Network Rail

Fatigue Reduction: Work-life Balance

Why should we consider the hours we work?

A lack of work-life balance can take its toll in many ways; it can cause a break down in family relationships, be bad for your mental and physical health and generally make it difficult to perform at your best.

What is recommended?

The ORR recommends 8 hrs of sleep and an hour either side for preparing for sleep and waking up and preparing for the day. This does not take into account quality time spent with the family and any other restful activities you might enjoy outside of work.

This time for rest is a very important aspect of managing your stress and alertness levels but it can be tempting to work through it.

The benefits of rest

- Your health and wellbeing will improve from additional rest
- You will be more productive because you don't do your best work when exhausted
- You'll be more likely to enjoy your work
- You'll have more 'you time'
- You'll stop missing out on important things outside of work
- You can start or have more time for that hobby you have always wanted to do
- Home relationships will be strengthened

Don't ignore the signs.

Tiredness, irritability, fractious home relationships, increased illnesses, stress, increasing list of jobs to do around the house, reduced job satisfaction, missing your children's achievements are all signs of work/life balance not being quite right.

Discuss with your family what their needs are: Are they happy with you at work all the time, are there things they would love to do as a family, are there particular jobs that need doing around the house?
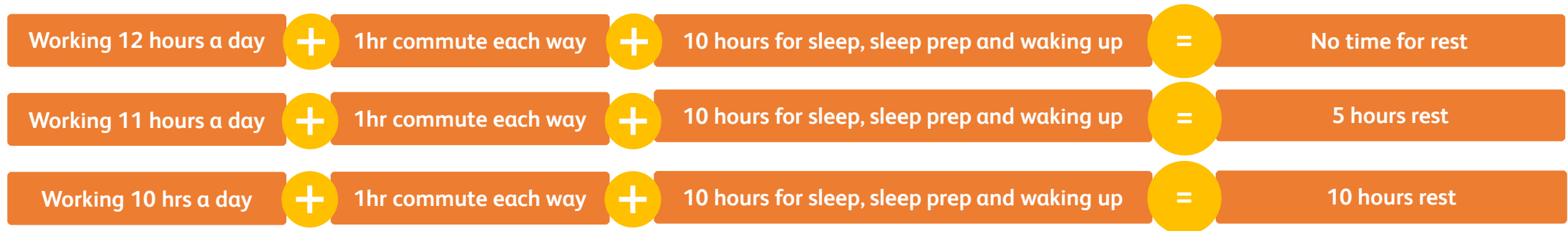
Ask yourself:

- Do I need to do these additional hours or can I reprioritise aspects of my work (or life style if the extra hours are financially driven)

- Have I gotten to the point where my commitments mean I cannot live without my overtime? Is this healthy for me?

- Is there a hobby I would like to take up but do not have the time to do?

NetworkRail

Fatigue Reduction: Work-life Balance

Protecting your rest time

If we take the ORRs recommendations of 10 hours for sleep and associated prep as sacred, then over the course of a 5 day working week:

Working 12 hours a day	+	1hr commute each way	+	10 hours for sleep, sleep prep and waking up	=	No time for rest
Working 11 hours a day	+	1hr commute each way	+	10 hours for sleep, sleep prep and waking up	=	5 hours rest
Working 10 hrs a day	+	1hr commute each way	+	10 hours for sleep, sleep prep and waking up	=	10 hours rest

Things to think about…

- What kind of response would you get from your family or friends if you asked them if they're happy with the time you spend working?
- How you currently rest and what time over the course of a week are you able to spend on yourself or with your family?
- Have you experienced any dis-benefits from working long hours? What have you done to improve your work life balance?
- How much rest time to you have each week? What actions will you take away from this?