

Leavism¹: the troubling truth behind the trend to keep working while on holiday

'We take holidays to work because working is often more comfortable and easier than the rest of our lives.'

Overworked employees are using their annual leave to catch up on tasks they should have left behind at the office. And it isn't just precarity and smartphones to blame.

- 5 'I can't wait for my holiday," a colleague told me. "I'm going to get so much work done!" At the time, I wasn't shocked. Many professionals I know use their holidays as an opportunity to work. I have to admit that when I'm on holiday, I wake up early so I can do some sneaky work before the rest of the family appear and demand I "relax".

- 10 Now this trend of working on holidays has been given a name: leavism. Prof Cary Cooper and his colleagues at Manchester University first identified leavism in 2014. They surveyed staff in a large UK police force during prolonged job cuts and found that more than one third of the officers had taken leave or holiday when they were sick or injured. Cooper soon realised that using annual leave instead of sick leave was part of a wider phenomenon where holidays became a time to work.

- 15 A follow-up study by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development in 2018 found that 72% of respondents had observed leavism and 37% reported people taking annual leave (rather than sick leave) when they were ill. More than 30% of those surveyed reported people took leave to catch up on work. An even more recent study found that up to half of employees surveyed were taking work home and claiming they were on holiday.

- 20 Cooper thinks employees take time off to work because our workplaces have become increasingly competitive and employees are overburdened. Working on holiday helps us keep up. Another reason is technology. The ubiquity² of smartphones means work is constantly with us. Even when we are hiking in the mountains, a smartphone tethers us to what is happening in the office.

- 25 I think there are two other reasons we take holiday to work. First, most modern workplaces have become the last place where you can get work done. There are often so many pointless disruptions and distractions. Going on holiday becomes a desperate means of finding distraction-free time to work.

- 30 Another overlooked reason we take holidays to work is this: working is often more comfortable and easier than the rest of our lives. By hiding in our work when on holiday, we are able to ignore personal relationships, family dynamics and our own feelings. Working on holiday is a defence mechanism. It helps us avoid facing up to the troubling prospect that we might not have a life outside work.

André Spicer, The Guardian, Tue 18 Feb 2020

1 : laisser « leavism » tel quel dans le compte-rendu

2 : omniprésence

TRAVAIL A FAIRE PAR LE CANDIDAT

I. COMPREHENSION ECRITE (10 points)

Rédigez **en français** un compte rendu d'environ 180 mots (+/- 10 %) de ce document en faisant ressortir les idées essentielles de façon organisée.
Vous indiquerez le nombre de mots utilisés.

II. EXPRESSION ECRITE (10 points)

Vous êtes Mike Parker, l'assistant de M. William Davidson, directeur des ressources humaines chez BROWN AND SONS Ltd, 346 Market Road, BIRMINGHAM B24 OQS.
Monsieur Davidson vous charge de rédiger, en son nom, un courrier à l'attention de Mme Elizabeth Wilkinson qui habite au 14 Chester Street, WOLVERHAMPTON WV1 1DA.
Il s'agit d'une demande de changement de date pour l'entretien d'embauche de Mme Wilkinson qui devait avoir lieu le 14 juin 2021.

Dans ce courrier :

- Vous rappelez la date qui était prévue pour l'entretien d'embauche.
- Vous expliquez que vous n'avez eu d'autre choix que d'annuler cet entretien en raison de circonstances imprévues. Une affaire urgente vous a contraint à modifier votre emploi du temps et vous serez outre-Atlantique à cette date.
- Vous vous excusez pour le dérangement occasionné. Vous attendiez cet entretien avec impatience dans la mesure où le besoin d'un assistant manager est urgent. L'expérience et le profil de Mme Wilkinson correspondent parfaitement aux besoins de l'entreprise.
- Vous proposez de reprendre rendez-vous la semaine suivant la date initialement prévue, entre le 18 et le 22 juin 2021, si cette dernière est disponible.
- Vous rappelez que vous appréciez l'intérêt que Mme Wilkinson porte à votre entreprise et vous espérez que la rencontre pourra se faire prochainement.
- Vous vous excusez à nouveau de la prévenir aussi tard. Vous attendez de ses nouvelles rapidement, via un courriel ou un appel téléphonique, afin de pouvoir reprogrammer la rencontre.

Formules de politesse et présentation d'usage.