



*Being the first is always
interesting, honorable, but
it is also a great responsibility.
(Marat Bissengaliyev, a musician)*

Dear colleagues!

I got interested in the idea of a working week with a three-day weekend after I checked Sir Richard Branson's blog, a person I admire and respect, a founder of Virgin Group and one of the richest British.

Sir Richard was not an original source of the idea; he just supported the proposal made by Google CEO Larry Page (by the way, one of the richest people in the world) who made a statement that became a clue to me, "We all need to work more efficiently not longer."

Personally, for all my walking life I have been striving for earning as much money as I need, and spending more time with my family, relatives, and friends, spending time on self-education and going in for sports. Fortunately, I managed to follow this way in spite of the fact that it was just my choice and my efforts only. Reduced working hours are a rare thing not only in Kazakhstan, but all over the world as well, and it is generally provided for creative jobs.

However, if we take a closer look at the job of a bank clerk, the same as at other jobs, then a working week reduced to four working days will not seem an excess to you. Especially, if the third day off work is used for self-education, advanced training, or just a psychological release.

We, bankers, bear huge responsibility, which often goes unnoticed, for our customers' funds. Though, we will have to cover it from our personal funds. Neural and mental load is sometimes over the top, especially when we wake up in the morning with a completely different KZT/USD exchange rate, and the customers cannot understand for a long time that the bank and we personally shall not compensate for their devaluation losses. Cash recounts and closing as well as making some urgent report under form # ... sometimes turn into an extraordinary event that cannot excuse our absence from a family celebration.

And taking all that into account, we not only have to smile at our dear customers, be careful and polite; we have to remember that we work for Bank RBK JSC, which, in my opinion, is the best bank in Kazakhstan by its service quality. That obliges us much.

That is why I got interested in the idea of a working week with a three-day weekend. That is where I saw a clue to improve the efficiency and quality of our business, especially those areas where employees are directly responsible for customer service, such as operating division and

cash payments as well as retail lending. They have a 4-day working week and the fifth working day is a so-called “creative” day. This is the first stage. We will further discuss and implement a plan to relieve workload of employees of other divisions of the bank, including the head office.

An unavoidable question arises, what is the price the bank will pay for a 32-hour working week? Keeping the same amount of salary and other payments to employees of the abovementioned divisions together with staff increase and staff recruitment to vacant jobs created will increase the administrative expenses. I will make my answer short – they are not expenses, they are human capital investment and contribution to further development of Bank RBK JSC.

The development strategy for the period 2015 to 2017 of Bank RBK JSC has recently been developed; it provides further growth of the bank, which is impossible without increasing workload for each employee, first, for the front office. Certainly, the solution for this scope of tasks is multidimensional; however, its central element is a 4-day working week.

What is the bank’s benefit from such innovation? A rested and efficient employee who is ready for work with a chance of spending more time not only with their family, but on their professional level. Besides, the expected transformation of the bank’s training center into RBK corporate university will help them as its program will be intended both for preparation of new team members and to methodic and psychological assistance for all operating employees.

What is the bank’s employee’s benefit from such innovation? More free time for the same salary. More time for themselves, for their family, for self-education, and for studying new things to provide a basis for further career development and personal income increase.

What is the social benefit from a 32-hour working week in our bank? More jobs and more people employed with a good salary. That is important with current situation in the financial system when due to mergers and optimizations specialists have to go to the labour market.

A human life is an absolute value, and quality of such life is one of the main criteria to assess the social development level. Besides, both leading scientists and famous business people are more and more often talking about necessity of this very approach. They also include in their understanding of a high quality of life such things as comfortable labour conditions that provide new horizons for creativity and self-fulfillment, quite a short workday or working week to enable a person to have enough free time.

I am really happy to realize that we use the best global practices in our work, and particularly, in human capital management. And in case with a 32-hour working week, Bank RBK JSC is the first in the world to do so as a representative of the private banking business. I am sure that it will provide success to our bank and to everybody of us!

**Faithfully yours,
Zhomart Yertayev**