



***Liberty Wellness Tip:***  
***Well-rested employees  
create happier & more  
productive workplaces.***

*Solution Driven – People Oriented*

## **Sleep and Productivity – Are Your Employees Getting Enough Rest?**

Sleep experts recommend at least 8 hours of sleep a night for adults to function properly, yet the National Sleep Foundation's (NSF's) 2000 Sleep in America omnibus poll found that, on average, adults sleep just under 7 hours during the work week. In fact, one third (33%) of adults sleep only 6-1/2 hours or less nightly. Even more discouraging: a full 45% of adults agree that they will sleep less in order to accomplish more.

### ***Sleepiness in the Workplace***

Americans now work the longest hours of any industrialized nation in the world, according to a recent study by the International Labour Organization. But as we work longer hours to get more done, individual productivity levels are suffering due to sleepiness:

- One-half of the American workforce (51%) reports that sleepiness on the job interferes with the amount of work they get done.
- 40% of adults admit that the quality of their work suffers when they're sleepy.
- At least two-thirds of adults say that sleepiness interferes with their concentration (68%) and makes handling stress (66%) on the job more difficult.
- Nearly one out of five adults (19%) report making occasional or frequent work errors due to sleepiness.
- Overall, employees estimate that the quality and quantity of their work is diminished by about 30% when they are sleepy.
- More than two-thirds (68%) of shift workers report problems sleeping.
- Nearly one out of four adults (24%) has difficulty getting up for work two or more workdays per week.
- One-third of adults would nap at work if it were allowed. (Only 16% of employees surveyed reported that their employers allow naps).

### ***Young Adults (18 - 29 year olds)***

"Youthful energy" may be a myth for most of the nation's young adults. Burning the candle at both ends, more than one out of two (55%) adults 18 to 29 years old admit to staying up too late to watch TV or be on the Internet; an equal percentage of the so-called "Generation Y" say they will sleep less in order to get more done. Other findings include:

- The percentage of young adults suffering from significant daytime sleepiness (33%) rivals that of shift workers (29%), a notoriously tired group who battles the body's natural inclination to sleep between the hours of midnight and 6 AM.
- More than half (55%) of those between the ages of 18 and 29 report, "waking unrefreshed."
- More than one-third (36%) of younger adults report difficulty getting up for work (compared to 20% of 30 - 64 year olds).
- Nearly one-quarter of young adults (22%) are occasionally or frequently late to work due to sleepiness (compared to 11% of 30 - 64 year olds).
- Forty percent of younger adults are sleepy at work at least two days a week (compared to 23% of 30 - 64 years olds).
- 13% of younger adults admit to occasionally/frequently falling asleep at work.

### ***Drowsy Driving***

Drowsy driving causes approximately 100,000 car crashes annually. Statistics show that fall-asleep crashes are most common among younger people, with peak occurrence at age 20. According to NSF's 2000 poll:

- Half of the nation's adults (51%) report driving while drowsy during the past year.
- 60% of 18 - 29 year olds have driven while drowsy, with 24% reporting that they dozed off at the wheel at some point during the past year.
- 42% of adults report becoming stressed while driving drowsy and 32% say they get impatient.
- Among younger adults, 22% drive faster when they're tired, compared to 12% of the general adult population.
- 63% of tired drivers turn to caffeine for relief; only 22% of drivers pull off the road to rest when drowsy, as recommended by safety experts.

### **General Findings**

- Nearly two-thirds of American adults (62%) experience a sleep problem a few nights per week or more.
- 43% of adults say they are so sleepy during the day that it interferes with their daily activities a few days a month or more; one out of five (20%) adults experience this level of daytime sleepiness at least a few days per week or more.
- Nearly one out of ten adults (7%) admit to having changed jobs in order to get more sleep.

### **Want a better night's sleep? Try the following:**

- Consume less or no caffeine and avoid alcohol.
- Drink less fluids before going to sleep.
- Avoid heavy meals close to bedtime.
- Avoid nicotine.
- Exercise regularly, but do so in the daytime, preferably after noon.
- Try a relaxing routine, like soaking in hot water (a hot tub or bath) before bedtime.
- Establish a regular bedtime and waketime schedule.

**To nap or not to nap**, that is the question. If you suffer from insomnia, try not taking a nap. If the goal is to sleep more during the night, napping may steal hours desired later on. However, napping can help promote short-term alertness, for example, to prepare for driving or in the middle of a long car trip.

### ***Napping Tips***

- Plan on a nap of just 20-30 minutes.
- If driving, nap in a safe place, such as in your locked car in a well-lit rest stop.
- Don't use a nap to try to substitute for a good night's sleep. If you're a regular napper, and experiencing difficulty falling or staying asleep at night, give up the nap and see what happens.

*SOURCE: The National Sleep Foundation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving public health and safety by promoting public understanding of sleep and sleep disorders, and by supporting sleep and fatigue-related education, research and advocacy. For information visit [www.sleepfoundation.org](http://www.sleepfoundation.org) or call (202) 347-3471.*