

BRITS WASTE AN AVERAGE OF TWO AND A HALF HOURS A DAY 'FAFFING'

- New research reveals the vast majority of Brits (80 per cent) admit to wasting time everyday
- Just under half estimate they 'faff around' for as much as 2-3 hours a day
- Waiting around for the kids, colleagues and queuing top the list of how Brits waste their time

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New research into how the average Brit spends their time released today, by the Learning and Skills Council to celebrate Skills and Apprenticeships, reveals the huge amount of time, an average of 40 days a year*, which is wasted by Brits as they live up to their reputation as the world's greatest faffers.

Today's research reveals that over 80 per cent of Brits admit to wasting time, with just under half estimating that they faff for as much as 2-3 hours each day. The survey of 1,658 Brits also shows that nearly a third of respondents (32 per cent) were annoyed at the amount of time they wasted in a day, with over three quarters (76 per cent) stating that they would like to make better use of their time.

The LSC's top ten time wasting activities include:

1. Waiting for other people (children, colleagues, partners) - 42%
2. Queuing – 39.5%
3. Clearing up after other people – 39%
4. Gossiping – 36%
5. Being kept on hold while on the phone – 34%
6. Traffic jams – 30%
7. Shopping for unessential bits and pieces – 24%

8. Waiting for public transport - 23%
9. Chasing up people on jobs – 17%
10. Waiting for the bathroom – 8%

Interestingly, when it came to identifying the main causes of wasted time, the results show that 42 per cent of people cite having to wait around for other people as their biggest time-waster. Over a third blame queuing, clearing up after other people and having to hold on the phone. Conversely, expected excuses like traffic, shopping and chasing up on people finished lower down in the LSC's top ten time-wasters.

When asked what they might do to put their time to better use, nearly two thirds of respondents (31 per cent) said they would rather use the time they waste learning a new skill, with two thirds of those surveyed (67 per cent) stating that they thought gaining a new skill or qualification could help them to further their careers.

Mark Forster, author and time management guru, says that not only is it essential for people to maximise their use of time but also manage their time better, all of which could benefit them in the long run. He says: "As a time management expert I am committed to making people understand the benefits of making the most of their own time. We live in a busy world. We're working harder and juggling more than we used to – and, clearly, the nation is also spending more time 'faffing' than they should!

"The only problem is that there's only ever a finite amount of time in the day. Of course, we've all been heard saying 'I just don't have time', but today's research from the Learning and Skills Council shows that we can all make the time if we manage ourselves more efficiently. It also goes to show that there is no excuse for the third of Brits who cite a lack of time as being the main barrier to them learning a new skill."

Chris Banks, Chairman of the LSC, says: "It's clear that people waste a lot of time, but it's also clear that people are willing to make better use of their time. If we all spent two and a half hours a day learning something new, we'd all benefit hugely. Modern learning comes

in all shapes and sizes, and with flexible courses on offer there is something out there for everyone. There are also various funding options available to help you get on your way. Learning a new skill can be a step in the right direction towards a career change, a foot up the career ladder or even a way to earn more money.”

He continues: “There is also a global aspect - two out of three jobs in the future will require a higher level of skills and better qualifications. Indeed, in less than ten years, there will be very few unskilled jobs, so why not be the first to safeguard your future by learning a new skill?”

The Learning and Skills Council has a wide variety of training and funding advice available for people who are interested in updating their skills or obtaining a new qualification. With so much support available, what’s stopping you from updating your skills? To find out more about training and whether there are any funding options available for the course you've chosen, talk to your employer or visit lsc.gov.uk/inourhands

ENDS

For all media enquiries and interview requests for Mark Forster or Chris Banks please contact:

Natasha Grocock T: 02476 82 3640
E: natasha.grocock@lsc.gov.uk

Ann Gill T: 024 76823515 T: 02476 82 3515
E: ann.s.gill@lsc.gov.uk

Notes to Editors:

Research

The research was conducted on behalf of the Learning and Skills Council by 72 Point, based on a survey of 1,658 people in England.

* An average of 2.65 hours a day are wasted according to today's survey

Learning and Skills Council:

The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for ensuring the availability of high-quality education and training for everyone. We have a single goal:

to improve the skills of England's young people and adults to world class standards. Our vision is that young people and adults in England have knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. We work nationally, regionally and locally to deliver this ambition on behalf of learners and employers.

The LSC offers a host of support services to help those who are already in the workforce, or are about to enter the workforce, to gain the skills they need to succeed, secure their future or grow their income. For example, you could receive the Adult Learning Grant (ALG) for your decided course, a grant designed as a helping hand for adults thinking about learning but worried about the financial barriers standing in their way. ALG provides low income adult learners with up to £30 a week to help with the extra costs of learning. Since the grant became available, over 43,000 people have received ALG. You could also access training at work through the LSC's flagship programme for employers, Train to Gain.