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HOW CEOS SPEND THEIR TIME:

What business
leaders do in an
average day.



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METHODOLOGY

CEO.com, a leadership resource for business executives, conducted this survey on how CEOs spend their time in 2015. The sample includes a total of 256 respondents, all of whom were CEOs.

DEMOGRAPHICS

- **84%** of respondents were male. **16%** were female.
- In our sample, male CEOs dominated nearly every industry, except in one case: There was an even split between male and female CEO in the not-for-profit sector
- **85%** of survey respondents were over 40 years old.
- **33%** of the CEOs have acted in their current role for more than 10 years.

A NOTE FROM CEO.COM

Today's CEOs are busy— and getting busier.



“At the end of the day, both men and women who become CEOs have showed tenacity and hard work to succeed in their careers, (...) It takes not just skills but also extreme dedication and commitment. And regardless of gender, CEOs are measured by the same criteria—the growth and success of the business.”

**- Susan Wojcicki, YouTube CEO,
and one of Fortune's acclaimed
most powerful women in business¹**

Warren Buffett could be considered one of the most well-known CEOs in the business world. More impressive than his reputation, though, is his daily schedule. The CEO of the \$350 billion dollar company Berkshire Hathaway reportedly spends 80% of his day reading—the rest is spent in one-on-one conversations with long-term friends and business partners. He's kept this regimen for decades.

Not every CEO spends his or her time like Warren Buffett, however. Most struggle to maintain a balanced schedule and stay productive.

In our study, we sought to understand how today's business leaders are spending their time. **We surveyed over 256 CEOs about their day-to-day routines and responsibilities to better understand the work it takes to run a company.**

The respondents confirmed what we suspected: CEOs work—a lot. The surveyed CEOs and C-level executives showed devotion to their brands, investing years of blood, sweat, and tears, high-intensity work weeks, and taking only a few vacation days per year.

Key Findings

CEOs are early risers

CEOs aren't fans of sleeping in late. Of the CEOs surveyed, **80%** say they wake up at 6 a.m. or earlier; only **3%** snooze past 8 a.m.

CEOs have a packed workday

The CEOs we surveyed reported that they work an average of **57.8** hours per week and **10-11** hours per day.



Comparatively, the average employed American business professional reported working 47.5 hours a week, which is almost 10 hours less than the typical CEO work week.

Meetings are a major time killer

The average CEO reports spending around **2.5** hours every day in meetings. Typically, they are meeting with executives (**37% of the time**), customers (**20% of the time**), and prospects (**15% of the time**).

Family time takes priority over hobbies

When asked to name the one thing they wished they could spend more time doing, a quarter of CEOs (**25.8%**) said they wished they could spend more time with family.

DAILY SCHEDULE

How CEOs spend an average workday.

On average, those surveyed said they get 6.7 hours of sleep per night. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics², the average American gets 8.75 hours of sleep per night.

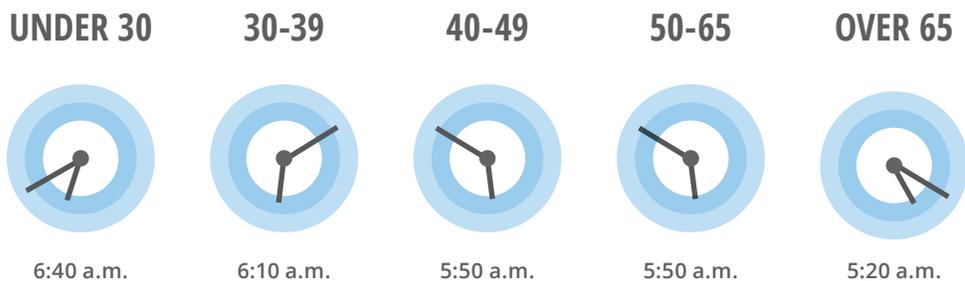
CEOs aren't fans of sleeping in late. Of the CEOs surveyed, 80% say they wake up at 6 a.m. or earlier and only 3% snooze past 8 a.m.

Despite their early wake up, CEOs tend to burn the midnight oil. Over 66% go to bed at 11:00pm or later. A bold 8% are up past 1 a.m.

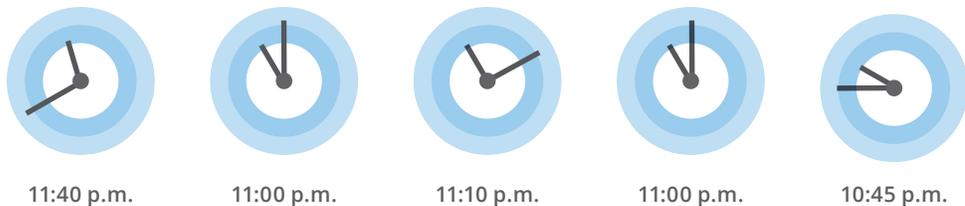
There's a direct correlation between the age of a CEO and his or her sleeping schedule. Older CEOs report earlier wake ups and bedtimes than younger CEOs.

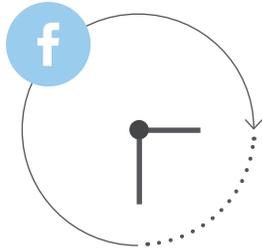
AGE VS. SLEEPING SCHEDULE:

Average wake-up time



Average bed time





50-60 HRS PER WEEK
IN OFFICE OR AT MEETINGS

But the work often doesn't end when CEOs leave the office. While Mark Zuckerberg exhibits surprisingly average CEO behavior, spending about 50-60 hours per week in the office and at meetings, **he admits he never really disconnects.**

“““

“If you count all the time I’m focused on our mission, that’s basically my whole life, (...) I spend most of my time thinking about how to connect the world and serve our community better, but a lot of that time isn’t in our office or meeting with people or doing what you’d call real work, (...) I take a lot of time just to read and think about things by myself.”

- Mark Zuckerberg
Chairman and CEO, Facebook³

WORK TIME

What CEOs actually do in the corner office.



The CEOs we surveyed reported working an average of 57.8 hours per week and 10-11 hours per day. **69% of CEOs take fewer than 20 vacation days a year.**

The CEOs we surveyed travel often for work. On average, 86% spend between 1-10 days of the month on the road. A small percentage (**6%**) travel more than half the month.

Surprisingly, one in ten of our respondents said that they wish they could spend more time working.

The average CEO reports spending more than 2 hours and 25 minutes every day in meetings. Typically they are meeting with executives (**37% of the time**), customers (**20% of the time**), and prospects (**15% of the time**).

Legal is the department CEOs meet with the least. CEOs spend most of their time with these departments:



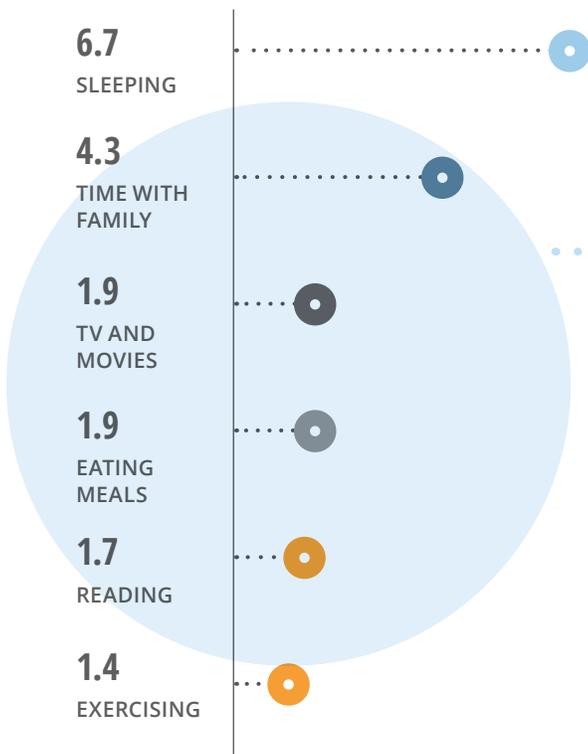
Reviewing reports takes up a substantial chunk of a CEO's time (**21.2% of the time spent working alone**).

LEISURE TIME

What CEOs do when they're off the clock.

HOURS IN A WEEKEND

A CEO's break from the office



On a weekday:

Family time is a priority for many of the CEOs we surveyed. After working and sleeping, family time takes up the most time in a CEO's average work day (**2.1 hours**).

When asked to name the one thing they wished they could spend more time doing, a quarter of CEOs (**25.8%**) said they wished they could spend more time with family.

A majority of respondents (**63.7%**) said they wished they could spend more time on a particular hobby.

On a weekend:

CEOs take a brief break from the office on the weekend. Those we surveyed spend an average of 2.4 hours working on a Saturday and/or Sunday.

CONCLUSION

Unsurprisingly, today's CEO is busy. The demands on a CEO's time are mounting, which makes their family and personal time especially important.

Even after squeezing in a few hours of work over the weekend, respondents wished there were more hours in a workday. When tallying up the amount of time they spend on projects or activities each day, a CEO says he's busy far more than 24 hours every day, while remaining optimistic about what they can accomplish in that timeframe.

Today's CEOs need some of the most resilient and determined minds in the world. They need to be constantly running (well, sprinting) because every moment of their day is occupied. Competence and productivity is no obstacle for these CEOs, it's a lack of time.

In a 2014 Fortune article⁴, 40 execs gave their secrets to success. None of them said "time management"

or "stay busy," in fact, a majority of them said to do what you're passionate about, and you'll never work a day in your life.

"Do something you are passionate about, do something you love, (...) If you are doing something you are passionate about, you are just naturally going to succeed, and a lot of other things will happen that you don't need to worry about. There are so many opportunities and choices anyone can make about what they do. Do something you are passionate about. Life is too short."

- General Motors CEO Mary Barra⁴

Though ridiculously busy, the passion CEOs have for their companies and their work far outweighs the sleepless nights. From Mary Barra to Mark Zuckerberg, it's easy to see why the role of CEO is held by some of the most ambitious people our workforce has to offer.

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1. <http://ideas.time.com/2011/11/02/good-news-about-women-in-tech/>
2. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonkblog/wp/2014/06/18/the-average-american-gets-nearly-nine-hours-of-sleep-each-day-yes-you-read-that-right/>
3. <http://money.cnn.com/2015/04/15/technology/mark-zuckerberg-hours/>
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