

# How was your weekend? Would your answer be different if you were happy at your job?

John C. Roach

How many times has a friend said, “Hey, how was your weekend?” Would you answer differently if you worked part time rather than full time or if you were not happy with your job? In [“How was the weekend? How the social context underlies weekend effects in happiness and other emotions for US workers”](#) (National Bureau of Economic Research, working paper no. 21374, July 2015), John F. Helliwell and Shun Wang explore the “weekend effects,” which are positive and negative emotions, for both full-time and part-time workers. The data, which were for the 2008–12 period, came from the Gallup/Healthways U.S. Daily Poll; this poll has randomly interviewed about 1,000 American adults daily since 2008. The total number of respondents had reached 1.77 million by the end of 2012.

Studies show people’s emotions play a key part in their overall well-being. Positive and negative emotions are found to exist as weekend effects among both full-time and part-time workers. In this research paper, the levels of positive emotions such as happiness, laughter, and enjoyment and the negative emotions of anger, stress, sadness, and worry are measured and explored as weekend effects for the U.S. working population.

Helliwell and Wang’s research indicates that working full time plays a larger part in emotional weekend effects than does working part time. The research shows that weekend effects for the emotions of happiness, anger, enjoyment, and stress for full-time workers are almost double those of part-time workers. The weekend effects are also 3 times larger for full-time workers who work in what they consider a negative work environment with a boss-type supervisor than for workers who have good social interactions at work, a positive workplace, and a partner-like supervisor. The weekend effect of sadness is similar for all American workers regardless of whether they work full time or part time.

Overall, American workers who experience a positive work environment tend to have a relatively small weekend effect—which is attributable principally to having more time on weekends for socializing—compared with employees who are unhappy at work.