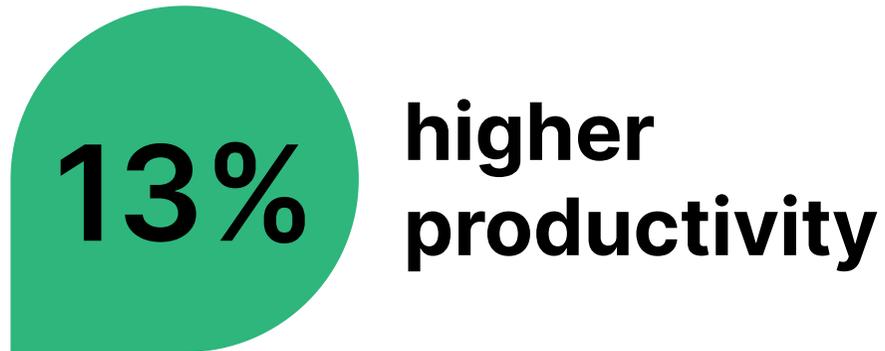
“Why did we all come to believe that we are more productive if we are always on and that we need to burn out in order to succeed? It goes back to the first Industrial Revolution, when we started revering machines. The goal of machines is to minimize downtime. But for the human operating system, downtime is not a bug, it’s a feature. Elite athletes know that recovery is part of peak performance. Downtime is a productivity multiplier.”

Arianna Huffington

Founder and CEO of Thrive Global



Workers who regularly take breaks have



↑ **62%** Work-life balance

↑ **43%** Ability to manage stress

↑ **43%** overall satisfaction



The afternoon slump is real.



While 3 out of 4 desk workers report working during the 3-6pm timeframe, **only 1 in 4** consider these hours highly productive





“This goes to show that productivity isn’t linear. Productivity happens in bursts, on and off throughout a day, not necessarily in prescribed windows of time, and definitely not for eight consecutive hours. The ‘afternoon slump’ shouldn’t be seen as a bad thing; for many workers this could be an ideal time to take that break that will boost their overall productivity for the day.”

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Senior Vice President of Research and Analytics at Slack and head of Slack’s Workforce Lab



The “Goldilocks Zone” for productivity



On average, desk workers say **the ideal amount of focus time** is around **four hours a day**.



More than two hours a day is the tipping point at which a majority of workers say they’re spending “too much time” in meetings.



People who say they spend too much time in meetings are **more than twice as likely** to feel they don’t have enough time to focus.





“Focus time, collaboration time, connection, and rest are like the macronutrients of a work day. The right balance gives you the energy you need to work your best. We cannot consider these critical components of our work in silos. To be our most effective, we must create the space for collaborative work and for focused work.”

David Ard

Head of Employee Success at Slack and Salesforce



AI adoption is still in its infancy

Only
1 in 5

desk workers
say they have
used AI for work

More than
80%

say that AI tools
aren't improving
their productivity

But leaders are pushing to incorporate AI tools



94%

of executives feel at least some
degree of urgency to incorporate
AI tools into their organization



Top three activities that employees expect AI tools will provide the most value in the future



meeting notes
and recaps



writing
assistance



automation
of workflows

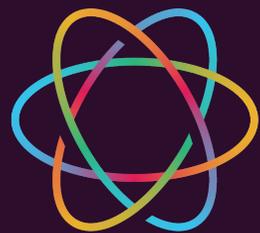


“People at every job level may be shocked to see that more than two hours of meetings a day reduces productivity. It may feel unrealistic to many team leaders to try to hit that target today. But that’s where the newest generation of AI tools could be a lifesaver. An AI assistant that could accurately summarize meeting notes and automate common workflows could be the key that frees up our time and helps us to unlock the balance we need to set ourselves up for success.”

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