



Finding Time: How Corporations, Individuals, and Families Can Benefit from New Work Practices (Collection on Technology and Work)

Leslie A. Perlow

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Why do Americans work so hard? Are the long hours spent at work really necessary to increase organizational productivity? Leslie A. Perlow documents the worklife of employees who assume that for their own success and the success of their organization they must put in extended hours on the job. Perlow doesn't buy it. She challenges the basic assumption that the more employees work, the better the corporation will do. For nine months, Perlow studied the work practices of a product development team of software engineers at a Fortune 500 corporation. She reports her findings in detailed stories about individual employees and in more analytic chapters. Perlow first describes the individual heroics necessary to succeed in the existing work culture. She then explains how the system of rewards perpetuates crises and continuous interruptions, while discouraging cooperation. Finally, she shows how the resulting work practices damage both organizational productivity and the quality of individuals' lives outside of work. Perlow initiated a collaborative effort to restructure the way team members worked. Managers who were involved credit the project for the rare and important on-time launch of the product the engineers were developing. In the end, *Finding Time* shows that it is possible to create new work practices that enable individuals to have more personal and family time while also improving the corporation's productivity.

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