

# Case Incident 1

## Do U.S. Workers “Live To Work”?

Many people around the world believe that U.S. adults live only to work. Do we really work that much harder than people in other countries? To answer this question, we turn to data collected by OECD, an organization that does research on economic development issues. The following figures represent the average hours worked per week (total number of hours an average employee works per year, divided by 52), averaged over the more recent five years available, for countries that are members of the OECD:

1. South Korea	46.7
2. Greece	39.9
3. Hungary	38.6
4. Czech Republic	38.2
5. Poland	38.1
6. Mexico	36.0
7. Italy	35.2
8. Iceland	34.9
9. New Zealand	34.9
10. Japan	34.5
11. Canada	33.6
12. Slovak Republic	33.5
13. Australia	33.4
14. Finland	33.2
15. United States	33.0
16. Spain	32.7
17. Portugal	32.5
18. United Kingdom	32.4
19. Ireland	31.8
20. Switzerland	31.7
21. Austria	31.6
22. Luxembourg	30.5
23. Sweden	30.4
24. Denmark	29.8
25. France	29.8
26. Belgium	29.6
27. Germany	27.8
28. Netherlands	26.1
29. Norway	26.0

### Questions

1. Do these results surprise you? Why or why not?

**Answer:** Yes, the results are surprising. Many other studies show U.S. employees working many more hours than employees in other countries.

2. Why do you think U.S. employees have a reputation for “living to work”?

**Answer:** Yes, U.S. employees do have a reputation of living to work since so many people “seem” to be workaholics in pursuit of monetary wealth.

3. Do these results prove that Koreans, for example, are more motivated to work than their U.S. counterparts? Why or why not?

**Answer:** No, not necessarily. Motivation may or may not be the sole factor in this study. The U.S. is known for its productivity and work ethic.

4. A research study has suggested that changes in hours worked over time are due, in part, to changes in tax rates. “If taxes and [government expenditures] are high, that may lead to less work,” said one of the researchers. Supporting this theory, since 2001, workers in the United States have increased their hours worked while tax rates have dropped. What theory or theories of motivation might support such a change?

**Answer:** A number of theories may be explained at this point. Expectancy theory would be one theory that would support an increase in hours worked, while tax rates have dropped as the given outcome becomes stronger.

Sources: L. Ohanian, A. Raffo, and R. Rogerson, *Long-Term Changes in Labor Supply and Taxes: Evidence from OECD Countries, 1956–2004*, NBER working paper 12786, December 2006; and J. J. Smith, “Taxes Likely Causing Some Countries’ Workers to Labor Fewer Hours

## Case Incident 2

### Bullying Bosses

“It got to where I was twitching, literally, on the way into work,” states Carrie Clark, a 52-year-old retired teacher and administrator. After enduring 10 months of repeated insults and mistreatment from her supervisor, she finally quit her job. “I had to take care of my health.”

Though many individuals recall bullies from their elementary school days, some are realizing that bullies can exist in the workplace as well. And these bullies do not just pick on the weakest in the group; rather, any subordinate in their path may fall prey to their torment, according to Dr. Gary Namie, director of the Workplace Bullying and Trauma Institute. Dr. Namie further says workplace bullies are not limited to men—women are at least as likely to be bullies. However, gender discrepancies are found in victims of bullying, as women are more likely to be targets.

What motivates a boss to be a bully? Dr. Harvey Hornstein, a retired professor from Teachers College at Columbia University, suggests that supervisors may use bullying as a means to subdue a subordinate that poses a threat to the supervisor’s status. Additionally, supervisors may bully individuals to vent frustrations. Many times, however, the sheer desire to wield power may be the primary reason for bullying.

What is the impact of bullying on employee motivation and behavior? Surprisingly, even though victims of workplace bullies may feel less motivated to go to work every day, it does not appear that they discontinue performing their required job duties. However, it does appear that victims of bullies are less motivated to perform extra-role or citizenship behaviors. Helping others, speaking positively about the organization, and going beyond the call of duty are behaviors that are reduced as a result of bullying. According to Dr. Bennett Tepper of the University of North Carolina, fear may be the reason that many workers continue to perform their job duties. And not all individuals reduce their citizenship behaviors. Some continue to engage in extra-role behaviors to make themselves look better than their colleagues.

What should you do if your boss is bullying you? Don’t necessarily expect help from coworkers. As Emelise Aleandri, an actress and producer from New York who left her job after being bullied, stated, “Some people were afraid to do anything. But others didn’t mind what was happening at all, because they wanted my job.” Moreover, according to Dr. Michelle Duffy of the University of Kentucky, coworkers often blame victims of bullying in order to resolve their guilt. “They do this by wondering whether maybe the person deserved the treatment, that he or she has been annoying, or lazy, they did something to earn it,” states Dr. Duffy. One example of an employee who observed this phenomenon firsthand is Sherry Hamby, who was frequently verbally abused by her boss and then eventually fired. She stated, “This was a man who insulted me, who insulted my family, who would lay into me while everyone else in the office just sat there and let it happen. The people in my office eventually started blaming me.”

What can a bullied employee do? Dr. Hornstein suggests that employees try to ignore the insults and respond only to the substance of the bully’s gripe. “Stick with the substance, not the process, and often it won’t escalate,” he states. Of course that is easier said than done.

**Questions**

1. Of the three types of organizational justice, which one does workplace bullying most closely resemble?

**Answer:** An argument can be made that distributive justice is at work here in that the workplace bully is attempting to influence the distribution of rewards, etc. in the workplace. Arguments may be made for retributive justice if one is dealing with the disposition of the one engaged in the bullying behavior.

2. What aspects of motivation might workplace bullying reduce? For example, are there likely to be effects on an employee's self-efficacy? If so, what might those effects be?

**Answer:** It appears that workplace bullying reduces the level of motivation exerted by individuals to go beyond a level of performance than what is minimally acceptable. It could be argued that individuals' self-efficacy is diminished in that those who are victims of bullying tend to downgrade the organization that they work for, cease to engage in citizenship behavior, etc. These reactions may affect an individual's self worth over the long run.

3. If you were a victim of workplace bullying, what steps would you take to try to reduce its occurrence? What strategies would be most effective? What strategies might be ineffective? What would you do if one of your colleagues was a victim of an abusive supervisor?

**Answer:** Students need to provide a strategy for dealing with this type of behavior. It is clearly an opinion-based question that has significant latitude to accommodate a wide range of responses.

4. What factors do you believe contribute to workplace bullying? Are bullies a product of the situation, or are they flawed personalities? What situations and what personality factors might contribute to the presence of bullies?

**Answer:** Some factors could be work history (that is emulating one's former supervisor), a lack of appropriate management training and development, low self-esteem, insecurity, and lack of adequate job knowledge.

*Source:* Based on C. Benedict, "The Bullying Boss," *New York Times*, June 22, 2004, p. F.1.

# Instructor's Choice

## Making the Connection

Many companies have pay-for-performance programs (e.g., sales incentive programs). In fact, some members of the class may have held similar jobs. If so, ask them to briefly characterize the pros and cons of such positions. What behavior is an organization trying to encourage with such plans? What are the ethical implications for the three main parties: the employee, the customer, and the organization? How does the organization use outcomes such as pay and bonuses to promote high motivation and performance? Student teams could discuss the issues and then get back together for a class discussion.



### EXPLORING OB TOPICS ON THE WORLD WIDE WEB

Search Engines are our navigational tool to explore the WWW. Some commonly used search engines are:

[www.goto.com](http://www.goto.com)      [www.google.com](http://www.google.com)      [www.excite.com](http://www.excite.com)  
[www.lycos.com](http://www.lycos.com)      [www.hotbot.com](http://www.hotbot.com)      [www.bing.com](http://www.bing.com)

1. Motivation the old fashioned way? Read how Bill Mork reenergized his workforce and realized real savings in the process. Go to: <http://www.inc.com/magazine/19941101/3187.html> and read the article of his company's success. Choose one classic theory of motivation and one contemporary theory to explain why his program works. Bring your analysis to class.
2. What motivated you to go to college? What is motivating you to stay and succeed? Visit these sites for ideas and tips for being successful and staying motivated during your academic career.

[http://home.okstate.edu/homepages.nsf/toc/chp12\\_1](http://home.okstate.edu/homepages.nsf/toc/chp12_1)  
<http://www.academictips.org/acad/collegemotivation.html>  
<http://www.ucc.vt.edu/stdysk/motivate.html>

3. Stock options are used as management and employee motivators. Are they powerful motivators? Read the article "Reward System: Increasing Performance and Employee Happiness" found on the Web site listed below. Write a short reaction paper (1 page) on this article. Include in the paper your thoughts on what organizations should do when stocks plummet, and they still need to motivate employees.  
[http://www.1000ventures.com/business\\_guide/crosscuttings/motivating\\_reward\\_system.html](http://www.1000ventures.com/business_guide/crosscuttings/motivating_reward_system.html)

4. For brief outlines of classic motivation theories, go to:

<http://www.netmba.com/mgmt/>

<http://choo.fis.utoronto.ca/FIS/Courses/LIS1230/LIS1230sharma/motive1.htm>

Select one theory that you think has application to the job you have now, or a previous job, and write a short description of the job and how the theory was applied. Now look over the class syllabus. What theories of motivation are applicable for the way this class is set up? Again, write a short description and the theory as it's applied. For example: Paper due on ?/?/200? = Goal- Setting Theory.

5. Read the article found on <http://www.cnr.berkeley.edu/ucce50/ag-labor/7research/7calag07.htm> concerning piece rate vs. hourly rate for agricultural workers. Write a journal entry or short reaction paper to this article as to what you would do, and why, as a manager confronting this issue with workers.