Can The Scandinavian Six-Hour Day Work In The UK?

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Meet Agent Marketing, the UKâ€™s first marketing agency to trial Swedenâ€™s increasingly popular six-hour working day, in an experiment to weigh up how well the model works on this side of the North Sea.
Pioneered by a variety of creative and tech firms in Sweden, the shortened working hours aim to improve employee wellbeing and reduce stress and fatigue. Many companies that have adopted this innovative model have reported heightened productivity, increased profits and reduced levels of staff turnover.

Agent Marketing, a full-service marketing agency based in Liverpool, is swapping its usual 8:30 â€“ 17:30 working day for a more forgiving 9:00 â€“ 16:00 throughout December and January. This also includes each employee taking a mandatory one-hour lunch break away from their desk.

After hearing about the firmâ€™s daily meditation sessions, weekly yoga classes and monthly massages, BBCâ€™s The One Show challenged Agent Marketing to turn its workplace wellbeing initiatives up a notch and implement a 30 hour week.
The experiment was recorded and will air on The One Show, in a feature on how the forward-thinking agency found working in this way.

Paul Corcoran, managing director of Agent Marketing, said:

â€œWeâ€™re always looking at how we can improve the ways in which we work; I am a strong believer in that if you feel great, you deliver great results. Agent is only as strong as the people that work here, so for me, investing time and energy into the wellbeing of my team is always an important thing to do. Happier, healthier people do create better work and as a result, help delight clients.

â€œThis experiment isnâ€™t just about having more time outside of the office. It is about creating new ways of working that allow for a better work/ life balance, greater focus, heightened creativity as well as an atmosphere and environment people genuinely want to work in.

â€œWeâ€™re looking at using this trial period to help us adapt elements of the six-hour model that fit around the schedules of both us and our clients. Trialling the strict Swedish model during the period The One Show was filming has shown us aspects that absolutely work and areas which we need to make work for us and our clients.â€•

If the trial works out for Agent Marketing, it could inspire many others to follow suit, revolutionising the UKâ€™s working world whilst combating widespread work-related stress.

Jeanette Gill, head of communications at Agent Marketing, said:

â€œSo far itâ€™s been going well. Weâ€™ve been forced to question our usual working habits and figure out ways to make them more efficient, whilst ensuring all creative avenues are properly explored.

â€œFor example, instead of lapsing into our usual one hour weekly team meeting, we decided to see what would happen if we cut it down. Everyone stayed sharp and in the end we covered everything we needed to in just eight minutes without missing the important content we needed to cover.â€•

Filming for The One Show took place throughout December, and the show will be aired in early January (likely to be 6th January at 7pm on BBC1). To find out more about Agent Marketing visit their website, and for updates on the six-hour working day follow them at @Agent_Marketing.