

The technology company Microsoft has said it successfully trialed a four-day working week in Japan, which saw improvements in workers' productivity and job satisfaction. The trial took place over the summer at the tech giant's headquarters in Tokyo. Employees were given every Friday off as paid leave in August. The company monitored the effects a three-day weekend would have on workers' performance. Company executives said the shorter working week resulted in additional benefits. Productivity rose by 40 per cent and 92 per cent of employees expressed their satisfaction with the scheme. The trial could lead to a change in Japan's infamous workplace practices of long hours and lots of overtime.

Microsoft called the trial the Work-Life Choice Challenge. The company said it aimed, "to create an environment where each employee can choose a diverse and flexible way of working according to the circumstances of their work and life". Other aspects of the trial included shortening the length of meetings to a maximum of 30 minutes and encouraging workers to choose online chats over face-to-face ones. There were additional advantages to the trial. Microsoft said that 23 per cent less electricity was consumed and 59 per cent fewer pages were printed compared with August 2018. Microsoft will conduct another experiment in Japan later this year and has asked employees for their input.

#### Paragraph 1

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| 1. trialed      | a. Well known for some bad quality or action.  |
| 2. satisfaction | b. The place or building serving as the managerial / administrative center of an organization.       |
| 3. headquarters | c. Looked at and checked the progress or quality of something over a period of time.                 |
| 4. leave        | d. Tested a new product or process to assess its suitability or performance.                         |
| 5. monitored    | e. A person with senior managerial responsibility in a business organization.                        |
| 6. executive    | f. The fulfillment of one's wishes, expectations, or needs, or the pleasure derived from this.       |
| 7. infamous     | g. A period of time when one has permission to be absent from work or from duty in the armed forces. |

#### Paragraph 2

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| 8. diverse        | h. Particular parts or features of something.                            |
| 9. flexible       | i. Helping or stimulating an activity, state, or view to develop.        |
| 10. circumstances | j. Ideas or a contribution of work, information, or material.            |
| 11. aspects       | k. Ready and able to change so as to adapt to different circumstances.   |
| 12. encouraging   | l. Use up a resource like electricity, energy, etc.                      |
| 13. consumed      | m. Facts or conditions connected with or relevant to an event or action. |
| 14. input         | n. Very different.   |