nature portfolio

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Reporting Summary

Nature Portfolio wishes to improve the reproducibility of the work that we publish. This form provides structure for consistency and transparency in reporting. For further information on Nature Portfolio policies, see our Editorial Policies and the Editorial Policy Checklist.

Statistics

For all statistical analyses, confirm that the following items are present in the figure legend, table legend, main text, or Methods section.

n/a	Confirmed	
☒	☐	The exact sample size (*n*) for each experimental group/condition, given as a discrete number and unit of measurement
☐	☒	A statement on whether measurements were taken from distinct samples or whether the same sample was measured repeatedly
☐	☒	The statistical test(s) used AND whether they are one- or two-sided *Only common tests should be described solely by name; describe more complex techniques in the Methods section.*
☐	☒	A description of all covariates tested
☐	☒	A description of any assumptions or corrections, such as tests of normality and adjustment for multiple comparisons
☐	☒	A full description of the statistical parameters including central tendency (e.g. means) or other basic estimates (e.g. regression coefficient) AND variation (e.g. standard deviation) or associated estimates of uncertainty (e.g. confidence intervals)
☐	☒	For null hypothesis testing, the test statistic (e.g. *F*, *t*, *r*) with confidence intervals, effect sizes, degrees of freedom and *P* value noted *Give P values as exact values whenever suitable.*
☒	☐	For Bayesian analysis, information on the choice of priors and Markov chain Monte Carlo settings
☐	☒	For hierarchical and complex designs, identification of the appropriate level for tests and full reporting of outcomes
☐	☒	Estimates of effect sizes (e.g. Cohen's *d*, Pearson's *r*), indicating how they were calculated

Our web collection on statistics for biologists contains articles on many of the points above.

Software and code

Policy information about availability of computer code

Data collection	The survey was programmed and administered through Qualtrics (https://www.qualtrics.com).
Data analysis	Data were analyzed using State SE 17.

For manuscripts utilizing custom algorithms or software that are central to the research but not yet described in published literature, software must be made available to editors and reviewers. We strongly encourage code deposition in a community repository (e.g. GitHub). See the Nature Portfolio guidelines for submitting code & software for further information.

Data

Policy information about availability of data

All manuscripts must include a data availability statement. This statement should provide the following information, where applicable:

- Accession codes, unique identifiers, or web links for publicly available datasets
- A description of any restrictions on data availability
- For clinical datasets or third party data, please ensure that the statement adheres to our policy

The data that support the findings of this study are currently restricted and not publicly available. Researchers interested in working with these data sets should contact the corresponding authors (W.F. and J.S) directly. We will make the data publicly available by 2027, and the data will be held in the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR).

Research involving human participants, their data, or biological material

Policy information about studies with human participants or human data. See also policy information about sex, gender (identity/presentation), and sexual orientation and race, ethnicity and racism.

Reporting on sex and gender	Respondents were not specifically sampled based on sex or gender. Respondents reported gender using response options of "male", "female," "non-binary," "not listed," and "prefer not to say." All of our analyses adjust for this self-reported variable. We have also conducted a supplementary analysis where gender is interacted with our key predictor to examine effect heterogeneity.
Reporting on race, ethnicity, or other socially relevant groupings	Respondents were not specifically sampled based on race, ethnicity, or other socially relevant groupings. Respondents reported race and ethnicity using country-specific response options. For example, the options provided to US respondents for their racial categories are: "white," "Black or African American," "American Indian and Alaska Native," "Asian," "Native Hawaiian other Pacific Islander," and "not listed above. Please specify." The categories are based on those used by the census in each country. Given the different racial and ethnic classifications across countries, we distinguish between white and non-white respondents. All of our analyses adjust for this variable. We have also conducted a supplementary analysis where race is interacted with our key predictor to examine effect heterogeneity.
Population characteristics	The characteristics of the sample are described in the Methods section of the paper.
Recruitment	Data used in the analysis come from employees who participated in four-day workweek trials or were part of the "control" companies. For trial companies, before the trial begins, company liaisons provide us with a list of email addresses and notify employees via email that a Qualtrics survey link will be sent, which they may complete during working hours. Employees were followed up at three, six, and twelve months after the start of the trials. The survey process is largely similar for the control companies, except they did not receive the midpoint survey, the twelve-month survey, or questions related to four-day workweek trials, and there is no mention of the trials in the cover letter. The control companies were recruited from those that attended information sessions organized by the NGO 4 Day Week Global (4DWG) but did not participate in the trial.
Ethics oversight	This research was approved by the Institutional Review Board at Boston College.

Note that full information on the approval of the study protocol must also be provided in the manuscript.

Field-specific reporting

Please select the one below that is the best fit for your research. If you are not sure, read the appropriate sections before making your selection.

☐ Life sciences ☒ Behavioural & social sciences ☐ Ecological, evolutionary & environmental sciences

For a reference copy of the document with all sections, see nature.com/documents/nr-reporting-summary-flat.pdf

Behavioural & social sciences study design

All studies must disclose on these points even when the disclosure is negative.

Study description	This is a quantitative panel study that examines the effect of a workplace intervention (four-day workweeks without pay reductions) by comparing employees in organisations that participated in four-day workweek trials with those in "control" companies (companies hat attended information sessions organised by 4DWG but did not participate in the trial).
Research sample	The data used in the analysis come from employees who participated in four-day workweek trials or those in the "control" companies. Given the aim of the research to identify the well-being effect of four-day workweeks, the sample is not intended to be representative of the general population.
Sampling strategy	This is a convenient sample, consisting of employees who participated in four-day workweek trials or were in "control" companies and completed both baseline and endpoint surveys. This group represents the most appropriate population suitable for addressing our research questions.
Data collection	For trial companies, before the trial begins, company liaisons provide us with a list of email addresses and notify employees via email that a Qualtrics survey link will be sent, which they may complete during working hours. Employees receive the survey link two weeks before the trial begins. At three months, they receive a second survey with a small subset of well-being measures and a time diary for their most recent off day. At six months, they receive an endpoint survey with all the baseline questions plus a short set of retrospective questions about the trial. At twelve months they receive a short survey with well-being and work experience questions. The survey process is largely similar for the control companies, except they did not receive the midpoint survey, the twelve-month survey, or questions related to four-day workweek trials, and there is no mention of the trials in the cover letter. All survey data were collected online using the Qualtrics platform.
Timing	The data collection period for each cohort is detailed in Table 1.
Data exclusions	Of 5,245 respondents who completed our baseline survey wave, we exclude respondents who did not complete the endpoint wave (n = 1,691) in order to assess changes in well-being over time. Note that 370 of the 1,691 respondents were not sent the endpoint

	survey, because they had either left the company during the follow-up period, gone on leave, or stopped participating in the trial (if in trial companies) for other reasons. We then exclude respondents with missing data on the variables included in the models (n = 373). The exclusion criteria were pre-established.
Non-participation	Among those we sent the baseline survey, 80% completed it (58% for control companies). Among the respondents who completed the baseline survey, 73% participated in the endpoint survey (59% for control companies).
Randomization	Respondents were not randomly allocated into experimental groups.

Reporting for specific materials, systems and methods

We require information from authors about some types of materials, experimental systems and methods used in many studies. Here, indicate whether each material, system or method listed is relevant to your study. If you are not sure if a list item applies to your research, read the appropriate section before selecting a response.

Materials & experimental systems

n/a	Involved in the study
☒	☐ Antibodies
☒	☐ Eukaryotic cell lines
☒	☐ Palaeontology and archaeology
☒	☐ Animals and other organisms
☒	☐ Clinical data
☒	☐ Dual use research of concern
☒	☐ Plants

Methods

n/a	Involved in the study
☒	☐ ChIP-seq
☒	☐ Flow cytometry
☒	☐ MRI-based neuroimaging

Plants

Seed stocks	*Report on the source of all seed stocks or other plant material used. If applicable, state the seed stock centre and catalogue number. If plant specimens were collected from the field, describe the collection location, date and sampling procedures.*
Novel plant genotypes	*Describe the methods by which all novel plant genotypes were produced. This includes those generated by transgenic approaches, gene editing, chemical/radiation-based mutagenesis and hybridization. For transgenic lines, describe the transformation method, the number of independent lines analyzed and the generation upon which experiments were performed. For gene-edited lines, describe the editor used, the endogenous sequence targeted for editing, the targeting guide RNA sequence (if applicable) and how the editor was applied.*
Authentication	*Describe any authentication procedures for each seed stock used or novel genotype generated. Describe any experiments used to assess the effect of a mutation and, where applicable, how potential secondary effects (e.g. second site T-DNA insertions, mosiacism, off-target gene editing) were examined.*