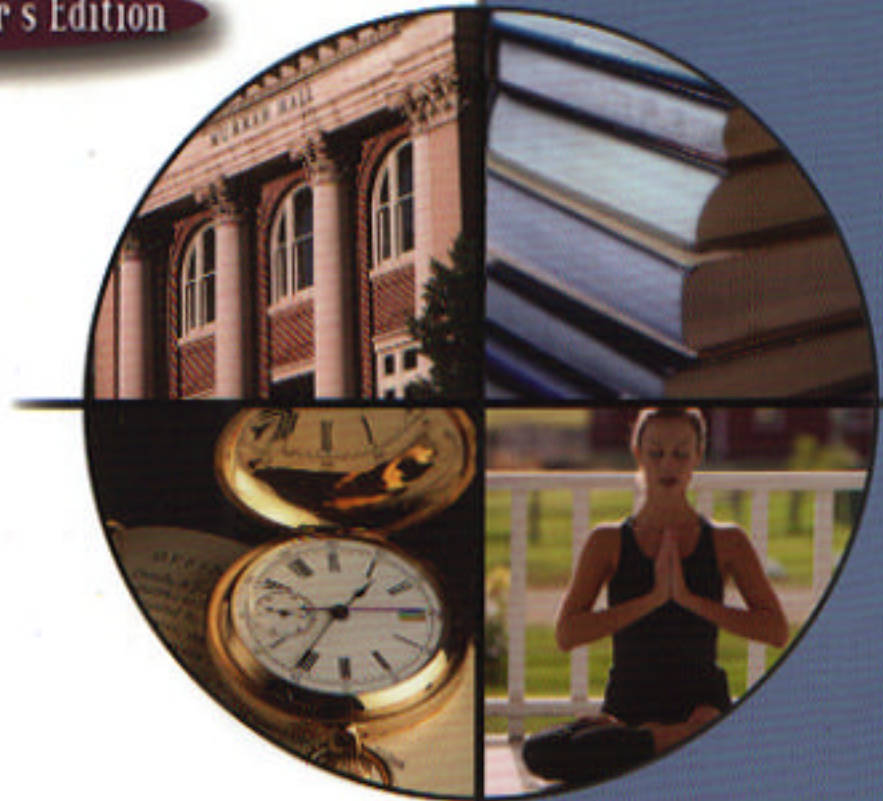


Annotated Instructor's Edition



# Efficient & Flexible Reading

SIXTH EDITION

Kathleen T.  
McWhorter

## BUSINESS

## READING SELECTION 24

**THE SANDMAN IS DEAD—LONG LIVE  
THE SLEEP DEPRIVED WALKING ZOMBIE**

Dorrit T. Walsh

From *www.hrplaza.com*

*What happens when you do not get enough sleep? Is your ability to work and function affected? This article describes how sleep deprivation affects on-the-job performance and suggests possible solutions to the problem.*

FAST FACTS SPOTLIGHT SITE PEOPLE ARE TALKING LINKS MEETINGS  
 HC RECRUITER NEWSFEED CAREER CENTER TOP MSA ASSOCIATIONS



HR Plaza

PEOPLE ARE TALKING ABOUT...

BERNARD HODES GROUP

- 1 Back in 1954, the Chordettes had a number one hit singing the praises of “Mr. Sandman,” but today he’s dead. It was a slow death; gradually, over a few decades, Americans killed him. Farewell sweet dreams and golden slumbers—we’ve entered into the age of waking up tired. Don’t assume it’s not you, either. Here’s a quick quiz: do you get less than eight hours of sleep a night? Fall asleep almost as soon as your head hits the pillow? Need an alarm clock to wake up? And sometimes that doesn’t even work? A “yes” to any of those questions means you’re probably one of the chronically sleep deprived.
- 2 Before I continue, let me clarify why an article on lack of sleep is on a business Web site. After all, not getting enough sleep is a personal problem, right? Wrong. While it is up to the individual to control his or her sleeping habits, unfortunately, for various reasons that I’ll discuss in this article, today more than 100 million Americans are sleep deprived. And this lack of sleep has a direct and substantial effect on American businesses. In 1990 the National Commission on Sleep Disorders put the direct costs of sleep loss at \$15.9 billion, and the indirect costs, such as higher stress and diminished productivity, clocked in at \$150 billion. One hundred and fifty billion dollars is way more than a “personal problem.”

**THE BASICS: WHY SLEEP IS IMPORTANT**

Before going into the facts about why Americans aren’t getting enough sleep, or the problems sleep deprivation causes, the first logical step is a brief explanation of exactly why sleep is so important to humans.

- 4 Contrary to popular belief, sleep isn't just a wasteful state of inertness. In fact, your brain when it's "sleeping" is often more active than when you're awake—neural activity drops by about only 10 percent when we're asleep. Sleeping consists of five cycles, one through four and REM sleep, so depending on how long you sleep at night you may experience anywhere from three to five cycles. The most significant stages are Stage 4, the deepest phase of sleep, and REM or Rapid Eye Movement Sleep. Stage 4 plays a major part in maintenance of our general health, including our natural immune system. REM sleep is when we dream, but more importantly, it's the key player in maintaining the various aspects of memory. It also has a lot to do with how we're able to learn new things and general mental performance.
- 5 Sleep restores and rejuvenates us, and affects everything from our creativity and communication skills to reaction times and energy levels.

### HOW MUCH SLEEP DO WE NEED? HOW MUCH ARE WE GETTING?

- 6 The simple answer to this question is: more than we're getting. According to Dr. James B. Maas, Cornell University professor and author of the book *Power Sleep*, the optimal amount of sleep we should be getting nightly is ten hours. Although ten hours of sleep per night may seem high by today's standards, it actually used to be the standard in this country. Before the invention of the electric light in 1879, most people slept ten hours per night. In fact, Einstein said that he could only function well if he had a full ten hours of sleep every night.
- 7 Since the late 1800s we've gradually cut back the time we sleep each night by a full 20 percent, to eight hours. However, even with a "standard" at two hours less than optimal, according to the National Sleep Foundation's "1998 Omnibus Sleep in America" poll, most Americans now average seven hours (actually only six hours and fifty-seven minutes) of sleep per night during the work week, or 30 percent less than the ideal. Nearly 32 percent only get six hours of sleep during the work week.
- 8 As far as why we're getting less sleep, there's no one single answer. Part of it's due to increased workloads (since 1977 Americans have added 158 hours annually to our working/commuting time), and then there's the stress that comes from the increased workloads. Or the fact that many people today, especially a number of "motivational speakers" downplay the need for sleep, so we don't want to be perceived as lazy. Or it could be what's on TV, or the book we just "have" to read, or the kids, or whatever.

### EFFECTS OF SLEEPLESSNESS

- 9 Because many adults have never gotten sufficient sleep, or have gotten so used to getting by on less sleep than they need, many of the effects often go unnoticed. They don't realize that if they got more sleep, they could be in a better mood, be more productive, more creative, and think more clearly.
- 10 However, there are far reaching, quantifiable consequences that result from not getting enough sleep. Some of the most significant are:
  - Thirty-one percent of all drivers say they've fallen asleep at the wheel at least once;
  - Accidents resulting from falling asleep at the wheel cost Americans more than \$30 billion each year;
  - The National Transportation Safety Board cited fatigue as the number one factor detrimentally affecting airline pilots;

- Shiftworkers are particularly affected by lack of sleep. Fifty-six percent of them say they fall asleep on the job at least once a week;
- According to *The Wall Street Journal*, \$70 billion is lost annually in productivity, health costs and accidents, a direct result of shiftworkers' not being able to adjust to late-night schedules;
- Forty percent of adults say that they're so sleepy during the day that it interferes with their daily activities, including work (remember, these are only the people who acknowledge or realize that their productivity is lessened).
  - Research done at Leicestershire, England's Sleep Research Center found that not getting enough sleep has noticeable negative affects on our ability to understand situations that change rapidly. They found sleep deprivation also made us more likely to be distracted, makes us think less flexibly, and hampers our ability to solve problems innovatively.
  - Studies at Loughborough University have shown a direct connection between our abilities to remember and concentrate, and sleep deprivation;
  - The U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has proven that there's a direct connection between hand-eye coordination (a necessity when you're driving) and lack of sleep.

And according to the National Sleep Foundation survey, an incredible one-third of American adults tested reached levels of sleepiness that are known to be dangerous.

## WHAT TO DO?

- 11 Again, there's no one simple answer to this question. Obviously people need more sleep. And one of the problems is that many people simply don't realize how important sleep is to us, or how serious the affects of sleep deprivation are. The National Sleep Foundation's "1998 Omnibus Sleep in America Poll" rated the sleep knowledge of 1,027 Americans, and it showed that Americans are generally ignorant when it comes to sleep and many sleep myths (e.g. that you need more sleep as you get older—you don't. Sleep needs remain the same throughout adulthood.).
- 12 Along with self education, employers could help both by providing the facts about sleep to employees and stressing how important an adequate amount of sleep is to everyday performance. Don't equate sleepiness with laziness; they're two totally different issues. Sleepy workers are more likely to cause accidents, make mistakes, and are more susceptible to heart attacks. Lazy workers, for whatever reason, just don't do their jobs.
- 13 One thing employers can do is give the okay to napping at work. This doesn't have to be the old kindergarten version with blankets on the floor; just closing the door and sitting in your chair with your eyes closed and trying to sleep for fifteen minutes will help to restore your energy. That's all you need, 15–30 minutes. Besides relieving stress, naps increase your ability to make important decisions and pay sufficient attention to details.
- 14 If you employ shift workers, realize that shift work simply isn't natural and humans can simply not adapt to just any work cycle. Also, get more information on recommendations (the National Sleep Foundation Web site and/or the book *Power Sleep* are good places to start) on how to help arrange shift working schedules to help your employees stay alert and healthy.

- 15 It's time that Americans, both as individuals and businesses, start to acknowledge the vital importance sleep plays in our everyday lives and in our society. Although he wrote in the 1600s, Miguel de Cervantes may have described the importance of sleep best in *Don Quixote de la Mancha*:

"Now blessings light on him that first invented this same sleep! It covers a man all over, thoughts and all, like a cloak; 'tis meat for the hungry, drink for the thirsty, heat for the cold, and cold for the hot . . . and the balance that sets the kind and the shepherd, the fool and the wise man even."

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*from Bartlett's Familiar Quotations*. Little, Brown and Company.

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**Bibliography:**

Hammon, Christopher A. "If You Don't Snooze, You Lose: Getting A Good Night's Sleep Is Critical to Productivity and Creativity." [The Quanta Dynamics Center for Sleep & Stress Web site](#).

Maas, Dr. James B. *Power Sleep*. Villard Books, 1998.

National Sleep Foundation. "1998 Omnibus Sleep in America Poll" and accompanying press release. [The National Sleep Foundation Web site](#).

National Sleep Foundation. "Sleepiness in America" survey press release. [The National Sleep Foundation Web site](#).

National Sleep Foundation. "Strategies for Shift Workers." [The National Sleep Foundation Web site](#).

People Are Talking About | Day After Day  
HR Plaza

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## EXAMINING READING SELECTION 24\*

### Checking Your Vocabulary

*Directions:* Complete each of the following items; refer to a dictionary if necessary.

- Discuss the connotative meanings of the word *sleep*. **Responses will vary.**
- Define each of the following words:
  - substantial (paragraph 2)  
considerable, important
  - diminished (paragraph 2)  
reduced
  - cited (paragraph 10)  
named, identified
  - hampers (paragraph 10)  
limits, restricts
  - acknowledge (paragraph 15)  
recognize, accept
- Define the word *clarify* (paragraph 2) and underline the word or phrase that provides a context clue for its meaning.  
definition: explain  
clues: "Before I continue . . .," ". . . why an article . . ."
- Define the word *optimal* (paragraph 6) and underline the word or phrase that provides a context clue for its meaning.  
definition: best, ideal  
clues: ". . . we should be getting"
- Determine the meanings of the following words by using word parts:
  - chronically (paragraph 1)  
continuing over time
  - productivity (paragraph 2)  
capability for producing goods or services
  - quantifiable (paragraph 10)  
measurable
  - detrimentally (paragraph 10)  
harmfully, for causing damage
  - innovatively (paragraph 10)  
creatively, in a new way

### Checking Your Comprehension

- State the author's thesis.  
Sleep deprivation is caused, in part, by increased workloads and seriously affects worker performance; employers must help employees address the problem.
- Name three effects of sleep deprivation.  
lessened productivity, lack of concentration, inability to solve problems innovatively
- What types of evidence does the author provide to support the thesis?  
statistics, results of research studies, results of surveys
- What can employers do to help employees who suffer sleep deprivation?  
educate employees; allow short naps; help shift workers find information on adjusting to shift work schedules

\*Multiple-choice questions are contained in Part 6 (page 612).

## Thinking Critically

1. What is the author's purpose?  
**The author's purpose is to describe how much sleep one needs, detail the effects of sleep deprivation, and examine possible solutions.**
2. Describe the tone and intended audience.  
**The tone is one of concern. The intended audience is employers, since the selection appears on a Human Resources (HR) Web site.**
3. What is the purpose of the Cervantes quotation that concludes the selection?  
**The quotation is intended to emphasize the benefits of sleep and to suggest the universal nature of sleep.**
4. What types of evidence does the author supply to support the thesis?  
**The author cites research studies, authorities, and surveys and supplies statistics to support the thesis.**

## Questions for Discussion Answers will vary.

1. Describe the effects you have experienced as a result of sleep deprivation.
2. The selection focuses on the effects of and solutions for sleep deprivation in the workplace. How do you think sleep deprivation affects academic performance? What solutions do you recommend for sleep deprived college students?
3. Visit the HR Plaza Web site and evaluate its reliability, content, accuracy, timeliness, and purpose.

Selection 24:	1269 words		
Finishing Time:	HR.	MIN.	SEC.
Starting Time:	HR.	MIN.	SEC.
Reading Time:		MIN.	SEC.
WPM Score:	_____		
Comprehension Score:	_____ %		



## Go Electronic

For additional readings, exercises, and Internet activities, visit this book's Web site at:

<http://www.ablongman.com/mcwhorter>

For even more activities, visit the Longman English pages at:

<http://www.ablongman.com/englishpages>

If you need a user name and password, please see your instructor.