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Vocabulary: timekeeping 词汇: 守时

What time do you start work? Do you prefer a **leisurely** start to the day, or are you an **early bird** who likes to get going **at the crack of dawn**?

At one computer programming company in the US you have no such choice. Work begins at the same oddly specific time every day: 9.06am.

In contrast to a more conventional 9am **kick-off**, employees in Pivotal Software's 20 offices around the globe have to be at work and ready to go precisely six minutes later.

At that time a cowbell is rung and employees gather for a brief stand-up meeting. After that it's **nose to the grindstone**, with no other meetings or distractions throughout the working day. They **steam on through** until 6pm **sharp**, at which point everybody **downs tools**.

So what's the reason behind this **quirky** timekeeping? Company CEO Rob Mee explains it's about making his team of computer programmers as efficient as possible.

"I realised that programmers, if **left to their own devices**, may **roll in** at 10am," he says.

"We thought that if we made it 9am, developers **psyching themselves up** for the day would think, 'well if it is 9am I'll be late.'"

He needed a little more **leeway**, but a starting time of 9.05am **on the nose** felt too rigidly precise – whereas 9.06am seemed "fun".

Mr Mee was also thinking of their stomachs. Lazier programmers who **turned up** around 10am would also often have missed breakfast. This meant they would be hungry by 11am and take an early lunch, leaving them with an **interminably** long working afternoon ahead. So he decided to provide breakfast as an extra incentive to get in to the office on time.

The company's approach to **punctuality** may seem **nerdy**, but Pivotal Software is in fact a highly successful company, valued at 20bn RMB. And Pivotal is not alone: Silicon Valley has long been associated with an alternative working culture. Google has '**nap pods**' and meditation classes, while Netflix offers a year's paid **parental leave**.

词汇表

leisurely	悠闲放松的
early bird	早到的人，早起的人
at the crack of dawn	破晓之时，一大早
kick-off	(活动) 开始
nose to the grindstone	长时间用功干活
steam (on) through	不间断、精神集中地工作
sharp	准时地
down tools	停止工作
quirky	独特的，奇特的
leave to one's own devices	任某人做自认为正确的事，听任自由
roll in	慢悠悠地来
psych yourself up	做好心理准备
leeway	富余的时间
on the nose	(时间) 分秒不差
turn up	到来，出现
interminably	没完没了地，冗长地
punctuality	守时
nerdy	呆板的
nap	(白天的) 小睡
parental leave	亲子假

测验与练习

1. 阅读课文并回答问题。

1. Why does Pivotal Software begin at 9.06am sharp?
2. What happens at 9.06am?
3. Why is Rob Mee concerned about employees missing breakfast?
4. Which word means 'normal', 'usual'?
5. True or false: American tech companies often have unusual benefits for employees.

2. 请你在不参考课文的情况下完成下列练习。选择一个意思合适的单词填入句子的空格处。

1. I need to _____ myself up before I give a presentation at work.

heat	tool	psychology	psyche
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2. You have such a _____ taste in fashion. I love your combination of pink shoes and dinner jacket.

conventional	quirky	leisurely	sharp
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3. We had no time for lunch today, we just had to _____.

roll in	steam on through	turn up	kick off
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4. You need to make the schedule a bit more flexible and create some _____ for delays.

leeway	punctuality	leave	gaps
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5. Martin downs tools at 6pm _____. He needs to catch a train at 6.12pm.

on his nose	sharply	sharp	on the grindstone
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答案

1. 阅读课文并回答问题。

1. Why does Pivotal Software begin at 9.06am sharp?

CEO Rob Mee believes that starting at this precise time helps employees be more efficient. Firstly, it ensures workers begin work at a good time, not too late in the morning. By choosing an unusual time the requirement seems fun rather than strict.

2. What happens at 9.06am?

At 9.06am a bell is rung and employees gather for a brief meeting, before starting work.

3. Why is Rob Mee concerned about employees missing breakfast?

Rob Mee is concerned that if workers don't eat breakfast, they'll have an early lunch and then have to face a very long afternoon of work.

4. Which word means 'normal', 'usual'?

Conventional

5. True or false: American tech companies often have unusual benefits for employees.

True. Google has nap pods and meditation classes, while Netflix offers a year's paid parental leave.

2. 请你在不参考课文的情况下完成下列练习。选择一个意思合适的单词填入句子的空格处。

1. I need to **psyche** myself up before I give a presentation at work.

2. You have such a **quirky** taste in fashion. I love your combination of pink shoes and dinner jacket.

3. We had no time for lunch today, we just had to **steam on through**.

4. You need to make the schedule a bit more flexible and create some **leeway** for delays.

5. Martin downs tools at 6pm **sharp**. He needs to catch a train at 6.12pm.