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PAYROLL

Workplace Boredom Kills Productivity

If you've ever had a case of the blahs at work, you're not alone. According to a new survey from staffing firm OfficeTeam, professionals admit they're bored in the office an average of 10.5 hours per week. That's more than a full day a week, or the ...

Isaac M. O'Bannon • Nov. 20, 2017

BORED AT WORK

Hours per week **employees** say they're bored at work:



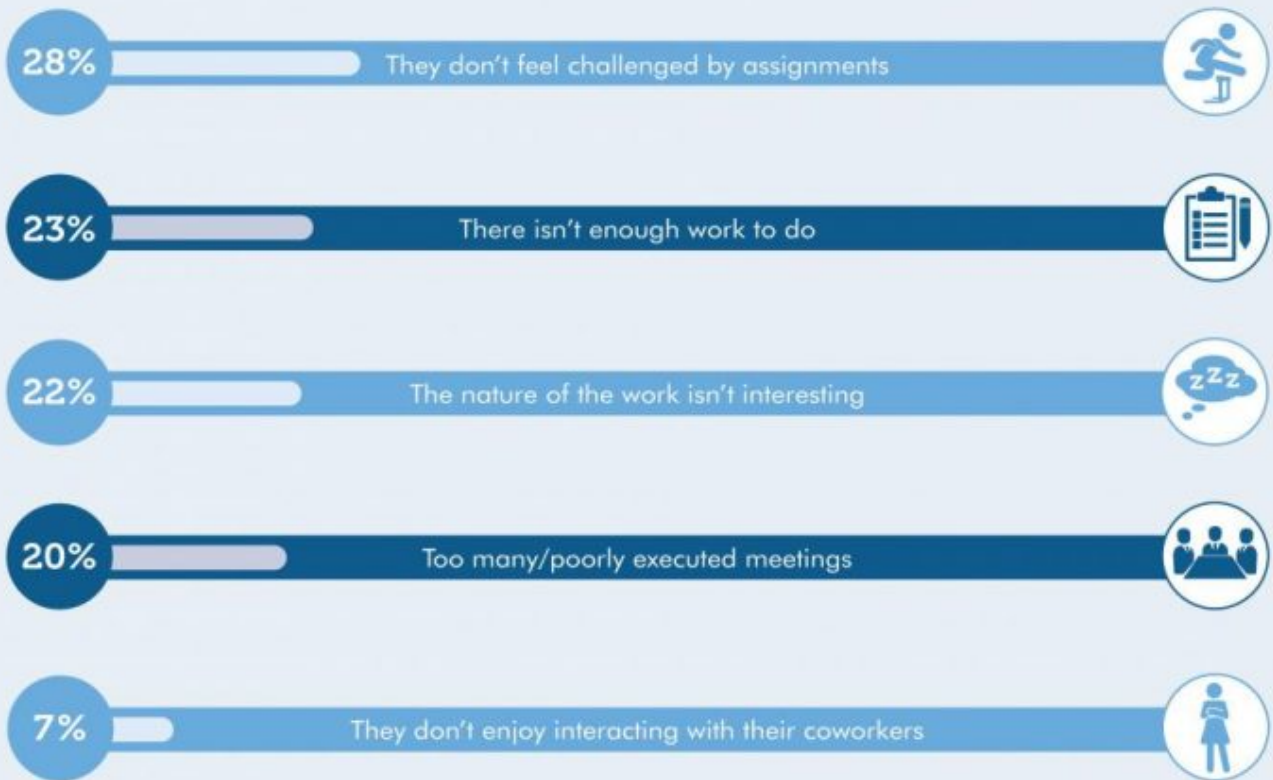
Hours per week **managers** think employees are bored at work:



2 in 5 employees would quit if they felt bored at work.

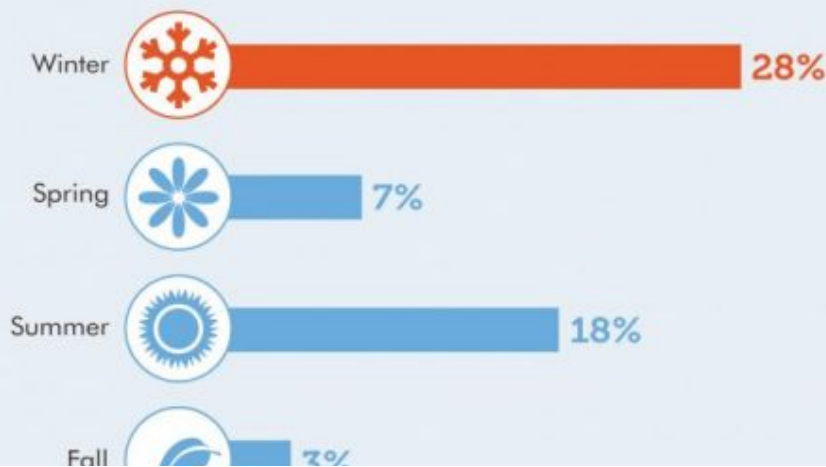


The main reason employees are bored, according to managers:



(Top responses shown)

The time of year workers are most bored*:



Equally bored
throughout
the year



45%



of managers say employees have
too much to do in their jobs.

Source: OfficeTeam surveys of 382 office workers and 307 senior managers in the United States.
Responses do not total 100 percent due to rounding.

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If you've ever had a case of the blahs at work, you're not alone. According to a survey from staffing firm OfficeTeam, professionals admit they're bored in the office an average of 10.5 hours per week. That's more than a full day a week, or the equivalent of 68 days a year! Senior managers interviewed acknowledged the doldrums do exist but estimated their staff is likely disinterested about six hours each week.

And this is nothing to snooze at: Two in five employees (40 percent) said it's likely they'd quit their job if they felt bored at work.

[View an infographic](#) of the research and [data tables](#) with breakdowns of the results by gender and age.

Employees were also asked what they do when they're bored in the office. In addition to browsing the internet, checking personal email and social media, and chatting with coworkers, here are some of their more creative activities:

- "Have rubber band battles with coworkers"
- "Make grocery lists and cut coupons"
- "Learn another language"
- "Do crossword puzzles"
- "Play ping pong"
- "Doodle"
- "Make videos"

- “Pay bills”
- “Watch TV or movies online”
- “Work on the book I’m writing”
- “Play online games”
- “Daydream”
- “Act like I’m interested in the work and meetings”
- “Clean my desk”
- “Ask for more work”
- “Look for other jobs”

“Let’s face it, the workday isn’t always filled with excitement. Managers can regularly check in with staff to ensure they’re engaged, but the onus is also on employees,” said Brandi Britton, a district president for OfficeTeam. “When boredom strikes or there’s a lull in activity, individuals should proactively ask to help with projects that challenge and interest them.”

Additional findings:

- Of all respondent groups, male workers and those ages 18 to 34 are bored the most per week (12 hours and 14 hours, respectively).
- Men (46 percent) and employees ages 18 to 34 (52 percent) are also most likely to leave their current position if bored.
- More than one-quarter of senior managers (28 percent) think the main reason boredom strikes is because employees don’t feel challenged by assignments.
- While 45 percent of professionals are equally bored throughout the year, another 28 percent said work is most tedious during the winter.
- In general, nearly four in 10 senior managers (39 percent) believe staff have too much work to do in their jobs.

About the Research

The surveys of workers and senior managers were developed by OfficeTeam. They were conducted by independent research firms and include responses from more than 380 U.S. workers 18 years of age or older and more than 300 senior managers at U.S. companies with 20 or more employees.

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