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ENG 100

Research Paper

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WORK, Work work

The full-time American workforce is not legally obligated to a single day of paid vacation time. For many of the people reading this that may not seem too radical, but after doing my research from a various amount of scholarly articles, Watching Michael Moore’s documentary Where to Invade Next, browsing the web finding research oriented websites, giving factual statistics, information, and real scenarios, and to me most importantly being one of the full-time American workers, who is not legally obligated to a single day of paid vacation, I’ve realized that America does have a major flaw, and that flaw is that we do not have enough time to enjoy our lives, and are far too focused on making a living. Compared to the rest of the advanced economies in the world.

The 28 nations that are part of the European Union, are required by law to have four weeks of paid vacation, that may seem like a significant amount of vacation time to American’s, but the four weeks; 20 days of paid vacation is just a minimal. The country France requires 31 days, Spain and Germany require 34 days, Portugal and Austria require 35 paid days off a year, including mandatory vacation time and public holidays.

The statistics were gathered by Carlos Davis, post on huffingtonpost.com, on August 2nd, 2018.

When we take a look at America’s legally obligated paid vacation days for full time workers, you will see that we are not entitled to not a single day of paid Vacation. According to Dickey, Jack “The U.S. is the only advanced economy that does not require employers to offer paid holidays or time off”. This is extremely shocking as this is the “Land of opportunity”. What good is all of the opportunity if there isn’t a way to spend time with your family, without worrying about bills, and responsibilities. This can put many American into a stressful rut, of going to work, none stop working and not having time to spend with their families due to opposing schedules, and they grow further apart and leading to being overworked and stressed. Without having a vacation to look forward to. According to Dr. Michael Jonesco, physician at The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center, Being over worked can lead to depression, higher resting heart rate, irregular sleep schedule, constantly being tired, hair loss, and being more prone to illness via a decrease functionality in the immune system. Many of these symptoms will lead workers not being happy.

When you think about working how happy your employees may not seem to be too important, but that’s not true. Jonha Revesencio article Why Happy Employees Are 12% More Productive posted on fastcompant.com July 22nd 2015. Claims “New research suggests we work more effectively, creatively, and collaboratively when we’re happy at work.” Which can increase a company’s productivity by 12%. Having a 12% increase may not seem far to pleasing, but with more than a majority of people hating their work and not engaged in their work you have a -10% in productivity. This makes a 22% difference in productivity from the rare happy workers and the most commonly found unhappy full-term workforce.

Johna, also states how the happiness starts since you’re a kid, and having experiences such as vacation’s as a child will increase you happiness, throughout life. Happier children are better while performing under stress. According to Harvard researchers Phil Stone and Tal Ben-Shahar When the children grow up, and become an adult, they are able to bring their skills to the workplace, and create better bonds with co-workers, and perform better under stress.

Michael Moore’s video documentary Where to Invade Next Michael Moore starts off his invasion with the line “Have you ever noticed that Italians always look like they just had sex” now that may seem very confusing at first, but after watching and annotating the documentary it is clean to me why it seems this way. Italians have so much vacation time and their government prioritizes family vacations. In Italy they managed to make paid holidays go into the following year if they are unused in the prior year. Italians also on average live four years longer than they typical American. Italians also have a two hour lunch break every single day. The most impactful moment in Where to Invade Next was when the Italian couple was telling Michael Moore how it is a goal for Italians to move to America, then Michael more informs the couple how by law they are not entitled to a single day of vacation, and their faces looked as if they just saw a ghost, and the results stayed the same for the rest of the people. Michael more closes the scene in Italy talking about how The United States, and Italy are both among the top 15 most productive countries in the world, even though American’s work many more hours than Italians. This is very reinforcing on how being happy will lead to a much greater level of productivity.

I understand that there are many possible counter arguments that you may be able to think of on why mandatory vacation time does not seems feasible, but in the world we live in anything is feasible. Vacation time is one of the most important things in life for many Americans. Having the mind set of being able to go on a vacation gives many people a purpose in life, especially when a vast majority of the people in our country do not in joy their workplace. The most common reason a person will give you why they should not pass a law mandating vacation time, is that you would have to hire more people to cover the person when they go on vacation. This seems more of an advantage in my eyes. If more people are working in a work place, this will lead to much happier American’s, and at the end of your life time what really matters most? Spending more time with your family and friends seeking great adventures, or working all the time?

Citations

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