

# WORK WORDS



1

## Warm up

What's the most important thing for you about choosing a job? Put these items in order of importance, 1-5.

- having opportunities to learn and develop new skills \_\_\_\_
- helping other people \_\_\_\_
- making a lot of money \_\_\_\_
- staying in the job for a long time \_\_\_\_
- working a reasonable number of hours every day or week \_\_\_\_

What else is important to you?



## Vocabulary

Read the sentences and then match each item in bold with the meaning below. In each set, one item relates to types of workers; the other relates to types of work.

(A) I design book covers. I used to work for a big publisher, but a few years ago I became a **freelancer**. There are quite a few advantages to **self-employment**, but one thing I don't enjoy is billing my clients.

\* finding work for yourself instead of working for an employer, possibly having your own business: \_\_\_\_\_<sup>1</sup>

\* a person who sells their work or services to different companies: \_\_\_\_\_<sup>2</sup>

(B) I live in London and I'm a web developer. Actually, I'm an **agency worker** and I've just started a new job in Manchester! I'm lucky that they're happy to have me **working remotely**.

\* a person who has a contract with a hiring company who sends them to do work for other companies: \_\_\_\_\_<sup>1</sup>

\* a way of working where you don't have to be in the office all the time - it relies on using technology to keep in touch with the employer: \_\_\_\_\_<sup>2</sup>

(C) I'm a **digital nomad** so I can work anywhere and anytime I like. This week, my office is a balcony with a view of the beach in Portugal. I really love **working flexibly** like this – I was going to spend some time in Italy next month, but I have to go to a meeting back at the office in London.

\* a way of working which allows you to choose when and where you work: \_\_\_\_\_<sup>1</sup>

\* a person who can work anywhere in the world because they use technology to keep in touch with their employer; they can travel around to enjoy different locations or live more cheaply: \_\_\_\_\_<sup>2</sup>

(D) I'm **an apprentice** engineer at a factory that makes cardboard boxes. It's more interesting than it sounds, but it's **shift work** so I sometimes have to work all night.

\* a person who is learning new skills on the job and is also paid a small amount of money:

\_\_\_\_\_ <sup>1</sup>

\* a system where the workplace is always open, and workers have to come in at different times of the day and night: \_\_\_\_\_ <sup>2</sup>

(E) I've had a lot of different jobs in my time. Right now, I'm **working on a zero-hours contract** for a food delivery service. I've also been **a temporary employee** in a call centre.

\* a way of working which depends on how much work is available; the employer does not have to offer you a minimum number of hours: \_\_\_\_\_ <sup>1</sup>

\* a person who has arranged to work in a company for a short period of time: \_\_\_\_\_ <sup>2</sup>

(F) I've just graduated with a degree in fashion and now I'm **an intern** at a kids' clothing company. I like it here and I'm hoping this will lead to some **full-time work**.

\* a person who works in a company for a limited time to get the experience of a job, often without being paid: \_\_\_\_\_ <sup>1</sup>

\* a type of job that takes up all of a working week: \_\_\_\_\_ <sup>2</sup>

**Answer these questions.**

1. Sometimes we refer to *working remotely* as *WFH*. What do these letters stand for?
  2. What's the opposite of *full-time work*?
  3. What's the opposite of a *temporary employee*?
-

There are lots of reasons why people might not be working. Complete the sentences with these items.

a) parental leave  
e) retired

b) made redundant  
f) fired

c) on strike  
g) sick leave

d) unemployed

1. After more than 35 years' service, my uncle \_\_\_\_\_ from his job. He's seventy.
2. Henry was \_\_\_\_\_ because he insulted one of the company's most important clients.
3. I'm glad to get back to work after taking a few months \_\_\_\_\_, but I really miss the baby.
4. She's been \_\_\_\_\_ for a while, but she's applying for at least five jobs every week.
5. Some people have had to take extended \_\_\_\_\_ due to the effects of long covid.
6. The company had to cut costs, so they got rid of several people in the sales department. They were \_\_\_\_\_.
7. The sign says that the shop is closed because the workers are \_\_\_\_\_ for higher wages.

Answer these questions.

1. In British English *sacked* is a synonym for one of these terms – which one?
2. Sometimes *parental leave* is called *maternity leave* for women. What is it called for men?
3. In which of these situations are people still being paid?

### 3

## Listening

You are going to hear three people talk about their working life. The first time you listen, decide what type of job each person does.

Speaker 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Speaker 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Speaker 3: \_\_\_\_\_



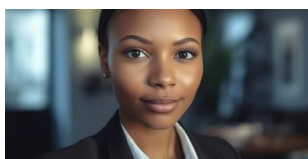
Read the text of the recordings and complete the gaps with words from the vocabulary you have studied in this lesson. Listen again to check your ideas.



1) Hi, my name is Rafferty and I enjoy my job mostly because it allows me to be very creative. I started out in the industry as an \_\_\_\_\_<sup>1</sup>, fresh out of fashion college. I wasn't happy at that company though, so I didn't stay long. I took up a **position** in the men's department with a much larger brand, and I've been lucky to find \_\_\_\_\_<sup>2</sup> work here – I'm now head of department and an industry advisor on recycling. One thing I'm very proud of is that I shared \_\_\_\_\_<sup>3</sup> with my partner when our twins were born seven years ago. Both of us work \_\_\_\_\_<sup>4</sup> these days, so we can manage taking them to school and picking them up without outside help. My advice to anyone who wants this type of **career** would be to keep changing companies until you find one that feels right.



2) Pleased to meet you – my name is June. I always knew I'd be the type of person who follows a **vocation** because helping people is very important to me. At school we had lots of advice about choosing an **occupation**, which was really helpful because it meant we knew the right subjects to study. I did a combination of science and social studies and then went on to train at a big teaching hospital. I'm single, so I often do \_\_\_\_\_<sup>1</sup> and that's pretty well paid, so I usually work \_\_\_\_\_<sup>2</sup>. These days, I'm actually an \_\_\_\_\_<sup>3</sup> but the job I'm doing right now is not very exciting – patients come to see me when they need a medical note to go on \_\_\_\_\_<sup>4</sup>. I might start looking for another **post** soon.



3) So, I'm Nancy and I work for a big firm that specializes in property sales. This is a **profession** I've always wanted to be part of – my parents both had the same job. It's quite interesting and very well paid. Once you become a senior partner, you can work any way you like. I've got colleagues who've bought houses in the south of France and now work \_\_\_\_\_<sup>1</sup>. In the next ten years I could either do the same and become a \_\_\_\_\_<sup>2</sup> or I could start my own company and see what \_\_\_\_\_<sup>3</sup> is like – maybe even both! It is quite long hours, so most people in this line of work look forward to when they're \_\_\_\_\_<sup>4</sup>, and they can slow down a bit

---

## Optional extension

There are lots of expressions with the word *work*. Match the phrases in bold with their meanings.

1. Have you tried this new hand cream? It'll **work wonders** on your skin - I promise you.
  2. He's **working towards** a score of 7.0 on the IELTS exam.
  3. I know it's a challenge but let's find a way to **work around** these issues.
  4. It takes time to become a manager - you have to **work your way up**.
  5. That's a very difficult task. Why don't you start with something easier and **work up to it**?
  6. The trainee you're going to work with is sweet but very inexperienced. You've really **got your work cut out** for you.
  7. We have a lot to do today, so let's **get down to work**.
  8. We have to **work out** how to attract more customers.
- 
- a. find a solution to a problem
  - b. have a difficult job to do
  - c. making progress on a long-term goal
  - d. have a very good effect, cause improvements
  - e. start doing something with a lot of energy and enthusiasm
  - f. do something successfully by avoiding or solving problems
  - g. spend time learning about a company so that you can get a better position
  - h. prepare to do something difficult by starting with something easier

Answer the following questions.

1. Which items are phrasal verbs?
  2. The other items are idioms. Do you have any similar expressions in your language?
-

# Transcripts

## 3. Listening

**Narrator:** - 1 -

**Rafferty:** Hi, my name is Rafferty and I enjoy my job mostly because it allows me to be very creative. I started out in the industry as an intern, fresh out of fashion college. I didn't like that company though, so I didn't stay long. I took up a position in the men's department with a much larger brand, and I've been lucky to find permanent work there – I'm now head of department and an advisor on recycling. One thing I'm very proud of is that I shared parental leave with my partner when our twins were born seven years ago. Both of us work flexibly these days, so we can manage taking them to school and picking them up without outside help. My advice to anyone who wants this type of career would be to keep changing companies until you find one that feels right.

**Narrator:** - 2 -

**June:** Pleased to meet you – my name is June. I always knew I'd be the type of person who follows a vocation because helping people is very important to me. At school we had lots of advice about choosing an occupation, which was really helpful because it meant we knew the right subjects to study. I did a combination of science and social studies and then went on to train at a big teaching hospital. I'm single, so I often do shift work and that's pretty well paid, so I usually work part-time. These days, I'm actually an agency worker but the job I'm doing right now is not very exciting – patients come to see me when they need a medical note to go on sick leave. I might start looking for another post soon.

**Narrator:** - 3 -

**Nancy:** So, I'm Nancy and I work for a big firm that specializes in property sales. This is a profession I've always wanted to be part of – my parents both had the same job. It's quite interesting and very well paid. Once you become a senior partner, you can work any way you like. I've got colleagues who've bought houses in the south of France and now work remotely. In the next ten years I could either do the same and become a digital nomad or I could start my own company and see what self-employment is like – maybe even both! It is quite long hours, so most people in this line of work look forward to when they're retired, and they can slow down a bit.