

PEOPLE OF THE NORTH WEST WASTE AN AVERAGE OF TWO TO THREE HOURS A DAY 'FAFFING'

- New research reveals the vast majority of people in the North West (84 per cent) admit to wasting time everyday
- Just under half estimate they 'faff around' for as much as 2-3 hours a day
- Clearing up after other people and waiting around for the kids and colleagues top the list of how people in the North West waste their time.

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New research into how the average person in the North West spends their time released today, by the Learning and Skills Council to celebrate Skills and Apprenticeships, reveals the huge amount of time, an average of 40 days a year*, which is wasted by people in the North West.

Today's research reveals that 84 per cent of people in the North West admit to wasting time, with just under half estimating that they faff for as much as 2-3 hours each day. The survey also shows that 74 per cent were annoyed at the amount of time they wasted in a day, with over three quarters (77 per cent) stating that they would like to make better use of their time.

The LSC's top ten time wasting activities in the North West include:

1. Clearing up after other people – 14%
2. Waiting for other people (children, colleagues, partners) – 14%
3. Gossiping – 13%
4. Queuing – 12%
5. Being kept on hold while on the phone – 11%
6. Traffic jams – 10%
7. Shopping for unessential bits and pieces – 9%

8. Waiting for public transport – 7%
9. Chasing up people on jobs – 5%
10. Waiting for the bathroom – 3%

Interestingly, when it came to identifying the main causes of wasted time, the results show that the two main reasons that respondents cited were clearing up after other people (14 per cent) and waiting for other people such as children and colleagues (14 per cent). Gossiping (13 per cent) and queuing (12 per cent) closely followed. Conversely, expected excuses like public transport, waiting for the bathroom and chasing up on people finished lower down in the LSC's top ten North West time-wasters.

When asked what they might do to put their time to better use, over half of respondents (57 per cent) said they would rather use the time they waste learning a new skill, with over two thirds of those surveyed (70 per cent) stating that they thought gaining a new skill or qualification could help them to further their careers.

Mark Forster, author and time management guru, says that not only is it essential for people to maximise their use of time but also manage their time better, all of which could benefit them in the long run. He says: "As a time management expert I am committed to making people understand the benefits of making the most of their own time. We live in a busy world. We're working harder and juggling more than we used to – and, clearly, the nation is also spending more time 'faffing' than they should!

"The only problem is that there's only ever a finite amount of time in the day. Of course, we've all been heard saying 'I just don't have time', but today's research from the Learning and Skills Council shows that we can all make the time if we manage ourselves more efficiently. It also goes to show that there is no excuse for the third of Brits who cite a lack of time as being the main barrier to them learning a new skill."

Chris Banks, Chairman of the LSC, says: "It's clear that people waste a lot of time, but it's also clear that people are willing to make better use of their time. If we all spent two and a

half hours a day learning something new, we'd all benefit hugely. Modern learning comes in all shapes and sizes, and with flexible courses on offer there is something out there for everyone. There are also various funding options available to help you get on your way. Learning a new skill can be a step in the right direction towards a career change, a foot up the career ladder or even a way to earn more money.”

He continues: “There is also a global aspect - two out of three jobs in the future will require a higher level of skills and better qualifications. Indeed, in less than ten years, there will be very few unskilled jobs, so why not be the first to safeguard your future by learning a new skill?”

The Learning and Skills Council has a wide variety of training and funding advice available for people who are interested in updating their skills or obtaining a new qualification. With so much support available, what's stopping you from updating your skills? To find out more about training and whether there are any funding options available for the course you've chosen, talk to your employer or visit lsc.gov.uk/inourhands

ENDS

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

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Notes to Editors:

Research

The research was conducted on behalf of the Learning and Skills Council by 72 Point, based on a survey of 1,658 people in the UK.

* An average of 2.65 hours a day are wasted according to today's survey

Learning and Skills Council:

The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for ensuring the availability of high-quality education and training for everyone. We have a single goal: to improve the skills of England's young people and adults to world class standards. Our vision is that young people and adults in England have knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. We work nationally, regionally and locally to deliver this ambition on behalf of learners and employers.

The LSC offers a host of support services to help those who are already in the workforce, or are about to enter the workforce, to gain the skills they need to succeed, secure their future or grow their income. For example, you could receive the Adult Learning Grant (ALG) for your decided course, a grant designed as a helping hand for adults thinking about learning but worried about the financial barriers standing in their way. ALG provides low income adult learners with up to £30 a week to help with the extra costs of learning. Since the grant became available, over 43,000 people have received ALG. You could also access training at work through the LSC's flagship programme for employers, Train to Gain.