

IN THE NEWS



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Leave the Office Earlier Day Aims to Cap Workday at Eight Hours *New National Event Challenges Workers to Get More Done in Less Time*

Highlands Ranch, CO (May 2005) -- June 2nd has been designated as National Leave the Office Earlier Day by [Laura Stack, MBA, CSP](#), bestselling author and a leading authority on productivity and workplace issues. The annual event, which is officially listed in Chase's Calendar of Events 2005, is intended to focus workers on improving their personal productivity and asks them to commit to working no more than eight hours on that day.

"The eight-hour workday remains a myth to many working Americans," says Stack. "But by implementing some simple strategies and tactics, even the most overworked and overstressed people can be more productive and shorten their workday and feel good about it."

Stack says that Leave the Office Earlier Day is especially relevant in light of Microsoft Corporation's recent landmark, [worldwide survey](#) on worker productivity, which found that workers average only three productive days per week. "That's not good for workers or the organizations they work for," says Stack. "Leave the Office Earlier Day is an opportunity for people to focus on changing work patterns, adjusting priorities, and to discover how much more productive they can be in an eight-hour workday."

To encourage news writers and editors to alert their audiences to this timely event, Stack is making available her proprietary "7 Tips for Leaving the Office Earlier" (attached) for reprint with attribution. Reprint permission is also included.

Stack says that personal productivity can be dramatically improved when workers apply her ten competencies of personal productivity: Preparation, Reduction, Order, Discipline, Unease, Concentration, Time Mastery, Information Control, Vitality, and Equilibrium (P.R.O.D.U.C.T.I.V.E.).

Stack chose June 2 as National Leave the Office Earlier Day because that is her birthday. "I do not want to work more than eight hours on my birthday, and no one else should have to either," says Stack.

For more tips on how to be more productive and leave the office earlier, please visit the Media Room at www.TheProductivityPro.com (password: productivitypro). Free articles are available, and reprint permission is provided.

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About Laura Stack, MBA, CSP

Laura Stack, MBA, CSP, is president of [The Productivity Pro, Inc.](#), an international consulting firm specializing in productivity improvement in high-stress industries and is the media's go-to expert on personal productivity and workplace issues. Laura is the author of the bestselling book *Leave the Office Earlier* (2004 Broadway Books). She has appeared on many top news media outlets including CNN, NBC-TV, NPR, Bloomberg, the New York Times, and numerous leading magazines. Laura presents keynotes and seminars on surviving information overload, managing multiple priorities, reducing stress, and balancing work and family.



7 Tips for Leaving the Office Earlier

1. **Stop participating in the cultural rules.** Commit to getting out the door on time. Who decided that you should work until 7:00 p.m.? How much is the time “you’re devoting because you’re a salaried employee and obligated to do what it takes to get the job done” worth?
2. **Start meetings before 4:00 p.m.** If you have some say or control regarding meeting times, schedule them to end by 4:30. Preferably, start meetings right after lunch. Block out your calendar beginning at 4:00 every day so people can’t schedule with you. And don’t ask people to begin projects at 4:45 PM. Respect their right to a life, too.
3. **Be assertive.** Don’t be afraid to tell others, “I leave work at 5:00, on time, every day. I have a 5:30 commitment I must adhere to.” It’s none of their business that your commitment is with yourself or your family. People tend to support others when their goals are made public.
4. **Schedule fixed office hours.** If you have an assistant, block off certain hours a few days a week to accept appointments. Perhaps Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, you take appointments from 9:00 to 10:30 and 2:00 to 3:30. This way you don’t have interruptions overlapping the time you’re trying to leave the office.
5. **Make preparations to leave.** Gather up your coat and put it in a visible spot so others can see you’re on your way out. Close your door a few minutes before quitting time so people will think you’re busy or already gone. Whatever they want, it can wait until tomorrow.
6. **Challenge your assumptions.** Long hours aren’t “the way it is.” To reduce the time pressure you feel, decide to reclaim your day, not by working longer, but to finish your work within the workday. Don’t focus on “catching up.” You will never catch up. There will always be more things to do than time to do them. By being more productive during the day, you’ll get the same amount of work done and leave earlier.
7. **Start small.** Pick a single day, perhaps Thursdays, to be “the” day you leave work on time. To support this decision, you will automatically begin to be more productive on Thursdays and work your day more carefully. Keep working on productivity skills and adding more days, until you’re working your 40-hour workweek again and accomplishing even better results.

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