

# The French workplace: No labour of love

<https://www.france24.com/en/20200313-france-focus-the-french-workplace-no-labour-of-love>

**WARM-UP** What's your ideal work arrangement: the traditional office, the home office (telecommuting) or co-working spaces?

Which of the following characterise your workplace?

- high-pressure work environment
- less hierarchy, more autonomy and flexibility
- employees are free to choose their own salary
- the rat race

## VOCABULARY

**I COLLOCATIONS/IDIOMS** Match the words from A to those in B to make common collocations and idioms

### A

too good  
to run  
to develop  
to tick  
to change  
to break  
to gain  
to cut

### B

sales  
(all) the boxes  
corners  
traction  
to be true  
with tradition  
a business  
your ways

**II** Look again at the expressions you formed from the two columns and match them to their definitions:

- a) to improve the bad parts of your behaviour
- b) to improve your sales performance
- c) to do something in the easiest, cheapest, or fastest way
- d) to have the right qualities to be a good choice or solution
- e) so good that it is hard to believe, or seeming very good but not real
- f) when an idea, product, etc. is becoming popular or accepted
- g) to do something different from what is usually done
- h) to be in control of a firm

**III** Now choose 4 of the expressions you've just formed (A+B) to complete the sentences below.

1. Men working on the site complained of pressure to \_\_\_\_\_ to save time on the delayed project.
2. I think we should hire this candidate. She \_\_\_\_\_ - we couldn't ask for more.
3. I'm not surprised the offer wasn't genuine, it sounded \_\_\_\_\_.
4. If he wants to carry on living here, he's going to have to \_\_\_\_\_ and learn to be a bit less messy.

## LISTENING COMPREHENSION

**IV TRUE OR FALSE?** BEFORE watching the video, try to guess whether the statements below are true or false. Then watch the video and find out if you guessed correctly.

1. The average French office is a happy place.
2. As many as 12 000 psychiatric breakdowns per year are attributed to work-related issues in France (data from 2016).
3. As more and more French workers are affected by mental disorders, a growing number of companies have started to adjust their management style.
4. In general, French workers enjoy a good work-life balance.
5. French companies are forced to shift to a freer work model in order to be able to attract millennials.
6. Most young people today want to climb the career ladder and move into a managerial position at some point.

## MORE VOCAB

### V PHRASAL VERBS AND PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES

Use the prepositions from the table to complete the sentences from the video. What do you think the expressions in bold mean?

under	over	from	towards	between	from	off	up	of	on
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1. Our **balance** \_\_\_\_\_ **work and personal life** is really not good.
2. Every month, every week, we would **go** \_\_\_\_\_ **the sales figures**.
3. Last September Claude **was signed** \_\_\_\_\_ **work**.
4. After a period of depression, Nicole had to **give** \_\_\_\_\_ **her profession**.
5. All the executives being treated at the clinic **suffer** \_\_\_\_\_ **the same symptoms**.
6. On average, it takes about 15 months for patients at the clinic to **get back** \_\_\_\_\_ **their feet**.
7. The seat with the exercise bike is free so I'm going to **make the most** \_\_\_\_\_ **it**.
8. Tiime is a startup **striving** \_\_\_\_\_ near total freedom for its employees.
9. At Tiime you can choose where and when you work, you might **be** \_\_\_\_\_ **the weather** or have something else to do and you can also choose your salary.
10. Are the older generations benefiting \_\_\_\_\_ this reboot of work space and work practices?