In 1926, the titan of U.S. industry Henry Ford single-handedly scaled back his full-time employee’s workweek from forty-eight to forty hours. In justifying his decision, he claimed “It is high time to rid ourselves of the notion that leisure for workmen is either lost time or a class privilege.”

The result was a vast improvement in worker productivity and company profits. In 1940, Congress made the five-day, 40-hour workweek the law of the land by amending the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Yet over time, the number of hours worked by American full-time employees has lengthened considerably. According to a recent Gallup poll, American full-time employees now work an average of 47 hours per week, or nearly a full extra eight-hour day.

A 2018 survey by The Workforce Institute found that 35 percent of current employees would take a 20-percent pay cut if they could work one less day a week. That is how much we need and value more free time.

While unexpected, these results are not surprising: Few people who log an eight-hour workday actually put in eight hours of continual work. The same 2018 Workforce Institute survey found that 45 percent of global workers think it should only take five hours a day to do their job.

It turns out, workforce authorities agree with them: Adam Grant, a professor at the University of Pennsylvania’s Wharton School of Business has spent years studying the dynamics of success and productivity in the workplace. His conclusion: Workers can be as productive and creative in six focused hours as in eight unfocused hours. For this reason, he suggests the workday should end at 3, instead of 5 p.m.