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workers to come to the office again, abridging the work week could be one way to woo talent.

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*By Lizzy McLellan Ravitch.*

The Philadelphia Inquirer (via TNS)

Software engineer Julian Plotnick made a pitch to his company's CEO last year: Let me work one less day per week, 32 hours total, without a cut in pay.

The answer was yes, and after six months of Plotnick testing it out, the Philadelphia

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As many employers continue to face a tight labor market and some try to get more workers to come to the office again, abridging the work week could be one way to woo talent. Those who have tried it say the decrease in hours has encouraged efficiency, leading to time-saving choices.

That's what Metropolitan Acoustics founder and CEO Felicia Doggett saw after observing Plotnick's six-month experiment. She has run her company with a five-day week since 1990, but she's confident they can accomplish just as much in four days by shortening meetings and dedicating time to heads-down work.

"There's enough wasted time during the work week. ... (T)here's definitely time we can cut out," Doggett said.

## Fridays off is a growing trend

A few other companies locally have been experimenting with a four-day work week, and dozens more across the globe.

In January, Philadelphia-based [Insomnia Cookies](#) started giving Fridays off to all 100 full-time corporate employees, citing mental health and work-life balance benefits. Chief marketing officer Tom Carusona told The Inquirer in February that feedback from employees has been positive and "productivity is doing great" since the change.

Philly Marketing Labs, which designs digital campaigns for consumer brands like Chloraseptic and Summer's Eve, [switched to a four-day week in 2021](#) and never looked back. The 12-person company had been a fully remote workplace since its founding in 2009, a deliberate choice meant to attract and retain talent.

"When everybody went remote during COVID, we kind of lost our differentiator. It wasn't anything special anymore," said CEO Bechara Jaoudeh. Making Friday part of

the weekend was seen as a way to stand out again.

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any clients about it, and surveyed them again after six months. Satisfaction levels were unchanged and clients had no complaints, he said.

Fundraising platform [Kickstarter](#) and online consignment retailer [thredUP](#) have cut the work week by one day.

In the United Kingdom, 61 organizations took part in a four-day work week pilot beginning in 2022. A [recent report said that 89% of participants](#) were still operating that way after a year and that the majority of them had decided to make the change permanent.

## What companies learned

The UK study was conducted by economic planning organization Autonomy Research, as well as researchers at the University of Salford, University of Cambridge, Boston College and University College Dublin. Nearly half of their original testing group agreed to take part in a follow-up study one year later.

“When asked what the shorter working week had changed, 82% of surveyed companies reported positive impacts on staff well-being,” researchers said. Half saw lower turnover, and nearly a third said recruiting had become noticeably easier.

Jaoudeh said PML hasn't lost a single employee since launching the four-day week more than two years ago. “It creates such stickiness,” he said, predicting that larger companies would see significant savings on recruiting costs if they moved to the same model.

Also in 2021, PML started offering employees 20 hours per year of free online therapy and retained a nutritionist for employees who opted in, Jaoudeh added. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, he wanted to invest in employees' mental health, and he thinks those changes have helped them.

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