# KEY THEMES **4-DAY WORK WEEK**

UNDERSTANDING WHAT PROBLEM YOU'RE TRYING TO SOLVE

- Let's take a step back: Understanding what problem it is that you are trying to solve by adopting a 4-day work week is critical. Is it more flexibility? Reduced costs? Better mental health and wellness? Environmental sustainability? Less burnout?
- Taking another step back: Is there another problem that's more important?
- There is added pressure in 'uncertain times' to crowdsource what others are doing to tackle the challenges of a tight labour market and scary headlines. Try to ignore it.
- What works for 'them' might not work for you or your team. Focus inwards instead.
- The conversation can be very nuanced depending on the industry/sector you work in.

IMAGINING & TESTING A 4-DAY WORK WEEK
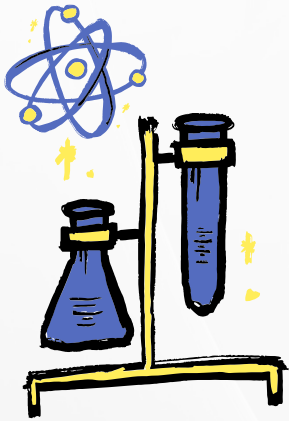
- What are your expectations? What would your team's expectations be? How will the work get done? Changing hours does not automatically change mindsets.
- Do you deeply understand the details of the work your team members do?
- Consider if work can be completed away from the office or at different times than other team members. Explore what's possible, test, and re-test.
- Not everyone wants reduced work hours, but some do. A mix of options is key.
- People are looking for choice. Personal and career agency are essential and can vary over time, within a given role, and as careers evolve.

STARTING WITH CULTURE
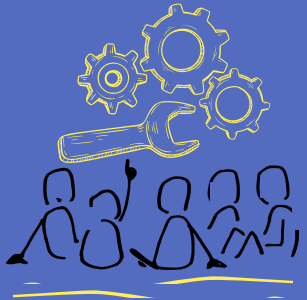
- What is your work culture? What do you want it to be?
- Moving to a shorter work week isn't just about changing how work gets done. It changes your work culture. What matters most are your values and your people.
- In a 2-year New Zealand pilot, 46% of participants reported feeling less fatigued while balancing work and home responsibilities. More case studies can be found here.
- While we have an opportunity to observe our partners and allies piloting these changes (e.g., New Zealand and the UK), their workplace cultures are different than Canadian norms. We can learn promising practices and avoid common mistakes, but geo-political and economic factors cannot be easily dismissed.

EXPLORING TRAPS, TROPES & AGENCY
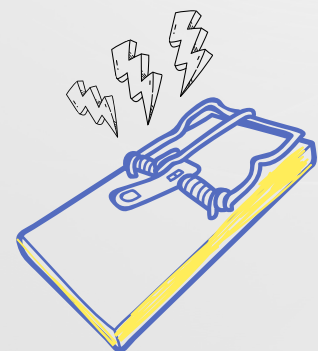
- "People don't want to work the way we used to work." Ask yourself: is this true? How do you know? Are we painting all workers with a broad brush of assumptions?
- Are people simply looking for agency, but we see it manifesting in the media as generational tropes and scary buzzwords like "quiet quitting"?
- Change is possible, but people are tired of constant change, including our leaders. It's no wonder they are risk-averse. Fears can be roadblocks or opportunities for curiosity.
- We can reduce risk aversion by knowing we can make adjustments as needed.

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RESOURCES 4-DAY WORK WEEK

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COFFEE & CAREERS

01 The Results are in: The UK's Four Day Week Pilot

02 Stop tiptoeing around setting expectations for in-person meetings

03 Hybrid? Remote? What jobseekers want is a clear workplace culture

04 Rural Ontario municipalities are adopting the 4-day work week

05 A Culture Blueprint that works
(Workforce Architecture subscription required)

06 Ted Talk by Juliet Schor: The case for a 4-day work week

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www.ChallengeFactory.ca