



THE GREAT RESHUFFLE



Scan to review worksheet

Expemo code:
1BIS-C1L8-M35G



1

Warm up

In pairs, discuss the following questions.

1. What effect did the pandemic have on working life in your country?
2. How do you think working life in your country will be different in ten years from now?

2

Focus on vocabulary

Part A: Complete the definitions below.

(A) enough work (B) away from work (C) on your own (D) not requiring
(E) inform workers (F) uninteresting way (G) nervous or afraid (H) sustained effort

1. **disposable** (adj.): unimportant and _____ thought or concern
2. **furloough** (v): _____ that they should not work for a period, often due to lack of business or money
3. **gruelling** (adj.): exhausting and requiring _____ over a period of time
4. **lay off** (phr. v): take away someone's job because there is no longer _____ for them
5. **pluck up the courage** (idiom): do something despite it making you _____
6. **sabbatical** (n): time spent _____ in order to travel or study with the intention of returning to the same job
7. **solitude** (n): the state of being entirely _____
8. **stuck in a rut** (idiom): have an _____ of life that does not change



Part B: Now put the vocabulary from Part A into the correct gaps in the following sentences. You may need to change the form of the word.

1. Every other weekend, I will escape the city and go hiking in the mountains. After all the stress, I really appreciate the _____ and the space to think.
2. During the pandemic, we were _____ for about three months. It was a really worrying time.
3. The farm was accused of treating its workers as completely _____ and having no regard for their health and safety.
4. When they took our company over, around thirty employees were _____, even though we were assured that it wouldn't happen.
5. We've got a deadline to meet, so work has been absolutely _____ for the last few months. I've barely had any sleep.
6. I've been feeling really _____ lately and I'm thinking of retraining to be a social worker so I'm not at a desk all day.
7. I finally _____ to ask my boss for a raise. She said she'd get back to me but I feel quite hopeful about it.
8. Both my parents took a _____ from their university jobs when I was a child and we travelled around New Zealand. It was some of the best times of my life.

Now in pairs, discuss the following questions.

1. What is the most **gruelling** work that you have ever done? What made it difficult?
2. Have you ever worked for anyone who made you feel **disposable**? How? What did you do about it?
3. Have you, or anyone you know, ever been **furloughed**? What was the reason?
4. Have you ever done something that you had to **pluck up the courage** to do? What was it? Why did you feel that way?
5. Have there been times in your life when you have felt **stuck in a rut**? What was happening? What did you do about it?



3

Listening for details

Listen to three people talking about their experience of changing jobs. Tick the box to show who uses the words and phrases from the vocabulary section.



vocabulary	speaker 1	speaker 2	speaker 3
disposable			
furlough			
gruelling			
lay off			
pluck up the courage			
sabbatical			
solitude			
stuck in a rut			

4

Listening comprehension

Listen again and underline the correct speaker in the following sentences.

1. Speaker 1/Speaker 2/Speaker 3 → received a sum of money after losing their job.
2. Speaker 1/Speaker 2/Speaker 3 → is a parent.
3. Speaker 1/Speaker 2/Speaker 3 → continued doing their old job while they learned new skills.
4. Speaker 1/Speaker 2/Speaker 3 → makes more money now.
5. Speaker 1/Speaker 2/Speaker 3 → relocated to a completely different environment.
6. Speaker 1/Speaker 2/Speaker 3 → enjoys being away from their desk.
7. Speaker 1/Speaker 2/Speaker 3 → used aspects of their old career in their new career.
8. Speaker 1/Speaker 2/Speaker 3 → benefitted from a senior manager leaving the company.



5

Skimming for gist

Read the following sentences and decide which gaps they can fill in the article on page five. You will not need all of the sentences.

- A. Observers believe that this reshuffling is likely to continue for some time.
- B. Many billionaires increased their wealth considerably during this time.
- C. It also prompted some to take a sabbatical or early retirement, while others left to care for family or friends.
- D. Others are taking the opportunity to go into business for themselves.
- E. Property development may well move in the direction of converting current corporate office space to the apartments of tomorrow.
- F. Companies will need to rethink their policies in order to cope with the demands from their employees.
- G. Livelihoods were threatened and businesses were forced to close temporarily, or in some cases, permanently.
- H. However, it's possible that what has been seen as masses of people resigning is actually a redistribution of workers.





What's next?

The Great Reshuffle

- I. When the global pandemic shut down workplaces around the world, it undoubtedly caused hardship for many millions of people. _____¹ For many, however, the change in circumstances triggered an epiphany. With the large-scale threat to life and the rise in sickness globally, large numbers of people found they wanted to redefine their relationship with work as the pandemic underlined the importance of family, relationships and time spent enjoying the simpler pleasures. Suddenly spending long hours working away from loved ones in order to make money for things, many of which could suddenly not be used, seemed ridiculous.
- II. What followed has become known as 'The Great Resignation'. During 2021, 3.98 million workers in the US left their jobs every single month with a total of 47 million Americans having quit in total by the end of that year. This trend has continued so far in 2022 with February seeing 4.4 million leaving their employment. A survey in the UK in January of 2022 found that 29% were intending to leave their jobs. Tellingly, of those who wanted to leave, 16% were doing so because employers were asking them to come to the office when they felt their jobs could be done from home. The traditional office commute for a 9-5 job seems unlikely to continue for many into the future, as the pandemic showed that it was not necessary for large numbers of workers. _____²
- III. _____³ With companies finding it harder to hire employees, many people are leveraging the situation to find better positions with improved benefits. _____⁴ The number of self-employed workers in the United States has risen by 500,000 since the onset of the pandemic. There's evidence that companies who want employees to work from an office location are offering higher wages for doing so in response to the fact that businesses which offer flexible or hybrid working situations have been less affected by resignations. This leaves professionals with the chance to create bespoke working conditions where their work can fit around their life, rather than vice versa.
- IV. _____⁵ Office-based organisations will likely start to reduce their workspace as more workers move to hybrid or remote working. They will have to rethink their policies for workers and decide if the demands of their particular industry can withstand a more flexible work environment. Impressive offices in an upmarket location will no longer be the draw that it used to be. Equally, the changes may well impact homes with more people looking for properties which can house both their personal and professional environments. Over time, we may see an increase in house and apartment sizes which will be mirrored by a reduction in the number of offices. _____⁶ Ultimately, it's possible that while the pandemic was a catastrophe of global proportions, it could have irrevocably changed working life for millions for the better.

source: BBC, thehrdirector.com, zippia.com





6 Scanning for vocabulary

Scan the article on page five and find words which have the same meaning as the following.

1. _____ (n, para. I): a difficult situation because life's basics such as food, work, clothing are in short supply
2. _____ (n, para. I): a sudden moment of understanding something
3. _____ (v, para. III): take advantage of a situation and get as much as you can from it
4. _____ (n, para. III): the beginning of something that isn't positive
5. _____ (adj., para. III): specially made to suit the particular needs of someone
6. _____ (adj., para. IV): expensive and high-quality
7. _____ (n, para. IV): an attractive thing or idea
8. _____ (adv., para. IV): in a manner which cannot be changed

7 Reading comprehension

Complete the following sentences with one, two or three consecutive words from the article on page five.

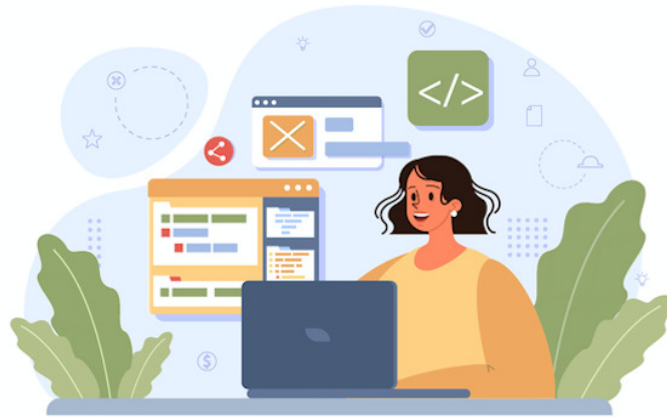
1. The _____ caused by the pandemic caused many to rethink their professional situation.
2. _____ of people's personal lives suddenly became a lot more significant and workers wanted to fit their work lives around it more effectively.
3. _____ involving a daily commute to the office is something that will become a thing of the past for many.
4. Employees looking for _____ are taking advantage of the lack of workers by demanding more of companies and looking for different positions.
5. _____ have been less of a problem for companies who have embraced flexible conditions and home-working.
6. It's possible that the future will see many companies begin to _____ the size of their offices as more of their employees will be working remotely.
7. The _____ of the pandemic may also change the way homes are built, with larger numbers of people wanting an office at home.
8. As devastating as the pandemic was, we may well say a vast improvement in the _____ of millions in the future as a result.



8 Talking point

In pairs, discuss the following questions.

1. How did your working life change around the time of the pandemic?
2. If you were able to switch to a different job or career, what would you choose? Why?
3. Have you made any changes to the way you work in recent years so that you have more time for your personal life? Why/Why not?
4. Do you think in the future, we will look back and see that the pandemic started major changes in working life? Or do you think it will go back to the way it was previously? Why?



9 Extended activity / homework

Write a letter to the person you were ten years ago.

Consider the following questions:

1. What would you tell yourself about the pandemic?
2. What advice would you give?
3. What mistakes have you made in the last ten years?
4. What successes have you had?

You should:

- write at least 250 words
- check your grammar, spelling and punctuation.