

Question No 1 1. Make a précis of the following extracts:

The present-day industrial establishment is a great distance removed from that of the last century or even of twenty-five years ago. This improvement has been the result of a variety of forces-government standards and factory inspection: general technological and architectural advance by substituting machine power for heavy or repetitive manual, labor, the need to compete for a labor force: and union intervention to improve working conditions in addition to wages and hours.

However, except where the improvement contributed to increased productivity, the effort to make work more pleasant has had to support a large burden of proof. It was permissible to seek the elimination of hazardous, unsanitary, unhealthful, or otherwise objectionable conditions of work. The speed up might be resisted to a point. But the test was not what was agreeable but what was unhealthful or, at a minimum, excessively fatiguing. The trend toward increased leisure is not reprehensible, but we resist vigorously the notion that a man should work less hard on the job. Here older attitudes are involved. We are gravely suspicious of any tendency to expand less than the maximum effort, for as has long been a prime economic virtue.

In strict logic there is as much to be said for making work pleasant agreeable as for shortening hours. On the whole it is probably as important for a wage-earner to have pleasant working conditions as a pleasant home. To a degree, he can escape the latter but not the former—though no doubt the line between an agreeable tempo and what is flagrant feather-bedding is difficult to draw. Moreover it is a commonplace of the industrial scene that the dreariest and most burdensome tasks, requiring as they do a minimum of thought and skill frequently have the largest number of takers. The solution to this problem lies, as we shall see presently, in driving up the supply of crude manpower at the bottom of the ladder. Nonetheless the basic point remains, the case for more leisure is not stronger on purely primacy grounds than the case for making labor-time itself more agreeable. The test, it is worth repeating, is not the effect on productivity it is not seriously argued that the shorter work week increases productivity- that men produce more in fewer hours than they would in more. Rather it is wither fewer hours are always to be preferred to more but pleasant ones.

Balancing Productivity and comfort in workplace

Today's industrial setup is more advanced than it was a century ago. Due to different factors e.g. machines have replaced the manual labour force and certain government standards. This improvement has made the work more enjoyable with increasing yield. It was allowed to remove objectionable and fatiguing conditions of work. But in older perception this new trend should not reduce the efforts of labourers. It is logical for a labourer to make his workplace comfortable. To distinguish between agreeable work environment and inefficiency of labourers is difficult. The argument for ^{making workplace} more comfortable is weaker than making working time more enjoyable, with the key issue being the balance between productivity and comfort.

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