

Local

Work less, achieve more



JUST KIDDIN', SERIOUSLY

By Sahar Moussa

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Karoshi is a Japanese word, which means 'death from overwork'— it was invented in the 1970s to describe deaths caused by work-related stresses and pressures. Many people worldwide are obliged to work long hours and sometimes do two jobs in order to pay their rent and children's school fees and put food on the table; unfortunately, they end up spending too much time in the office away from their loved ones, just to provide for their needs.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, there has been a radical transformation in the workplace. Many employees were able to work remotely and working hours were reduced to avoid spreading COVID-19. These options are now becoming part of the mainstream—but not at all workplaces. This new experience has proved and convinced companies and employers that an employee does not have to stay eight hours at the office to be productive. Of course, this does not apply to all types of jobs.

What if you can work for only four hours daily, spend more time with your family, and be more productive and happier, while being paid the same salary? This will be the case of citizens in Qatar after the cabinet there approved a draft decision on the terms and conditions of a part-time system at government agencies, whereby the number of workhours per week are reduced by half. Qatar's aim with this decision is to attain family stability and more productivity in the work field.

In Kuwait, to boost women's productivity, give them greater comfort and ease their great social burden when they go out to work, a proposal was discussed to establish nurseries at government and non-government workplaces for female employees. Article 25 of the labor law stipulates working women must be given two hours daily to breast-feed during work, and the employer should set up nurseries for children under four years of age at workplaces where the number of female workers is more than 50 or the number of workers exceeds 200. Unfortunately, till today this proposal hasn't seen the light of day.

Experts believe that working fewer hours leads to happier, healthier and more engaged workforces. Research shows that people get more done when they work fewer hours, and less done when they work longer hours. I believe that a healthy, friendly and fair environment makes employees love their jobs and be more productive and loyal to the company. It enhances creativity and makes people grow in their careers. Conversely, a toxic environment and long hours of work that are not productive make you depressed, miserable and unwilling to contribute or produce.

A very interesting study done in 2021 that followed Swedish workers showed that reduced working hours reduced stress, exhaustion and negative emotions. Another study in 2017 showed that cutting working hours by 25 percent improved sleep, while research from the 1990s showed that working only six hours a day improved workers' family lives. In some countries, they have adopted the four-day workweek policy, where you reduce your working hours by 20 percent.

Overall, flexible working hours and a relaxed environment at any workplace lead to work-life balance, strengthen family ties, make people happier and fewer sick leaves are taken. In addition, the carbon footprint is reduced, along with the traffic that employees face every morning.

PHOTO OF THE DAY



This picture taken on Sept 21, 2021 shows a view of the waning gibbous moon over Kuwait City. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

A momentous journey



IN MY VIEW

By Abdellatif Sharaa

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Today marks the 60th anniversary of our beloved Kuwait Times. This is the place where I have spent many hours and days; a place that gave me the opportunity to learn how states are run; a place that gave me the opportunity to meet, speak with and pose questions to dignitaries from various parts of the world. Kuwait Times gave me the opportunity to participate in very important events, particularly those that had to do with science and human wellbeing.

Kuwait Times staff - starting from the office employees all the way to the founder Abu Tareq, May Allah bless his soul - were one family. Mind you, we see each other more than our own families, and fortunately, the tradition goes on!

Kuwait Times followed a path that meant truth and accuracy in its reporting; sensitive issues were and are

dealt with accordingly, while maintaining the principle that the public in general and our dear readers in particular must know the truth.

I remember one day when Abu Tareq asked me to come to his office, and told me many things about his journey. One thing remained on my mind very vividly: "Kuwait Times is my dearest daughter, and it must be cared for as such!"

The foundation is solid and the pillars are firm, so regardless of what happens, the paper will remain standing, informing its readers with news and other topics, day in and day out. I trust all those at Kuwait Times today will keep the torch burning and preserve the legacy of its founder, the late Yousuf Saleh Al-Alyan.

Happy anniversary, Kuwait Times! Wishing you all the best, today, tomorrow and every day!