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1

Unit

Work and travel



Lead-in

- 1 Have you ever heard of the word “workcation”? What does it mean?
- 2 What are the factors contributing to the phenomenon of people’s taking workcations? Do you think it is beneficial for companies and employees? Why or why not?

Text A

Half work, half vacation: Meet the “workcation”

Steve Hargreaves

exotic *adj.* seeming interesting and unusual because it is related to a foreign country
异国风情的

time off time when you are officially allowed not to be at work or studying
(正式批准的)假

clock off to record the time at which you leave work or be off duty 打卡下班

- 1 Feel like getting away? Don’t want to use a vacation day? Just combine work and vacation.
- 2 Call it the “workcation.” It’s not just checking email or taking a call during your vacation, but actually putting in full eight-hour workdays from an exotic destination, without sacrificing precious time off. A few days working, followed by a few days seeing the sights with the family.
- 3 It’s a win for both sides: The employee gets to travel more frequently than the typical 2-3 weeks a year many companies offer, while the employer doesn’t have to lose the worker for a full week or more.
- 4 “You take a long vacation with the family, and use that time to do whatever you need to do,” said Paul James, global brand leader for Starwood’s St. Regis, The Luxury Collection and W Hotels. “The nature of work is changing. You can’t just clock off and take two weeks off anymore.”

- 5 The practice is common in industries where it's easy for employees to work remotely, said Scott Dobroski, director of corporate communications for a jobs and recruiting site. Tech is a big one, but increasingly it's happening in fields like consulting, finance and digital media. Companies, he said, are offering this type of thing as a perk.
- 6 Dobroski himself recently took a workcation when he decided to visit friends in Florida and soak up some warm weather. The six-hour flight from his base in San Francisco meant he'd have to stay for several days to make the trip worth it. But with his firm's busy season approaching, he didn't want to fall behind on his work. So he caught a Wednesday flight and worked from the plane, and also worked Thursday from a beachfront café in Fort Lauderdale. He spent Friday through Monday relaxing, and used only two days of vacation time to have a six-day trip.
- 7 "I joked that I was working from our South Florida office," he said. "I was getting my work done, so it didn't really matter where I was."
- 8 At Starwood Hotels, employees are seeing guests book bigger rooms, stay for longer periods of time, and send the kids and one parent down to the concierge to look for daily activities.
- 9 At the St. Regis San Francisco, the number of guests saying they are on both business and leisure is up 10% from last year.
- 10 To meet the needs of these workcationers, Starwood is building more suites, upgrading Internet speeds, and expanding day care and entertainment options—among other things—at its higher-end properties.
- 11 "It's actually driving our new hotel construction," said James, noting that the number of suites at Starwood's new luxury hotels has more than doubled.
- 12 The St. Regis' Punta Mita location in Mexico saw a 28% rise in large suite bookings from 2013, and at its Sanya Yalong Bay hotel in China, families now account for 60% of the bookings.
- 13 Businesses are looking at this trend as a way to reward employees without having to spend extra money, said Kimberly Wilson

corporate communications

the way in which businesses and organizations communicate with various internal and external audiences 企业传播

recruit v.

to find new people to work in a company, join an organization, do a job, etc. 招聘

perk n.

sth. that you get legally from your work in addition to your wages, such as goods, meals, or a car (工资以外的) 额外待遇

soak up to experience sth.

good or pleasant with your senses, your body, or your mind 感受, 享受

base n.

the main place where you live or stay, or where a business operates from 总部

busy season a peak season

旺季

concierge n.

sb. in a hotel whose job is to help guests by telling them about places to visit, restaurants to eat in, etc. 酒店服务台职员

suite n.

a set of rooms, especially expensive ones in a hotel 套房 (尤指酒店豪华套房)

high-end adj.

expensive and of high quality 高端的

property n.

a building, a piece of land, or both together 房产

joint meeting a meeting involving two or more people, organizations, or companies 联合会议

infancy *n.* the time when sth. is just starting to be developed 初期, 初创期

Wetty, co-president at a high-end travel agency. It's becoming so common that a year and a half ago her firm started holding joint meetings between the business and leisure travel departments.

- 14 “This is a trend that will grow over the next few years,” said Wetty. “We’re just seeing its infancy state.”

Notes

1. **“You take a long vacation with the family, and use that time to do whatever you need to do,” said Paul James, global brand leader for Starwood’s St. Regis, The Luxury Collection and W Hotels.**

In this sentence, the source information “said Paul James” is placed after the quote, followed by an appositive phrase “global brand leader for Starwood’s St. Regis, The Luxury Collection and W Hotels,” which introduces the title of Paul James. This is a very common structure in business texts. The source is usually someone who knows well about a certain industry, making the information offered more convincing.

2. **Starwood**

Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, Inc. was the most global high-end hotel company in the world before it was acquired by Marriott International, Inc. in 2016. The company owned several distinct lifestyle brands including St. Regis, The Luxury Collection, and W Hotels.

Understanding the text

1 Decide whether the following statements are true (T), false (F), or not given (NG) according to the text.

- ___ 1. Many companies permit their employees to have vacations for 2 to 3 weeks a year.
- ___ 2. According to Paul James, employees now don't need to register before getting off work because of the change of the nature of work.
- ___ 3. Executives are happy to see their employees work flexibly in fields like consulting, finance, and digital media.
- ___ 4. Scott Dobroski lives in Florida and works in San Francisco from time to time.
- ___ 5. Scott Dobroski did not enjoy his vacation since he worked during the entire six-day trip.
- ___ 6. At the St. Regis San Francisco, the number of travelers who are on both business and leisure is on the rise.
- ___ 7. Starwood is building more suites at all of its properties to catch up with the trend of workcations.
- ___ 8. Businesses are spending less money by allowing their employees to have workcations.

2 Discuss the following questions.

1. Why does the author think combining work and vacation is “a win for both sides”?
2. Why does the author cite many luxury hotels as examples?
3. According to Para. 13, what has the travel agency done to take advantage of the trend of workcations?
4. With the advances in technology, especially the rapid development of mobile devices, do you think people's ways of working have been reshaped? Is it good or bad? Give your reasons.
5. Different from “workcation,” the word “staycation” is used to describe people going out for day trips but using their home as their base. Why is “staycation” happening? What do you think travel agencies can do to seize this opportunity?

Language work

1 Match the phrases with their meanings.

1. get away	A. to spend a lot of time or make a lot of effort doing sth.
2. put in	B. to not do or pay sth. at the right time
3. clock off	C. to form a particular amount or part of sth.
4. soak up	D. to go away for a period of time in order to have a holiday
5. fall behind on	E. to register one's departure from work
6. look for	F. to hope to get sth. that you want or need
7. account for	G. to spend time experiencing, listening to, or feeling sth. enjoyable

2 Complete the following sentences with the proper form of the phrases from the above exercise.

1. This company on its own could _____ 8% to 12% of the smartphone sales in this quarter.
2. Workers at a district council in eastern England must now _____ when they leave work.
3. All countries need to _____ ways to reduce their carbon footprint.
4. Juliana is too busy to _____ from it all after days of work.
5. Remember not to _____ the mortgage payments.
6. Keaton comes here once or twice a year to _____ the atmosphere.
7. They've _____ enough time and effort in order to keep the project going.

3 Translate the following expressions into Chinese.

1. check email
2. an exotic destination
3. a jobs and recruiting site
4. digital media
5. upgrade Internet speeds
6. luxury hotels

Word formation knowledge is of great importance in helping us infer the meaning of unknown words in reading. Common types of word formation include blending, compounding, clipping, and affixation.

■ **Blending**

Blending refers to the process of combining the meanings and sounds of two or more words. The blended parts may not be in their full forms. In other words, they may be clipped or partially overlap. For example, the word “workcation” is formed by “work” and “cation.” “Work” means “a job,” and “cation” is clipped from “vacation,” which means “a holiday.” Therefore, we can infer that “workcation” refers to a trend that combines working and taking a vacation.

■ **Compounding**

Compounding refers to the process of putting two or more base words together to make one word. For example, the word “high-end” is formed by “high” and “end.” “High” denotes a greater level, meaning “greater or better than normal,” while “end” means “one of the two points that begin or end a scale.” Therefore, we can infer that high-end products or services are of better quality and more expensive than other products or services of the same type.

■ **Clipping**

Clipping refers to the process of shortening a long word by cutting a part off the original and using what has remained as a word. For example, “tech” is the result of clipping “nology” from the original word “technology.” Therefore, “tech” shares the same meaning with “technology”: “scientific knowledge used in practical ways in industry.”

■ **Affixation**

Affixation refers to the process of adding a prefix or suffix to a base word to form a new word. Generally, the prefix changes the meaning of the base word while the suffix changes the part of speech of the base word. For example, the word “co-president” is formed by the prefix “co-” and the base word “president.” The prefix “co-” means “together/with,” and “president” means “the person who has the highest position in an organization.” Therefore, we can infer that “co-president” means “a person who shares the highest position in an organization with one or more other people.”

The Uber workcation

Polly Mosendz

- 1 As the clock struck midnight, six panicked employees were jammed into a Malibu, California vacation rental, attempting to keep their company's app from crashing and customers from boiling over with rage. The CEO had supplied tacos, drinks and the house, having planned the trip quickly when he felt an inkling of the issues his team would be up against on this night.
- 2 That night was one of Uber's busiest and most profitable of the year. High surge pricing was necessary to get its drivers to work on a holiday, but customers would become alienated if the prices were set too high. The wait time for cars could become long; customer service queries were numerous; servers were overloaded; and turning a profit meant finding an appropriate way to deal with all of the issues at hand.
- 3 The next year, Kalanick's startup braced for New Year's Day away from its offices once again. This New Year's Day was no less stressful, but catching glimpses of a tropical paradise amid the hundreds of support issues seemed to calm the staff.
- 4 By 2012, Kalanick decided to make workcation a more formal event. The weeklong trip was given a theme and a dedicated time frame. Employees would submit project concepts to the CEO directly for approval. If Kalanick liked the idea, he would sign off on it, create a budget and dub the person who submitted the proposal. He would have no say in the location; that was solely up to the leader. The California wine country and Latin American countries were popular locations.
- 5 Projects were to be focused more on development than on marketing ideas. Then, the team recruitment would begin. Engineers would be recruited to workcation teams first. Other staff members could lobby for roles on teams, pitching their love for the location selected, the other members or the concept to the leader. Each team would end up with between three and seven members.
- 6 While the leader's travel expenses would be paid for, the other team members had to pay their own way. Uber believes this encourages only extremely motivated employees to attend workcation trips, rather than those just seeking free vacations.

- 7 Since Kalanick established workcation, the themes have played an important role in the experience. In Melbourne, 15 employees arrived to find their short-term rental had been a scam: Their money was gone, and Uber was supposed to start service in the city in just a few hours during the busiest time of the year. They scrambled to create a makeshift office, and one employee busted out his ukulele, a talent not shared at headquarters, to entertain the staff while they got things up and running. Melbourne launched. Employees went out celebrating at four in the morning.
- 8 The next year, workcations were used by numerous companies, and working from a distance has become a breeze since the rise of mobile technology. For Uber, workcations are broken into two categories: for wacky, out-of-the-box ideas and for necessities that have fallen through the cracks in a packed day-to-day office schedule. While 2013's expansion theme was a necessity, 2014's idea theme bred both types of projects.
- 9 It was during the 2014 workcation that the idea of integrating a music streaming service with Uber was born, and a prototype was designed in less than 10 days.
- 10 Different concepts for push notifications were also debated during the 2014 workcation. California led by engineer Aiden Scandella worked to move Uber's app away from text message notifications. The change was a necessity that had eluded Scandella's team for far too long due to scheduling conflicts. He brought together a designer, a product manager, some engineers and a marketing manager to create push notifications and debate exactly what they would do.
- 11 Scandella wanted surge pricing changes to be reflected in the push notifications. This workcation team built the prototype in six days and upon arriving back at headquarters. While they were unable to find a way to fit surge pricing changes into the push notifications, they did have a completed push notification system ready to launch.
- 12 Because of the amount of work Scandella and his team did during the workcation, the push notification system was built in about 12 to 16 weeks less than it would have taken in the office. This outweighed the costs of sending so many employees around the world. When the 2014 integration broke—workcation's most notable success thus far—both companies were at the center of a media frenzy, with hundreds of pieces debating the nature of the partnership, what it meant for the companies' futures and, of course, if customers actually enjoyed the offering. When a company-sponsored vacation garners those kinds of results, the effort expands, and it did.

- 13 The culture of workcation promotes this obsessive attention to detail and desire for perfection. The projects remain a secret, but if the 2014 integration sets the bar for workcation's success, Uber users can assume at least one quirky addition is coming in the next few months.
-

1. **surge pricing**

a way of setting the price for a product or service in which the price changes according to how much demand there is at a particular time (根据需求浮动的) 动态定价

2. **turn a profit**

to begin to earn a profit 开始盈利

3. **startup** *n.*

a new company that has been started fairly recently 初创公司

4. **budget** *n.*

a sum of money allocated for a particular purpose 预算

5. **headquarters** *n.*

the center of operations, as of a business, from which orders are issued 总部

6. **push notification**

an automated message sent by an app when the app is not in use, especially on a phone 推送通知

7. **product manager**

a person who is responsible for the strategy and blueprint of a product or product line 产品经理

8. **marketing manager**

a person who is responsible for planning and executing marketing strategies 营销经理

Understanding the text

Answer the following questions.

1. What is the purpose of Para. 1?
2. What policies made workcation a more formal event?
3. How did the 15 employees overcome the difficulties in Melbourne?
4. What does “change” in Para. 10 refer to? Why was the change a necessity for Uber?
5. What does the author think of the culture of workcation?

Language work

1 Translate the following sentences into English by using the proper form of the words and expressions in parentheses.

1. 我们始终从国情出发想问题、作决策、办事情。(issue)

2. 我国如期完成了脱贫攻坚任务，打赢了人类历史上规模最大的脱贫攻坚战。(time frame)

3. 新疆维吾尔自治区每年将 70% 以上的公共预算用于保障和改善民生。(budget)

4. 这个团队急于给人一种项目处于可控状态的印象。(scramble)

5. 营销经理强调，未来的回报要超过公司的资金投入。(outweigh)

2 Decide which of the words given in the box below would best complete the passage if inserted in the corresponding blanks. The words can be used ONCE ONLY.

- | | | |
|----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| A. becomes | B. important | C. particularly |
| D. similar | E. apartment | F. interrupt |
| G. workplace | H. staying | I. matter |
| J. rates | K. different | L. valuable |
| M. experiences | N. reliable | O. typically |

How do you book a workcation? Because you'll be living there for several weeks or more, the considerations are 1 _____ than they would be for a short-term hotel or vacation rental. Find the 2 _____ or home on a map to see whether you're near the facilities that 3 _____ to you, such as coffee shops, the local library, pharmacies, and restaurants. As far as the apartment goes, you'll want to check that there's a kitchen, adequate laundry facilities and, because you'll be working from home, a(n) 4 _____ wireless signal.

"Accommodations with multiple bedrooms are also 5 _____ for couples or families, so that multiple conference calls can happen at the same time in peace," says Christian Hempell, vice president for North American market operations for a website that offers extended-stay options.

Extended-stay properties 6 _____ cost between 20 percent and 30 percent less than a comparable hotel stay. If you're 7 _____ longer than a month, ask about special 8 _____. Many companies will build discounts into their pricing, but not always.

Maybe the most important piece of advice for aspiring workcationers is to be open to new 9 _____. At the leading edge of this trend, the line between a hotel and an apartment is blurring. It blends the best of traditional branded hotels and individually owned rentals. And the rooms are like those in a hotel, but with more facilities, such as full kitchens. As the workcation trend 10 _____ popular, we'll get a fuller picture of the ups and downs of this new lifestyle.