



ARAG



Summer Holidays - *Why Time Off Matters More Than You Think*

As summer begins, many of us are starting to look forward to time in the sunshine, chilled evenings and a chance to recharge. But for some, booking time off still feels like a luxury. Workloads, deadlines and a sense of obligation can make rest feel hard to prioritise – and with school holidays thrown into the mix, it can be even more stressful for working parents.

That said, annual leave is crucial for ensuring your physical and mental wellbeing. A proper break helps to maintain your motivation and gives your brain the reset it needs to work well. Encouraging a culture where time off is used and valued supports both individuals and teams in achieving sustainable performance.

Understanding the value of rest

A well-rested team is a resilient team – better equipped to collaborate, problem-solve and engage positively with each other. Yet, many people are reticent to go on holiday – worrying about how it might look to a new employer, guilt over burdening colleagues with their workload, or simple FOMO (Fear Of Missing Out).

Yet, these things couldn't be further from the truth. Working too long without a break is a sure-fire way to give yourself burnout – and the optics aren't true either – a recent study by the Harvard Business Review found that taking a vacation actually increases the likelihood of receiving a promotion or a raise! As such, workplaces that actively encourage rest and recovery see improved morale and stronger employee loyalty. When leave is supported at all levels of the business, it sends a clear message that wellbeing actually matters.





Planning time off effectively

For people working outdoors, it's even more important to make sure that you stay safe in the hot weather. Heat exhaustion and heatstroke can strike fast, and can be seriously dangerous. Make sure that you:

- **Book early** – Get your time off in the calendar and share your plans with your manager and team.
- **Leave a clear handover** – Make your workload easy to follow and note which tasks can wait until you return.
- **Set boundaries** – Set your out of office, and avoid checking work emails so you can fully rest. Delete work apps off your phone if you feel the temptation will be too much!
- **Encourage others** – Role-modelling good leave behaviour helps make time off a normal and positive part of team culture.

Time off doesn't have to involve big trips or expensive plans. A day trip to the beach or into the city, a long weekend with friends, or even a few tech-free days can have a huge impact.

Benefits of switching off properly

Here are some small ways to make a big difference:

- **Mental reset:** Even a few days away from your usual routine can improve mood, reduce your anxiety and lift energy levels.
- **Improved productivity:** Time off supports clearer thinking and sharper decision-making on return.
- **Better physical health:** Regular rest helps the body recover, lowering cortisol levels and making sure you're getting enough sleep.
- **Team development:** When one team member steps back, others gain opportunities to grow, support and learn.

Using your leave helps create a more balanced, flexible and confident team.

A healthy workplace supports rest

Making use of your annual leave is an active investment in your health, happiness and ability to thrive at work. This summer, take the opportunity to plan your next break.

Whether it's two weeks away or you're eyeing up a winter getaway, give yourself the time and space to relax, reflect and return re-energised. Your wellbeing is worth it.

