



NB: This is not a word for word transcript

Rob Hello I'm Rob. Welcome to 6 Minute English. I'm joined today by Finn. Hello Finn.

Finn

Rob Finn? ... Hello Finn?

Finn Oh sorry Rob, you caught me **napping**. It's that time of day when I need to **nod off** – or in other words, fall asleep.

Rob Well, **sleeping on the job** – or sleeping at work - is no bad thing – and I hope today's programme will wake you up to the idea that sleeping in the workplace might be a good thing.

Finn Oh really! That's good to hear. I would have thought that sleeping at work was against the rules.

Rob Not in every office, Finn, and I'll tell you why soon as well as explaining some sleep-related vocabulary. But now you're wide awake, how about a question?

Finn OK, let's hear it.

Rob When the former British Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, was in power, she did her job with very little sleep. Do you know how many hours of sleep she is said to have had each night?

- a) Three hours
- b) Four hours
- c) Five hours

Finn I always thought she got by, she managed her job, with just four hours of sleep a night.

Rob We'll find out if you are right or wrong later. I'm not sure if she chose *not* to sleep for long or she just wasn't able to sleep for long. Someone who can't sleep is called an **insomniac**.

Finn And I'm certainly not an insomniac. I enjoy sleeping all night and some of the day too. And Rob, you said napping during the day is a good thing?

Rob It's always nice to have a short sleep – or what I call **40 winks** – during the day, but when you're at work this can be a problem. In some companies, like Google and the Huffington Post, workplace naps are positively encouraged. They're seen as a way to make staff more productive.

Finn So you mean they work harder and are more creative because a **power-nap** – a quick sleep – makes workers feel refreshed and more alert. I like the sound of this!

Rob An Australian health writer called Thea O'Connor, is a founder of a campaign called Nap Now which is trying to make sleeping at work more acceptable. She calls herself a '**naptivist**'! Let's hear from her now. What does she say is stopping us from doing this?

Thea O'Connor, health writer and speaker:

I think that our culture is a bit crazy not to embrace it, and one of the reasons we don't is our attitude, you know it's quite counter-cultural to do nothing in order to get ahead. I just really see that it's time to disrupt the prevailing work ethic which is all about work longer and harder.

Finn Right – so she wants us to embrace – to accept – the idea of a workplace power-nap. But it is our **attitude** – the way we think about work – that stops society from accepting this.

Rob Yes, she explains that it is **counter-cultural** – so going against the normal way of thinking – to actually do nothing and have a snooze.

Finn That's why she is trying to change – or disrupt – our current **work ethic** of working longer and harder. She believes this doesn't necessarily bring better

results. But Rob, is this idea just a fad – something that's popular for a short while?

Rob Maybe, but research has certainly shown that good quantity and quality of sleep is important for our **wellbeing**. A few years ago research by the East of England Development Agency found 30% of people have their best ideas in bed compared to just 11% who have them at their desk. It called for companies to install beds in the workplace.

Finn Well there aren't any in our office yet Rob. I think putting beds or areas for naps in the office would help us workers feel more able to rest and recharge our minds.

Rob An alternative idea would be to change our working hours. The UK's Sleep Council claims the **nine-to-five** work culture does not fit into the natural sleeping pattern of the human race and bosses need to introduce a more sleep-friendly working day.

Finn That sounds like a **siesta** to me - a short period of sleep in the middle of the day that people in warm places like Spain often have.

Rob My problem with a siesta is that if I have a sleep in the afternoon I'd never wake up!

Finn Well before you nod off now Rob, could you please tell me the answer to today's question.

Rob Yes. I asked you if you knew how many hours of sleep the former British Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, is said to have had each night? Three, four or five hours?

Finn I said four hours Rob.

Rob You are right. It has often been said she needed just four hours of sleep – only on weekdays, not weekends.

Rob Well before you have another power-nap, could you remind us of some of the vocabulary we've heard today:

Finn Yes, we heard:
napping
nod off
sleeping on the job
insomniac
40 winks
power-nap
naptivist
attitude
counter-cultural
work ethic
wellbeing
nine-to-five
siesta

Rob Thanks. We hope you've enjoyed today's programme. Please join us again soon for another 6 Minute English from BBC Learning English.

Both: Bye.

Vocabulary and definitions

napping	sleeping for a short period of time
(to) nod off	to fall asleep
sleeping on the job	sleeping when you should be working
insomniac	a person who has difficulty falling sleep
40 winks	(informal) nap for a short period of time
power-nap	a short sleep that gives you energy
naptivist	a made-up name for someone who actively campaigns for napping at work
attitude	opinion or feeling about something
counter-cultural	opposite to what most people think or do
work ethic	belief about how we should work
well-being	feeling of being happy and healthy
nine-to-five	regular office hours (often from nine o'clock in the morning to five o'clock in the afternoon)
siesta	rest or sleep taken after lunch, especially in hot countries

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