

**Lloyds Bank • Small Business Research Trust**

**Quarterly**

**Small**

**Business**

**Management**

**Report**

**No. 2 Vol. 4 1996**

**Lloyds Bank/Small Business Research Trust**

**Quarterly Small Business  
Management Report - Vol.4, No.2**

*June 1996*

ISSN 0968-6444

£17.50

***A Day In The Life  
Of The Small Businessman/woman***

**Small Business Research Trust,  
School of Management,  
The Open University,  
Walton Hall,  
Milton Keynes.  
MK7 6AA**

**Tel: 0190 865 5831**

## WEB VERSION: INTRODUCTION

The Lloyds Bank/TSB-sponsored series of small business management reports commenced in 1992, and concluded in 2009. In total, 53 reports were published over a period of 17 years.

Our target audience comprised the owner-managers of independent small businesses, typically employing fewer than 50, and based in mainland UK.

The series originated from a longitudinal study of small business management, undertaken by the Polytechnic of Central London (now University of Westminster), and culminating in: *The Management of Success in 'Growth Corridor' Small Firms*, (Stanworth, Purdy & Kirby, Small Business Research Trust, 1992).

## THEMES

The themes were wide-ranging – including such as entrepreneurship, work & stress, employment strategies, and the environment – a full list is shown overleaf.

## INSIGHT

In addition to asking questions and supplying the respondents with a range of answer options, the corresponding questionnaire was included as an appendix to each report so that readers would know exactly what questions had been put to respondents.

We also sought qualitative information – in the form of verbatim comments about the key theme – to help elaborate on whatever related challenges respondents felt they were facing at the time.

Finally, the findings are primarily intended to be indicative rather than definitive – partly due to the sample size, which is, on average, 111 for the 2003-09 reports.

## PUBLISHING FORMAT

The reports were published in hard copy form, obtainable via subscription. Initially

by the Small Business Research Trust, and from 2003, by the Small Enterprise Research Team (SERTeam), both research charities based at the Open University.

Regrettably, SERTeam ceased operating in 2009, and so in 2010 the authors felt that the more recent reports would find wider interest if they were made freely available in Acrobat format via the Internet – especially with the UK economy set for a protracted journey out of recession, and with the government in turn refocusing on smaller businesses to aid the recovery.

It is worth mentioning that the series commenced as the UK economy emerged from the early 1990s recession.

In 2015, the earlier reports were also converted (1993 to 2003), with the full series made available at Kingston University: <http://business.kingston.ac.uk/sbrc>

## SUPPORTING INFORMATION (WWW)

In later years – as the world-wide-web developed and an increasing number of sources of information became more readily available – suggestions for online sources of related material were included.

N.B. For reports 2003 onwards - where successfully validated, the web links (URLs) were enabled in 2009. And in the case of many invalid web links, an alternative was offered, but not where the organisation appeared defunct and an obvious replacement was not traced.

**John Stanworth, Emeritus Professor,  
University of Westminster**  
<http://www.westminster.ac.uk/schools/business>

**David Purdy, Visiting Fellow,  
Kingston University**  
<http://business.kingston.ac.uk/sbrc>

© co-authors John Stanworth & David Purdy 2015 (and Graham Bannock for reports 1-19, 1993-97). Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International  
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>

Lloyds Bank/TSB & SBRT  
Quarterly Small Business Management Report  
ISSN 0968-6444

1993 (Vol.1)

- 1 Surviving The Recession .....February 1993
- 2 Using Your Time .....June 1993
- 3 Management Style ..... September 1993
- 4 Financial Management .....December 1993

1994 (Vol.2)

- 1 Purchasing ..... March 1994
- 2 Quality Standards & BS 5750 .....June 1994
- 3 Management Succession.....August 1994
- 4 Customers & Competitors . November 1994

1995 (Vol.3)

- 1 Information Technology..... March 1995
- 2 Holidays.....June 1995
- 3 Company Vehicles.....August 1995
- 4 Pricing Policies..... November 1995

1996 (Vol.4)

- 1 Training ..... March 1996
- 2 A Day In The Life .....June 1996
- 3 Financial Management ..... September 1996
- 4 Tax Compliance .....December 1996

1997/8 (Vol.5)

- 1 'Europe' & Small Businesses ... March 1997
- 2 Employee Recruitment.....July 1997
- 3 Information Technology..... October 1997
- 4 Business Support Agencies.. January 1998

1998/9 (Vol.6)

- 1 Entrepreneurship..... May 1998
- 2 Work & Stress ..... September 1998
- 3 Employment Strategies.....December 1998
- 4 Small Firms & The Environment .. Mar 1999

1999/2000 (Vol.7)

- 1 The Impact of Holidays .....June 1999
- 2 Late Payment ..... September 1999
- 3 Management Development .December 1999
- 4 Exit Routes..... March 2000

2000/01 (Vol.8)

- 1 E-commerce .....June 2000
- 2 Sources of Finance ..... September 2000
- 3 Transport & Government ....December 2000
- 4 Government & Regulations .....April 2001

2001/02 (Vol.9)

- 1 Marketing & Sales.....July 2001
- 2 The Human Side of Enterprise ..... Oct 2001
- 3 Health Issues ..... January 2002
- 4 Premises.....April 2002

2002 (Vol.10)

- 1 Networking in Business .....August 2002
- 2 The Euro .....December 2002

Lloyds TSB & Research Team  
Small Business Management Report  
ISSN 1478-7679

- 3 Crime Against Small Firms ..... June 2003

Lloyds TSB & SERTeam  
Small Enterprise Research Report  
ISSN 1742-9773 No.2 (Vol.1) onwards

2003-04 (Vol.1)

- 1 Small Firms And Politics .....October 2003
- 2 Pensions ..... February 2004
- 3 Work-Life Balance..... July 2004

2004-05 (Vol.2)

- 1 Education & Enterprise .....October 2004
- 2 Made in Britain ..... February 2005
- 3 Management & Gender Differences..... July 2005

2006 (Vol.3)

- 1 Local or Global ?.....January 2006
- 2 Managing IT ..... May 2006
- 3 Networking in Business .... September 2006

2006-07 (Vol.4)

- 1 Owner-Manager Flexible Working..... December 2006
- 2 The Ageing Workforce..... April 2007
- 3 Travel & Transportation..... August 2007

2008-09 (Vol.5)

- 1 The London 2012 Olympic And Paralympic Games..... April 2008
- 2 Competition: Small Firms Under Pressure.....January 2009

## WEB VERSION PUBLISHING

<http://business.kingston.ac.uk/sbrc>

Certain content needed to be re-set, e.g., the figures in the earlier editions, but the report body content is intended to be identical to that in the printed original. This web version - an Acrobat document - is derived from the original DTP text and will permit searching.

## LIABILITY DISCLAIMER

The information and analysis in each report is offered in good faith. However, neither the publishers, the project sponsors, nor the authors, accept any liability for losses or damages which could arise for those who choose to act upon the information or analysis contained herein. Readers tracing web references are advised to ensure they are adequately protected against virus threats.

## HIGHLIGHTS

This is the fourteenth of a series of small business management reports based on surveys of a panel of small firms, mainly in manufacturing, retail/distribution and business services. The focus of this survey was on ***A Day In The Life*** of the small businessman/woman. The principal findings were as follows:

- **Most popular day of the week** - the most popular day of the week amongst our small business respondents was undoubtedly Friday, followed by Monday.
- **Least popular day of the week** - the least popular day of the week amongst our small business respondents was undoubtedly Monday, followed by Friday.
- **Variation in working pattern throughout the week** - respondents working in manufacturing were most likely to feel that 'most days of the week are pretty much the same'. Those from retailing & distribution were most likely to feel that this was not so and that certain days were, in fact, very different.
- **Working hours away from 'work'** - most respondents were unable to contain work to within the boundaries of the main work location. For practically two-thirds, it spilled over into life outside the main location. Manufacturing respondents were those most likely to be able to avoid spill-over whilst female and older male respondents were those least likely to do so. Very small businesses (0-4 employees) experienced very substantial spill-over.
- **Mid-day breaks** - only 12% of our sample enjoyed the luxury of a 'protected lunch break' and had to settle for a 'bite on the hoof'. Women appeared slightly less likely than men to enjoy the luxury of a protected lunch break. Respondents aged over 55, regardless of gender, were the most likely to take a protected break.
- **Exercise** - two out of every five of our respondents undertook 'serious exercise' either each day or, at the very least, each week. Female respondents were more likely than males to undertake serious exercise but also more likely to claim to find it 'impossible' to take exercise. 78% of respondents in the 25-34 year age group undertook serious exercise on at least a weekly basis, compared to fewer than one-in-three in the 45-64 age groups.
- **Daily planning** - the typical sequence of events in the average day for respondents involved starting with a plan but 'getting taken over by events'. This held across all groups.
- **Perception of time** - respondents were least aware of the time of day, or day of the week, when things were going well or, alternatively, they were working under pressure (in equal measure). For women and older respondents, pressure appeared most likely to trigger this effect whereas, for very small businesses, 'things going well' was the most likely trigger.
- **Small businesses and the opportunity for flexible working hours** - respondents were asked to respond to the statement: 'The nice thing about working for yourself is that you can play golf on Wednesday and then make up the time later when it suits you'. Two out of every three respondents claimed that this was possible either 'frequently' or (more commonly) 'sometimes'. Female and older male respondents were the most likely to see this kind of autonomy as just a 'pipe dream'.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Figure 1	- Structure/Pattern To Week: By Sector.....	8
Figure 2	- Structure/Pattern To Week: By Age.....	8
Figure 3	- Structure/Pattern To Week: By Gender.....	9
Figure 4	- Structure/Pattern To Week: By Employee Size.....	9
Figure 5	- Extent Of 'Working Day': By Sector.....	10
Figure 6	- Extent Of 'Working Day': By Age.....	10
Figure 7	- Extent Of 'Working Day': By Gender.....	11
Figure 8	- Extent Of 'Working Day': By Employee Size.....	11
Figure 9	- General Nature Of Lunch: By Sector.....	12
Figure 10	- Extent & Frequency Of Exercise: By Sector.....	12
Figure 11	- Extent & Frequency Of Exercise: By Gender.....	13
Figure 12	- Extent & Frequency Of Exercise: By Age.....	13
Figure 13	- Planned Daily Schedule: By Sector.....	14
Figure 14	- Reduced Awareness Of Time: By Sector.....	14
Figure 15	- Reduced Awareness Of Time: By Gender.....	15
Figure 16	- Reduced Awareness Of Time: By Age.....	15
Figure 17	- Reduced Awareness Of Time: By Employee Size.....	16
Figure 18	- Small Businesses & Working Flexibility: By Sector.....	16
Figure 19	- Small Businesses & Working Flexibility: By Gender.....	17
Figure 20	- Small Businesses & Working Flexibility: By Age.....	17
Figure 21	- Small Businesses & Working Flexibility: By Employee Size.....	18
<b>Addendum - Additional Information About Sample</b>	.....	<b>27</b>
Figure 22	- Industrial Sector: By Region.....	27
Figure 23	- Region: By Employee Size.....	28
Figure 24	- Industrial Sector: By Employee Size.....	28
Survey Questionnaire	.....	Appendix

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Small Business Research Trust wishes to thank all responding firms for their time and effort involved in participation in the production of this Management Report.

The Trust acknowledges the help provided by Graham Bannock & Partners Ltd, David Purdy, The Open University and The University of Westminster in designing the survey, processing data and analysing the results.

The Small Business Research Trust is particularly pleased to acknowledge the generous support provided by Lloyds Bank plc in sponsoring the research, analysis and presentation of this report. However, it is important to note that any opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of Lloyds Bank plc.



## MANAGEMENT ISSUES

The emphasis of our Quarterly Management Reports is on monitoring the key management problems and practices of smaller business, with an emphasis on survival and success. Accordingly, each issue of the Lloyds Bank/Small Business Research Trust Management Report addresses one or more highly topical small business management issues. In this survey we focus on ***A Day In The Life*** of the small businessman/woman.

Past surveys have covered:

### ***1993: Vol.1***

#### ***No.1 Surviving The Recession***

##### ***2 Using Your Time***

##### ***3 Management Style***

##### ***4 Financial Management***

### ***1994: Vol.2***

#### ***1 Purchasing***

#### ***2 Quality Standards & BS 5750***

#### ***3 Management Succession***

#### ***4 Customers & Competitors***

### ***1995: Vol.3***

#### ***1 Information Technology***

#### ***2 Holidays***

#### ***3 Company Vehicles***

#### ***4 Pricing Policies***

### ***1996: Vol.4***

#### ***1 Training***

It is planned to cover the following management issues in future:

- Financial Management
- Compliance/regulation

## THE SAMPLE

This report is based on responses received from a panel of some 350 small businesses situated in the Northern, Midland and Southern regions of Britain. Respondents are predominantly small firms with fewer than 50 employees, drawn mainly from the manufacturing, business services, and retail/distribution sectors of the economy. Over half of the participating firms employ fewer than 10 people and over one-third of the firms are less than 5 years old.

## RESULTS

The questionnaire completed by sample firms appears at the end of this report as an appendix. This survey was carried out during March and April 1996.

## **MOST AND LEAST FAVOURED DAYS OF THE WEEK**

Which days of the week do small business people like most and least? For most of the general population in society at large, Friday would probably be the most popular day of the week and Monday the least. However, conventional wisdom has it that the small businessman/women, running their own show, get high levels of job satisfaction (plus, of course stress) and may thus view things differently. So what happens in practice?

Some of the answers to our questions on this issue were perhaps not surprising though others were unexpected. For instance, the **most** favoured day of the week turned out to be Friday (exactly **half** of our respondents claimed this) whilst the **least** favoured day of the week was Monday (again claimed by almost exactly **half**).

What was perhaps rather more surprising here was that **Monday was the second most popular day, whilst Friday was the second most unpopular day.**

Typical comments concerning **Friday** being the **most** popular day were:

*"Friday because the weekend is looming - 2 days away from the pressure and stress."*

*"... it's the end of this week and I can now look forward to the next."*

*"... I may then get at least one day with my family."*

*"... because tomorrow is Saturday and I don't have to work. If I do, then it's by choice."*

*"... pressure begins to drop as customers are also winding down for the 2 day break."*

*"... I can lunch out of the office on Friday which is quiet a treat."*

*"... because I mostly manage not to work weekends now."*

*"... the afternoon is quiet as most clients shut down early. I can get on with jobs which need my full attention."*

Typical comments concerning **Monday** being the **least** popular day were:

*"Monday - its back to the grind. Running a small business is very much a grind."*

*"... often things that happen over the weekend to my customers need attention urgently on a Monday morning."*

*"... five days to go."*

*"... wondering what crisis the week will start off with."*

*"... after a day and a half of relative quiet, it's back to the slog."*

*"... getting motivated for a new week, knowing that the more motivated you get, the more pressure you'll be putting yourself under."*

*"... end of the weekend."*

*"... half of the week's post seems to arrive but none of the cheques."*

*"... things happen over the weekend which become urgent by Monday morning."*

*"... especially if I have not been working at the weekend."*

Typical comments (made by nearly 30% of respondents) concerning **Friday** being the **least** popular day were:

*"Friday - pay day - I just hope we have enough money to cover wages and any standing orders for that week. There have been times when*

*both of us have taken home £40 between us, because of late payers."*

*"... I am too aware of what should have been accomplished by then, but hasn't been."*

*"... everyone wants to unload their problems and wipe the slate clean by Friday teatime."*

*"... I leave a lot of administrative tasks until Friday but always run out of time trying to get everything done."*

*"... it is a 'no-go' day. Customers don't usually make decisions and it is difficult to motivate staff or outside suppliers of goods or services. Friday is probably the best day to be away from one's business."*

*"... you have to pay people."*

Typical comments (made by over 15% of respondents) concerning **Monday** being the **most** popular day were:

*"Monday - I look forward with optimism to what we will achieve in the coming week."*

*"... the office has been cleaned and the desks and works are clear for a new week."*

*"... you have a whole week ahead to achieve your plans."*

*"I like Mondays best - new week, new programme."*

*"... start of the week with plenty of time to get work done."*

In all, Mondays and Fridays counted for 66% of 'best days' and 76% of 'worst days'. For most respondents, their lives rotated very much around the Monday to Friday axis. Saturdays and Sundays were not very often mentioned though, but when they were, they were discussed in

the sense of providing a haven from pressure and stress. However, some experienced problems even with weekends:

*"Saturdays are a problem for me. I haven't yet unwound from worrying about things that went wrong during the last week whilst trying to focus on domestic matters."*

*"Saturday - I tend to consider it as a day off and then feel guilty if I don't work at home at some point during the day. I then feel I've neither 'worked' or 'played' enough."*

For some other respondents, the markers in their working week were governed by events rather than days. For instance:

*"I like days when we get good reviews in the press and lots of orders."*

*"All days tend to be the same. I enjoy all my time at work, but also enjoy time spent with my family."*

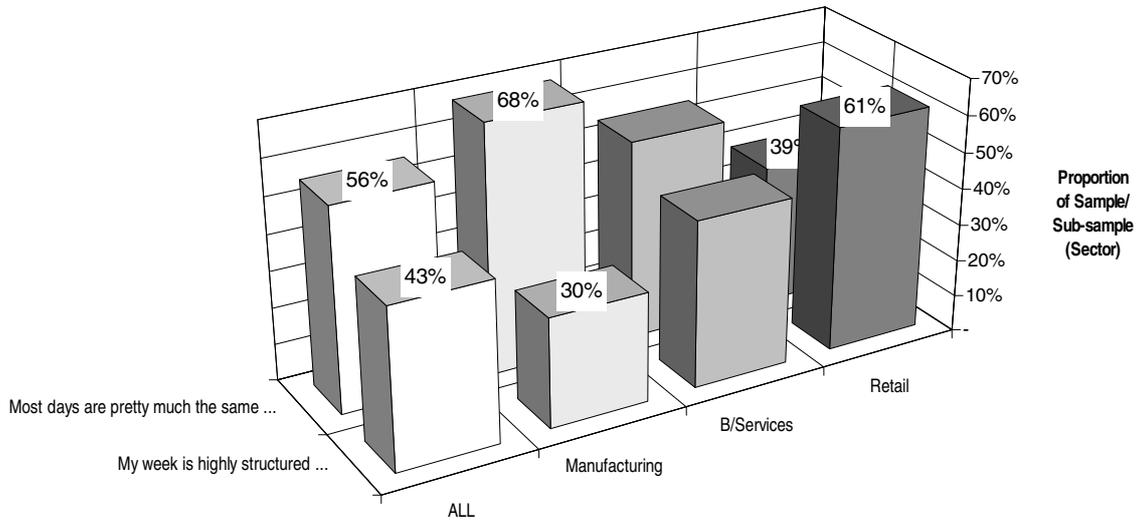
*"We always have good days and bad days. Bad days are usually the ones that don't go to plan."*

*"Any day when a substantial new job is confirmed."*

*"They are all the same - I generally enjoy what I do."*

*"I have no favourite days - each day presents a fresh challenge."*

**Fig 1 - STRUCTURE/PATTERN TO WEEK: BY SECTOR**



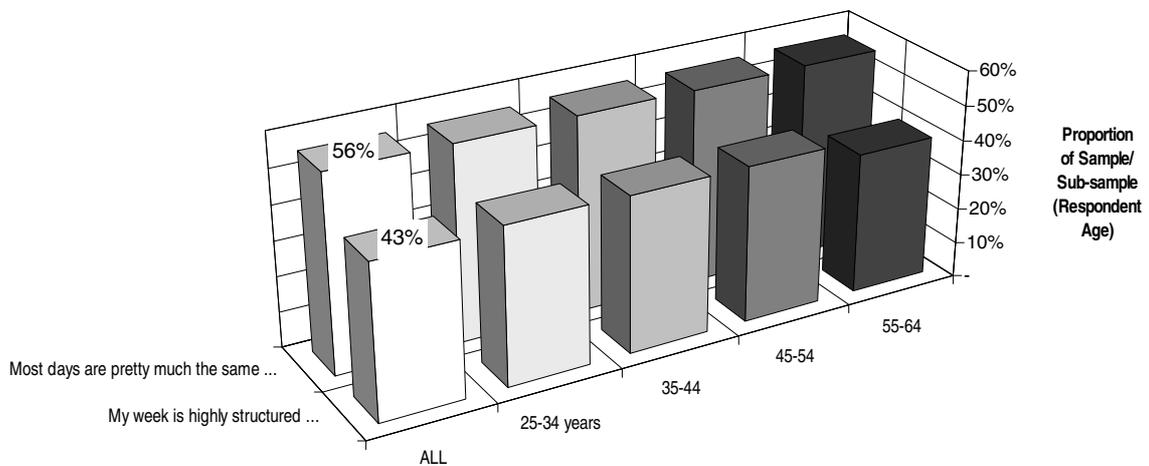
**STRUCTURE IN THE WEEK**

Respondents were asked whether their week was highly structured (tending to routinely do certain things on certain days) or whether most days were pretty similar.

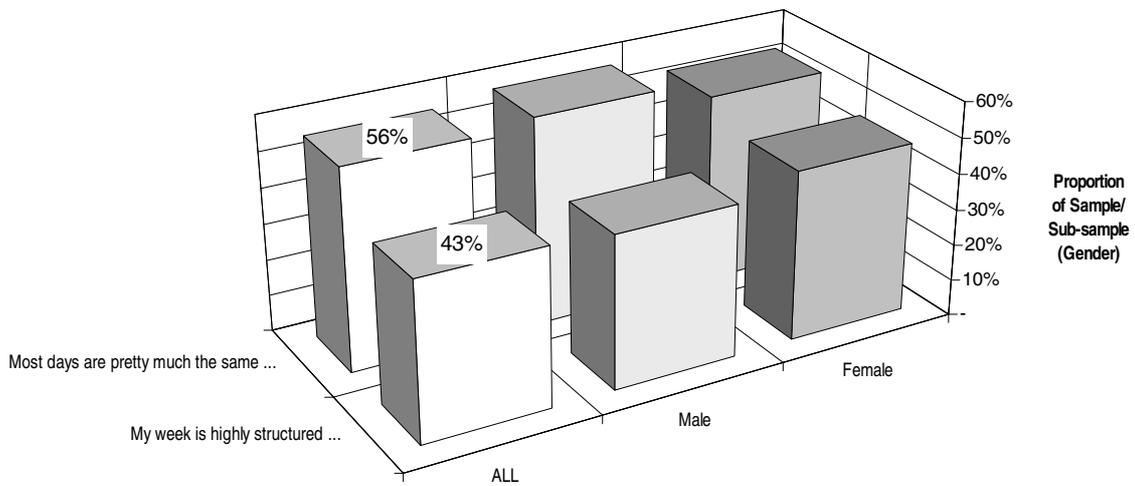
**Figure 1** shows that the differences between days was greatest in the field of retailing and distribution and least in manufacturing.

**Figures 2 and 3** demonstrate that differences here did not appear to be affected by either age or gender of respondent.

**Fig 2 - STRUCTURE/PATTERN TO WEEK: BY AGE**

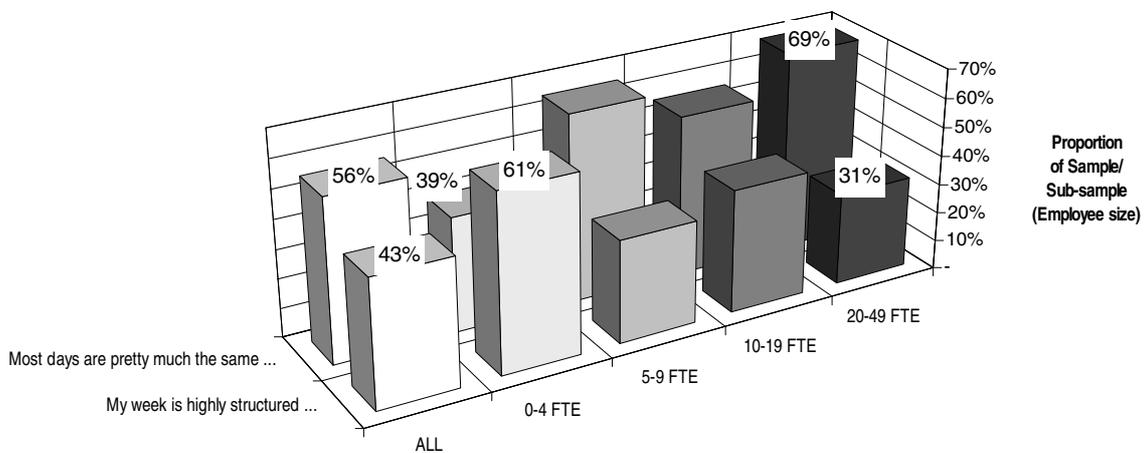


**Fig 3 - STRUCTURE/PATTERN TO WEEK: BY GENDER**

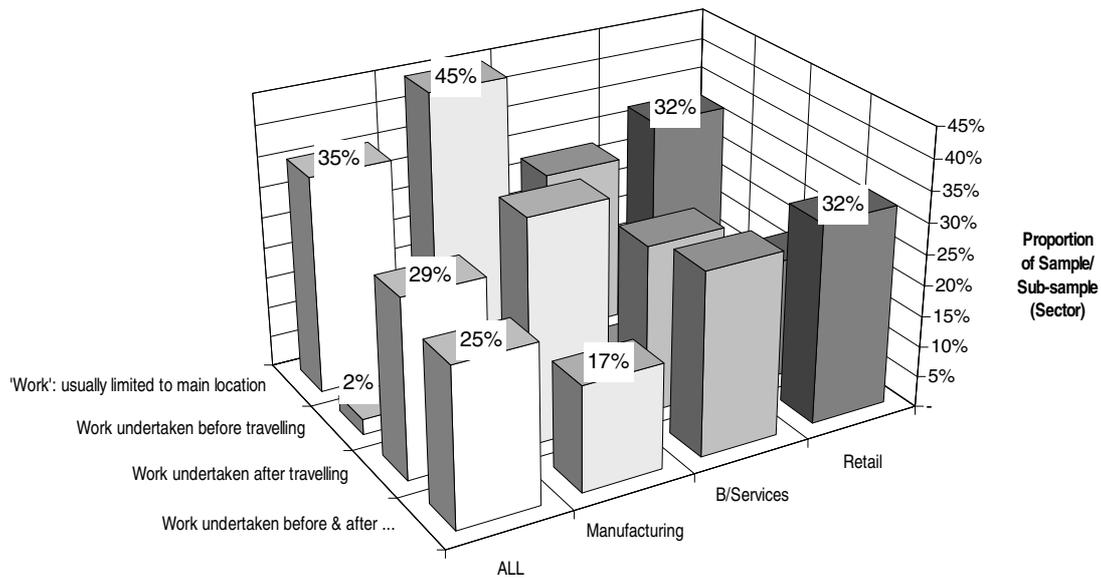


However, as **Figure 4** shows, it was quite plainly influenced by size of business with the smallest category of business (0-4 employees) being much less likely than any other size grouping to report most days as being the same.

**Fig 4 - STRUCTURE/PATTERN TO WEEK: BY EMPLOYEE SIZE**



**Fig 5 - EXTENT OF 'WORKING DAY': BY SECTOR**

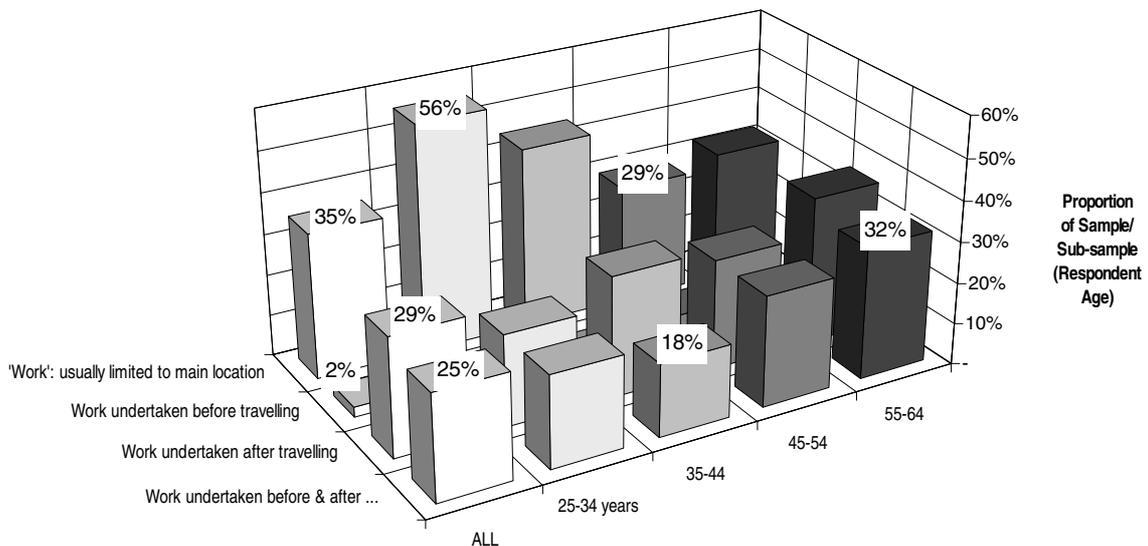


**TAKING WORK HOME**

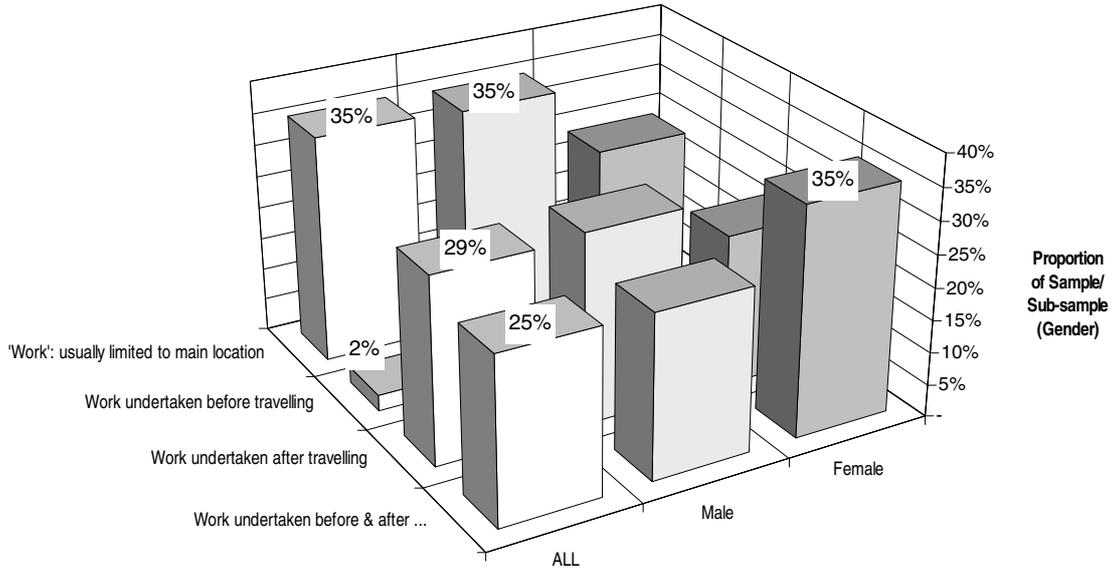
**Figure 5** shows that respondents from the manufacturing sector were the most likely amongst the sample to be able to contain their working lives to the place of work. However, as **Figure 5** shows, it was only a minority of even manufacturing respondents who were able to contain work to the principal workplace.

**Figures 6 and 7** show interesting differences on the variables of age and gender with older and female respondents looking decidedly more likely to see work eating into their lives away from the principal place of work.

**Fig 6 - EXTENT OF 'WORKING DAY': BY AGE**

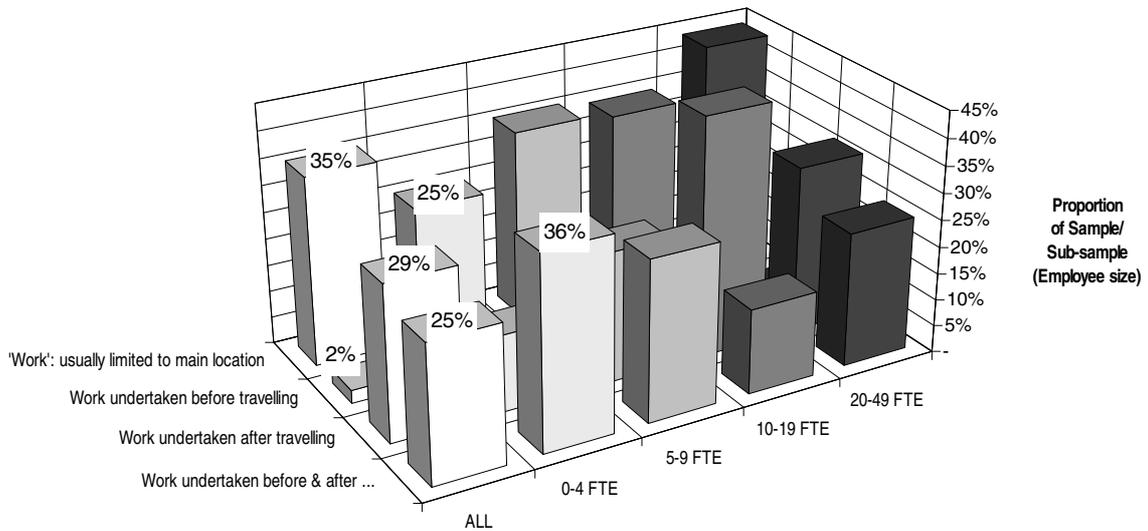


**Fig 7 - EXTENT OF 'WORKING DAY': BY GENDER**

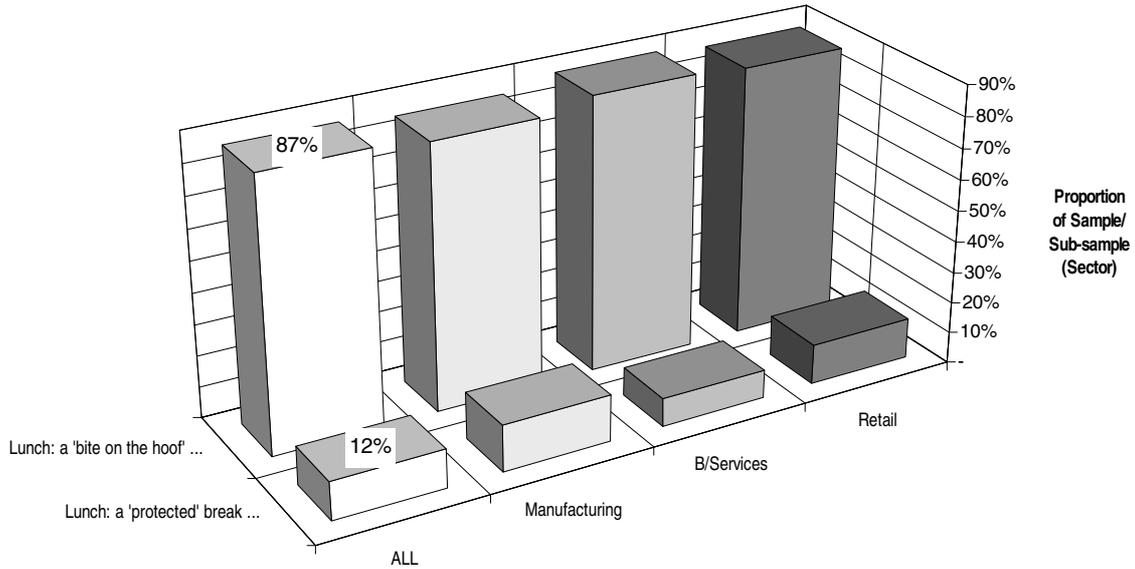


**Figure 8** shows respondents from the smaller businesses in our sample as being the least likely to be able to contain work to a single location.

**Fig 8 - EXTENT OF 'WORKING DAY': BY EMPLOYEE SIZE**



**Fig 9 - GENERAL NATURE OF LUNCH: BY SECTOR**



**TAKING LUNCH BREAKS**

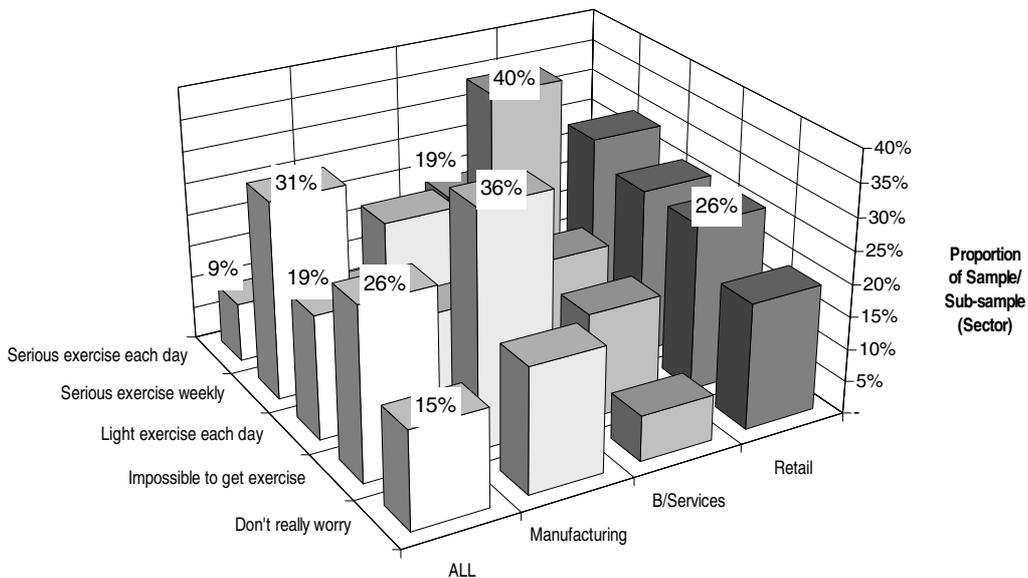
For some people, lunch means a 'protected break' whilst, for others, it means a 'bite on the hoof'. **Figure 9** shows that, for the vast majority of our respondents across all sectors, a protected break was a relative rarity enjoyed by just 12% of our sample. This rose to 15% in the case of male respondents and 24% of all respondents

in the 55-64 age group but was generally, amazingly consistent.

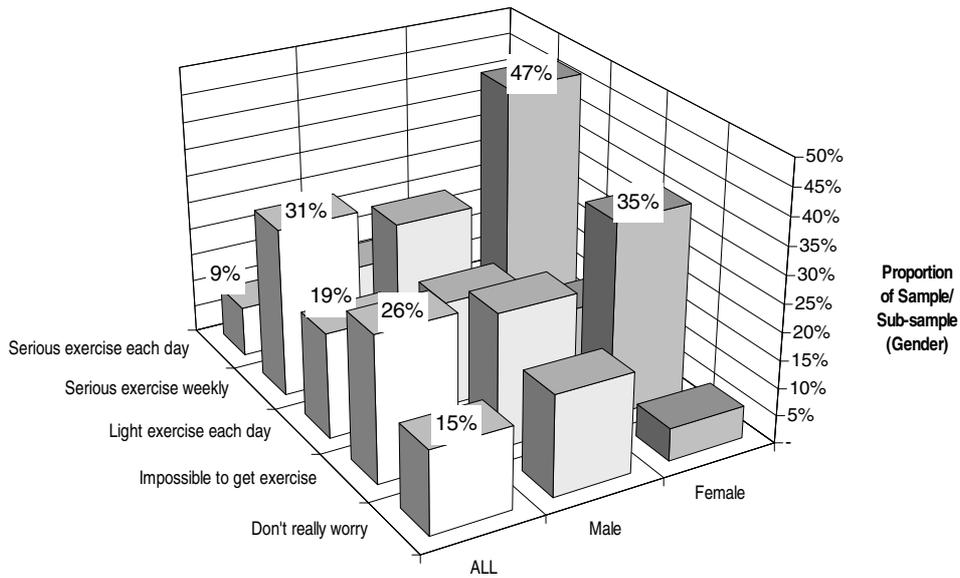
**SERIOUS EXERCISE**

Two out of every five respondents undertook 'serious exercise' either each day or, at the very least, each week (see **Figure 10**). Female respondents were more likely than males to undertake serious exercise but also more likely to

**Fig 10 - EXTENT & FREQUENCY OF EXERCISE: BY SECTOR**



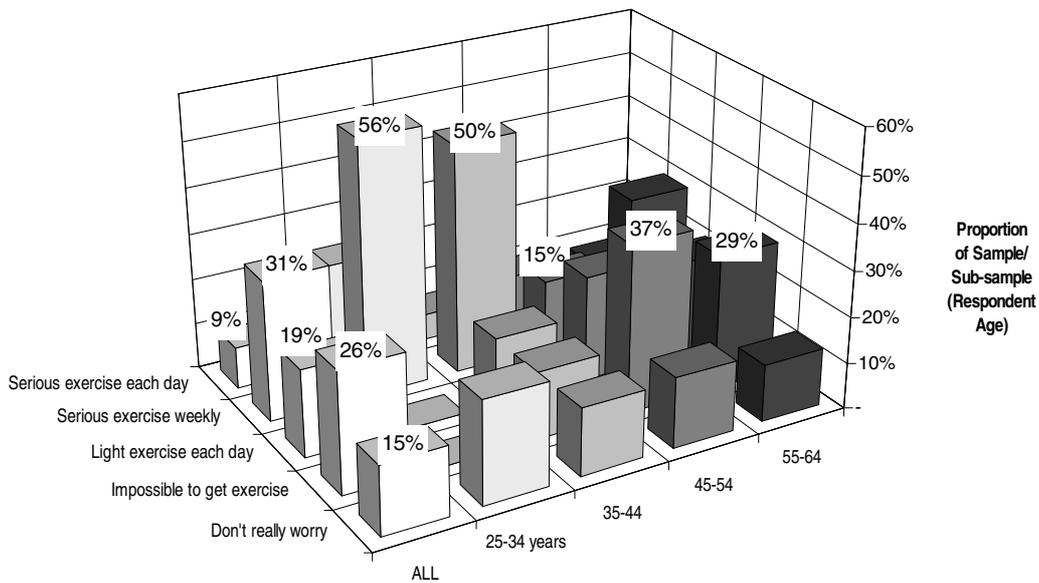
**Fig 11 - EXTENT & FREQUENCY OF EXERCISE: BY GENDER**



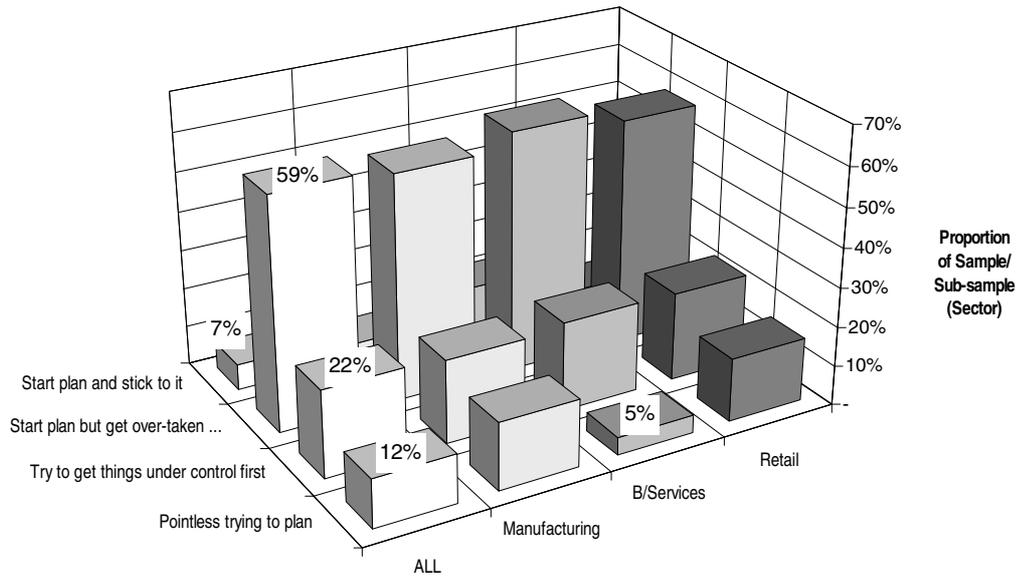
claim to find it 'impossible' to take exercise (**Figure 11**).

78% of respondents in the 25-34 year age group undertook serious exercise on at least a weekly basis, compared to fewer than one-in-three in the 45-64 age groups (**Figure 12**).

**Fig 12 - EXTENT & FREQUENCY OF EXERCISE: BY AGE**



**Fig 13 - PLANNED DAILY SCHEDULE: BY SECTOR**



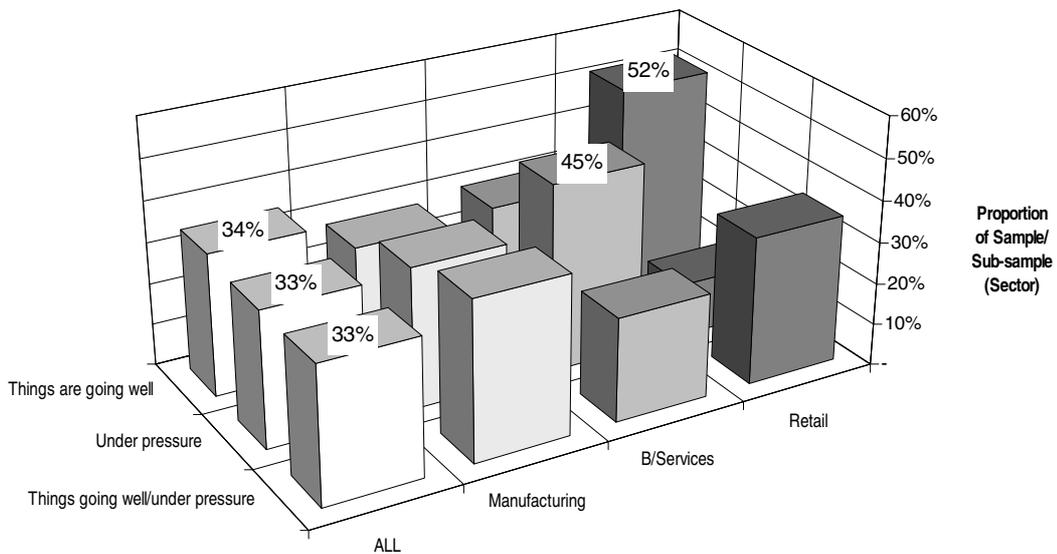
**STARTING THE DAY WITH A PLAN**

Figure 13 shows that the typical sequence of events in the average day for respondents involved starting with a plan but ‘getting taken over by events’. This held across the variables of age, gender and size.

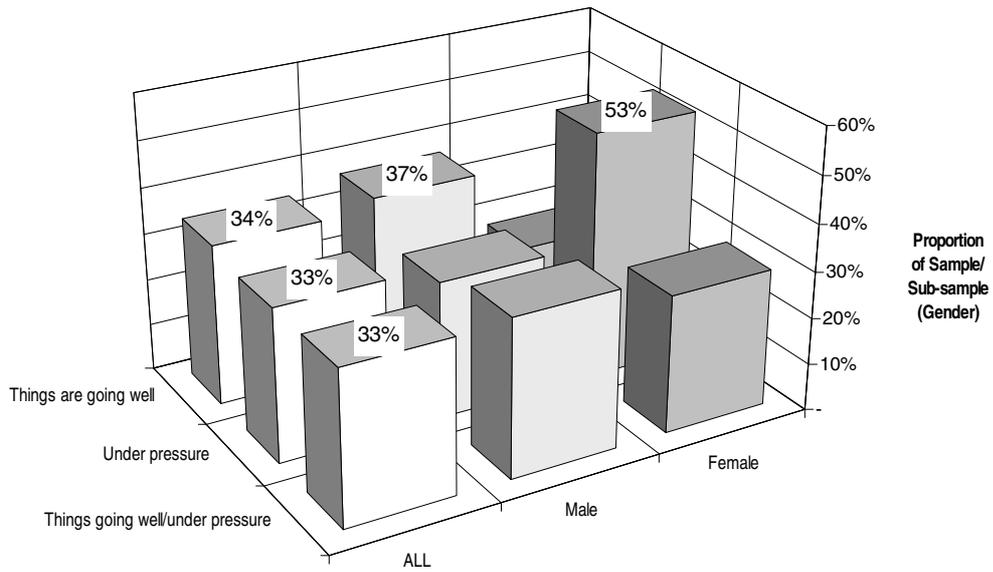
**LEAST AWARE OF TIME**

Respondents were asked when they were **least** aware of time - when ‘things were going well’, when they were ‘under pressure’ or, alternatively, whether both factors had the same effect. Figure 14 shows sector differences. Business Services respondents were least aware of time when they were under pressure compared with respondents from Retail &

**Fig 14 - REDUCED AWARENESS OF TIME: BY SECTOR**



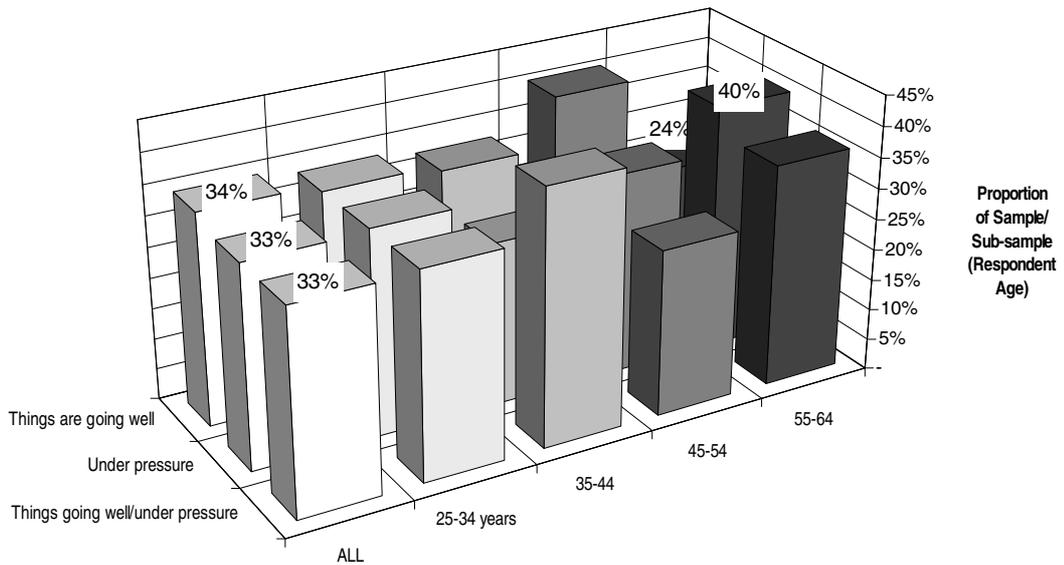
**Fig 15 - REDUCED AWARENESS OF TIME: BY GENDER**



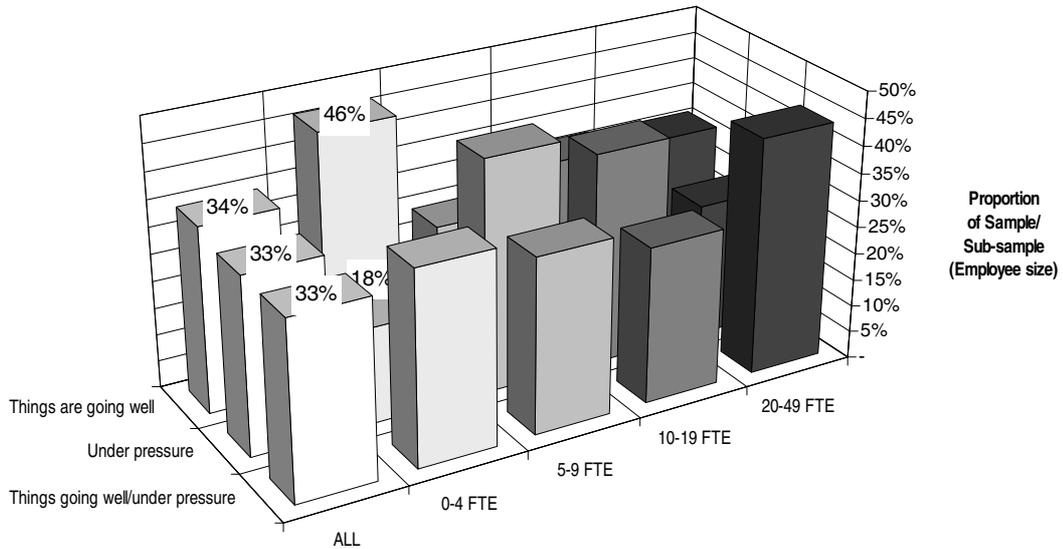
Distribution who were least aware of time when 'things were going well'. Manufacturers were fairly evenly spread on this issue.

Figures 15 and 16 show female and older respondents more likely to answer 'under pressure'.

**Fig 16 - REDUCED AWARENESS OF TIME: BY AGE**



**Fig 17 - REDUCED AWARENESS OF TIME: BY EMPLOYEE SIZE**



**Figure 17** quite clearly separates out the smallest businesses (0-4 employees) as being least aware of time when ‘things were going well’.

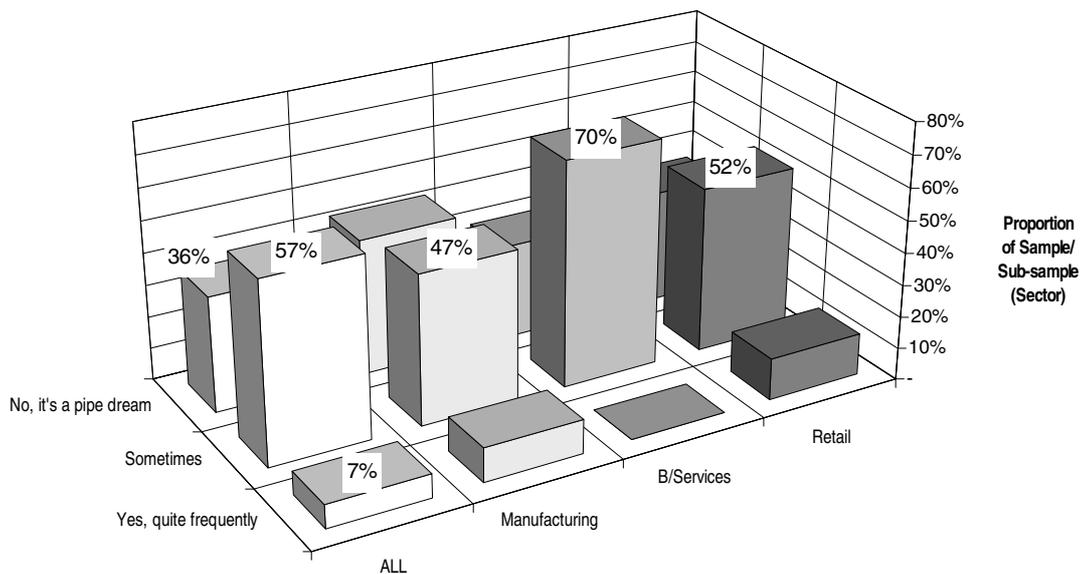
**PLAYING GOLF ON WEDNESDAY AFTERNOONS**

Although only one of our respondents claimed Wednesday to be their favourite day of the week on the grounds that he

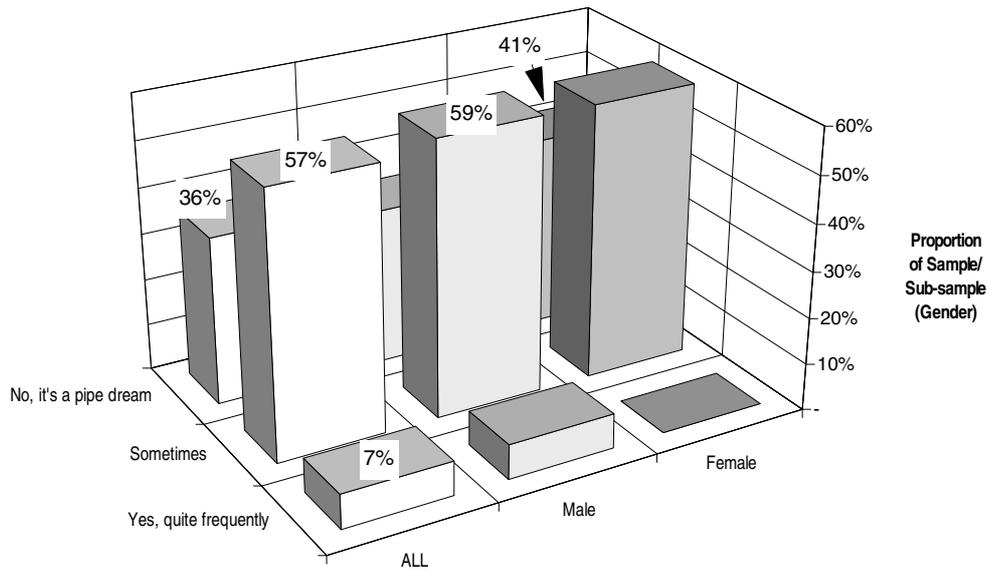
played golf in the afternoon whilst the course was quiet, **Figure 18** shows that this kind of freedom is not always just a ‘pipe-dream’. Nearly two-thirds of our sample said that they did take advantage of the flexibility in their work schedules to engage in such activities either ‘quite frequently’ (7%) or ‘sometimes’ (57%).

**Figure 19** shows that more women than men considered this kind of autonomy a

**Fig 18 - SMALL BUSINESSES & WORKING FLEXIBILITY: BY SECTOR**



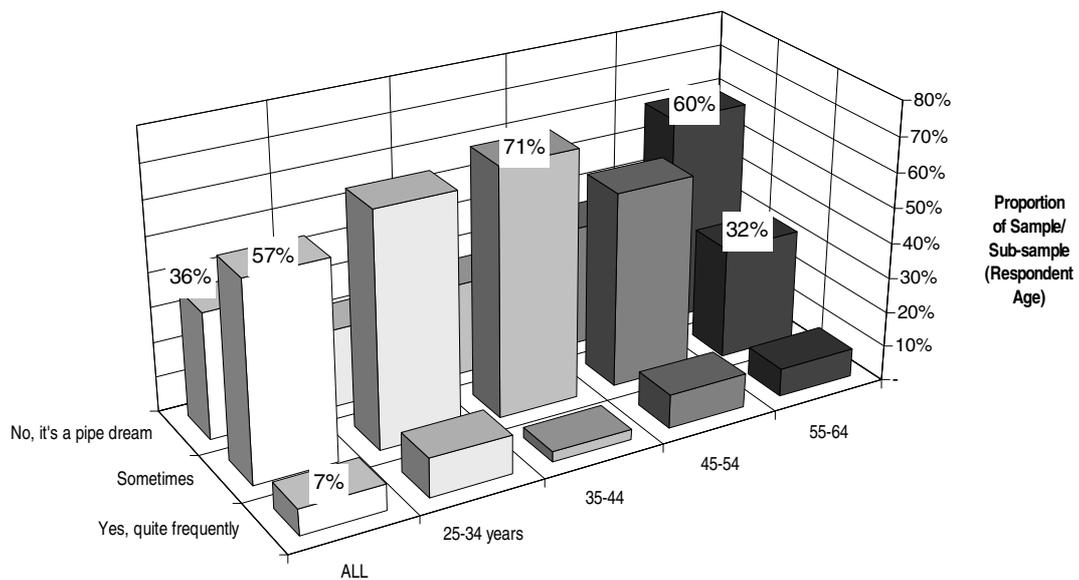
**Fig 19 - SMALL BUSINESSES & WORKING FLEXIBILITY: BY GENDER**



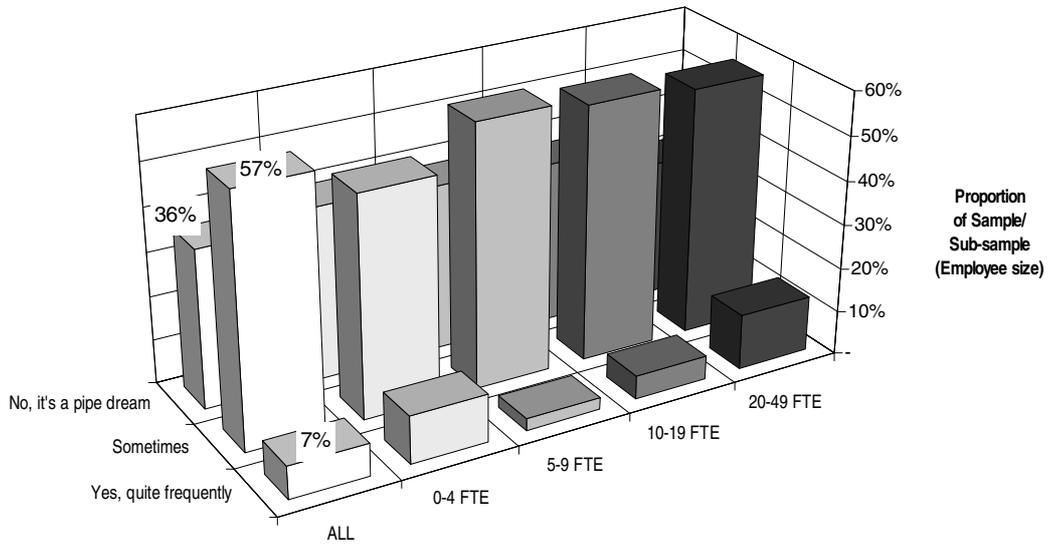
'pipe-dream'.

**Figure 20** shows that the big division on this question comes into play when we look at the age factor. Older respondents were noticeably less likely than their younger counterparts to feel that they enjoyed this kind of autonomy in their work.

**Fig 20 - SMALL BUSINESSES & WORKING FLEXIBILITY: BY AGE**



**Fig 21 - SMALL BUSINESSES & WORKING FLEXIBILITY: BY EMPLOYEE SIZE**



Finally, **Figure 21** shows no differences of any consequence when we look at the influence of firm size.

## MANUFACTURING

	<b>Most favoured day</b>	<b>Least favoured day</b>
Thread Rolling Dies		<i>"Friday - if our computer system goes wrong, it is nearly always a Friday."</i>
Lace & Sports Trim		<i>"Monday - I go golfing in the afternoon and find the morning not long enough."</i>
Maintenance and General Engineering		<i>"Monday - Is a mad and hectic day of sorting out jobs."</i>
Printing	<i>"All days tend to be the same. I enjoy all my time at work, but also enjoy my time spent with my family."</i>	
Plastic Fabrications	<i>"Dependent on work load - usually 7 days a week - so all days are the same."</i>	
Local Area Network Test and Analysis	<i>"Days when we get good reviews in the press and lots of orders !"</i>	<i>"Any day when we get technical problems with released products."</i>
Clothing Manufacturer	<i>"Friday."</i>	<i>"Wednesday."</i>
Staircase Manufacturer	<i>"Friday - I may then get at least one day with my family at the weekend."</i>	
Publishing	<i>"Friday - because we close for a much-needed weekend break - although we always take work home - accounts etc."</i>	<i>"Monday - 'back to the grind', for running a small business is very much a 'grind'."</i>
Colour Cosmetic Products Manufacturer and Retailer	<i>"Friday - review projects, banking update, relief that all has gone to plan."</i>	
Office Screen Systems	<i>"Friday - looking forward to the weekend."</i>	<i>"Monday - so much to do at the start of the week."</i>
Party/Carnival Goods	<i>"Friday - weekend looming. 2 days away from pressure/stress !"</i>	<i>"Monday - psychological awareness of 5 days of pressure/stress."</i>
Equipment Installation	<i>"Friday - as I look forward to the weekend for some rest."</i>	<i>"Monday - often things that happen over the weekend to my customers need attention urgently on a Monday morning."</i>
Metal Polishing and Decorative Nickel/Chrome Plating	<i>"Friday - 1) weekend is here, 2) phone calls lessen, 3) the good or bad results for the week are behind you, 4) normally a good day for work intake from customers."</i>	
Corporate Furniture	<i>"Friday - of course."</i>	<i>"Monday - [I] have to prepare statistics for the week just passed."</i>
Pipe Supports for Oil Refineries, Power Stations, Processing Plants etc.	<i>"Friday - because leisure time is only hours away and I can unwind."</i>	

## MANUFACTURING continued

	<b>Most favoured day</b>	<b>Least favoured day</b>
Joinery Manufacture, Windows, Doors etc.	<i>"Friday - it's the end of this week and I can now look forward to the next !"</i>	<i>"Wednesday - so close yet so far away from the weekend !"</i>
Special Purpose Machine Design & Manufacture	<i>"Friday - pressue starts to drop as customers are also winding down for the 2 or 1½ day break."</i>	
Cash Register Ribbons and Stationery	<i>"Friday - has to be Friday ! Because 2 days of comparative rest follows."</i>	
Manufacturing Broom Clamps and Holders, Yard Scrapers	<i>"Friday - because tomorrow is Saturday and I don't have to work - if I do, then it is by choice."</i>	<i>"Least favourite day of the month is the 18th when I write the cheque to the Inland Revenue for PAYE. I could waste the money just as well as the government !"</i>
Self-adhesive Label Printers	<i>"Friday - it is the end of the week."</i>	<i>"Friday - five days to go."</i>
Cleaning Chemicals for Household and Industrial Use	<i>"Monday - I look forward with optimism to what we will achieve in the coming week."</i>	<i>"Friday - I am too much aware of what should have been accomplished by then, but hasn't."</i>
Sheet Metalwork	<i>"Monday - office has been cleaned, and desks and works [are] clear for [a] new week."</i>	<i>"Friday - rush to get wages sorted, then most suppliers/ customers leave early."</i>
Manufacturing	<i>"None really - it's [a] worry from Monday to Friday hoping we cover ourselves and don't scrap a job or a machine doesn't breakdown."</i>	<i>"Friday - pay days - I just hope we have enough money in to cover wages and any standing orders for that week (there have been times when both of us have taken home £40 between us, because of late payers)."</i>
Mechanical Installation and Maintenance Service	<i>"No preference - most days are enjoyable."</i>	<i>"No preference - most days are enjoyable."</i>
Window Blinds	<i>"No set day that I most enjoy or detest but always have good days and bad days. Bad days are usually the ones that don't go to plan."</i>	<i>"No set day that I most enjoy or detest but always have good days and bad days. Bad days are usually the ones that don't go to plan."</i>
Electric Motor Repairs	<i>"No preference."</i>	
Heat Exchangers, Water Cooling Systems	<i>"No real difference."</i>	
Signwriting, Screenprinting, Computer Graphics	<i>"Saturday/Sunday - I can get on with paperwork without interruption."</i>	<i>"Monday - after a day and half of relative quiet it's then back to the slog."</i>
Print Finishers	<i>"Sunday - as I don't work and can enjoy the company of my family and friends."</i>	
Equipment Maintenance. Garage Equipment Supply and Maintenance	<i>"Sunday - I have a good part of the day to myself."</i>	

## MANUFACTURING continued

	<b>Most favoured day</b>	<b>Least favoured day</b>
Printing, Graphic Design, Copy Service	<i>"Saturday - weekend (part) break."</i>	<i>"Monday - what 'crisis' may the week start off with ?!"</i>
Computer Hardware and Software	<i>"Saturday - I can come into the office and do what I want to do without interruptions; this is invaluable for planning."</i>	
Manufacturers of Imitation Food Models	<i>"Sunday - Had a chance to relax and formulate a plan for next week."</i>	<i>"Saturday - Haven't yet got unwound and am worrying about things that went wrong during the last week while trying to focus on domestic matters."</i>
Products for the Building Industry	<i>"Sunday - usually spend away from business worries although involved with home/family matters instead."</i>	<i>"Thursday - involved with wages, PAYE and various other related matters which I tend to view as lost/wasted time (unpaid tax collectors)."</i>
Lace Manufacture	<i>"The best days are those when aspects of the forward business plan are achieved and proven valid and can relate to sales, production, or financial aims."</i>	
Repairs to Electric Motors	<i>"Thursday."</i>	<i>"Monday."</i>
Photographic Processing and Printing	<i>"Vary from week to week."</i>	<i>"Vary from week to week."</i>
Bar Fitting. Shopfitting. Joinery Manufacturing	<i>"Wednesday - I play golf in the afternoon to relax from pressure of work."</i>	
Publishing. Trade and Leisure magazines	<i>"When[ever] we have a big banking or a lot of invoices are sent out. Also the day we exceed [a] month's sales target !"</i>	<i>"Approach of the overdraft limit - often towards the end of the week for some reason."</i>
Fabrication, Welding, Machining, Special Purpose Machines	<i>"[The] Saturdays when all is well and I can enjoy a full weekend at home, [representing] 66% of [all] Saturdays."</i>	<i>"[The] Saturdays when I have come into work because 'the week' is behind schedule."</i>

## BUSINESS SERVICES

	<b>Most favoured day</b>	<b>Least favoured day</b>
Recruitment of Computer Staff		<i>"Monday - it is very quiet - phone-wise - but lots of paperwork. I need the phone buzzing for motivation."</i>
International Freight Forwarding Services		<i>"Possibly Friday - as all hell breaks loose with customers coming on at the last minute."</i>

## BUSINESS SERVICES continued

	<b>Most favoured day</b>	<b>Least favoured day</b>
Microfilming Bureau Service		<i>"Saturday - for 20-odd years at ... [a UK plc], I did not have to work on Saturday or Sundays. Now I do and have done since I started our small business (the Sunday is usual for paperwork, VAT entry etc.)."</i>
Investment & Pensions Advice		<i>"Monday - getting motivated for a new week knowing that the more motivated you get, the more pressure you know you'll put yourself under !"</i>
Farm Management Consultancy		<i>"Friday - everyone wants to unload their problems and wipe the slate clean by Friday teatime."</i>
Training Consultancy		<i>"Friday - I leave at lot of administrative tasks, paperwork etc. until Friday, but I always run out of time trying to get everything done."</i>
Telephone Marketing and Telephone Sales Company		<i>"Friday - it is the last full working day of the week and I always realise I have not accomplished everything I wanted to do at the start of the week. Biggest difficulty is prospects/client/suppliers NOT returning phone calls or NOT communicating."</i>
Thermal Insulation		<i>"Monday - everything seems to go wrong on a Monday."</i>
Architectural Design and Project Management	<i>"Any day when a substantial new job is confirmed."</i>	<i>"Any day when you think that it is going to go as planned and it turns out to provide far more questions than answers."</i>
Broadcast & Corporate TV Production & Provision of Technical Facilities	<i>"As my business is working seven days a week, my most favourite day is usually any day that I can spend some time with my family."</i>	<i>"I do not have a least favourite day. I enjoy them all particularly if they are busy."</i>
Design Consultancy - mainly Packaging	<i>"Don't really have this attitude."</i>	
Design Service	<i>"Does not apply as most days are OK."</i>	
Accountancy, Taxation, Bookkeeping	<i>"Friday - I have lunch out of the office on this day, therefore it's quite a treat."</i>	<i>"Tuesday - it used to be this day, as I always cleaned the office after work on Tuesday's."</i>
Freight Forwarder	<i>"Friday - end of the week and sometimes I am able to switch off."</i>	
Chartered Accountants	<i>"Friday - the start of the weekend."</i>	<i>"Monday - the end of the weekend."</i>

## BUSINESS SERVICES continued

	<b>Most favoured day</b>	<b>Least favoured day</b>
Insurance Brokers	<i>"Friday - a) [it's] prior to the weekend, b) I have afternoon off."</i>	
Management Training Courses	<i>"Friday - when we've had a good week."</i>	<i>"Friday - when we've not had such a good week."</i>
Audit Accountancy and Taxation	<i>"Friday - I can look forward to the weekend."</i>	<i>"Monday - one half of the week's post seems to arrive but no cheques."</i>
Conference/Event Organisers	<i>"Friday - [I] try to finish early."</i>	
Shipping and Freight Forwarding	<i>"Friday - enjoy book-keeping/banking etc."</i>	<i>"Thursday - [I] work in charge of operational department which is busy and stressful."</i>
Graphic Designers	<i>"Friday - weekend in sight !"</i>	<i>"Wednesday - I'm usually getting behind with my urgent tasks by mid-week."</i>
Carpet & Upholstery Cleaning	<i>"Friday - If I can get away on time for a well-earned weekend."</i>	<i>"Monday - Things happen over the weekend which become urgent by Monday morning."</i>
Management Development Courses/Consultancy	<i>"Friday - usually no pressure in terms of organised activities and no work on Saturday !"</i>	<i>"Tuesday/Wednesday - usually busiest day and more to come."</i>
Quality of Service Measurement/Orientation Training	<i>"Friday - because I mostly manage not to work weekends now."</i>	<i>"Monday - 'it all starts again.'"</i>
Public Relations	<i>"Friday - an opportunity to escape the increasing pressures and recharge batteries."</i>	<i>"Monday - difficult to get up to speed I need to operate at to be effective."</i>
Plumbing & Heating Services	<i>"Going home on a Friday, if the week has gone well and I haven't got to work the weekend."</i>	<i>"Working Saturday and Sunday till late does not go down too well at home. Wife and 3 young children ages 8, 6 and 4."</i>
Executive Search Recruitment and Provision of Temporary Managers	<i>"Monday - [the] start of another week [is] another opportunity."</i>	<i>"Friday pm - always seems too busy."</i>
Secretarial Recruitment	<i>"Monday - because it's a fresh start to the week and it tends to be rather busier than the rest of the week which is good. I also like Wednesdays because I'll quite often take the morning off to play tennis (it's taken me 10 years to get to this stage of making time for myself and I have to admit I still feel guilty about it)."</i>	
Chartered Accountants	<i>"Monday - have whole week ahead to achieve plans."</i>	
Architect	<i>"Monday - with a clear week ahead."</i>	<i>"Thursday - [people] ring tomorrow to get the week's work done."</i>

## BUSINESS SERVICES continued

	<b>Most favoured day</b>	<b>Least favoured day</b>
Consultancy	<i>"Neither [a least nor most favourite day] - my week is a continuum if pressed."</i>	<i>"Monday - if I have not been working at the weekend."</i>
Chartered Accountancy Practice. Audit, Accountancy, Taxation	<i>"No particular days are my most favourite or least favourite days. In the main I enjoy all my working days - unless I am working Saturdays and Sundays."</i>	<i>"No particular days are my most favourite or least favourite days. In the main I enjoy all my working days - unless I am working Saturdays and Sundays."</i>
Consultant Naval Architects & Marine Engineers	<i>"Sunday - thinking day."</i>	<i>"None - I enjoy what I do."</i>
Publishing Services, Artwork, Setting, Design, Typesetting	<i>"Sunday - I try and relax, waiting for the next week."</i>	<i>"Monday - uphill struggle to the end of the week."</i>
Conference Placement, Management, Consultancy, Training, Travel	<i>"Sunday - the one opportunity to relax."</i>	
Carpet & Upholstery Cleaning	<i>"Sunday - out in the countryside walking or on tandem."</i>	<i>"Don't have one."</i>
Accountancy, Audit, Tax & Management Consultancy	<i>"Tuesday - if Monday has gone well. This is a day to catch up, reflect and plan ahead - unless events dictate otherwise."</i>	<i>"Monday - [it's] always difficult to plan as 2 days' post tends to divert attention away from planned activity."</i>
Textile Marketing	<i>"Thursday - Operations seem to reach a peak of achievement with Friday still to come."</i>	<i>"Monday - So often beset by problems and irritations made more difficult by the week-end break."</i>
Office Space Planning and Supply of Furniture	<i>"Thursday - Helter skelter mayhem. Great atmosphere. Really enjoyable."</i>	<i>"Monday - Picking up the threads and starting to organise the week."</i>
Food Technology & Quality Consultant	<i>"We work on 7 days of each week. On Sundays we go to church and usually have friends and family for a meal."</i>	<i>"I have no least favourite days, they are all busy and interesting."</i>

## RETAIL AND DISTRIBUTION

	<b>Most favoured day</b>	<b>Least favoured day</b>
Garden Design & Implementation		<i>"Saturday - I tend to consider it as a day off and then feel guilty if I didn't work at some point during the day - I then feel I've neither worked or 'played' enough."</i>
Marine Equipment Suppliers		<i>"Monday - it's usually the day when one discovers that weekend deliveries scheduled to ship were not made."</i>
Travel Agency	<i>"All much the same."</i>	<i>"Saturday - I work a 6-day week."</i>

## RETAIL AND DISTRIBUTION continued

	<b>Most favoured day</b>	<b>Least favoured day</b>
Foundry Products	<i>"All the same - I generally enjoy what I do."</i>	<i>"Thursday - pay day."</i>
Hardware and Pet Store	<i>"Every day could be favourite - it depends on my customers' reactions to my pro actions. No formula to daily trade any longer. Monday could be busier than Saturday or vice-versa."</i>	<i>"Least favourite is any day starting with a £20 note for a 20p sale !"</i>
Garden Sundries Distribution	<i>"Friday - generally a little quieter for finishing jobs for end of week."</i>	
Direct Mail and Fulfilment House	<i>"Friday - I can look forward to two days off."</i>	<i>"Monday - it is another four days to Friday."</i>
Retailing of Motor Accessories and Spares	<i>"Friday - efforts to clear most of week's work - if successful - [gives a] sense of achievement."</i>	<i>"Monday - if above fails to work "</i>
Computer Data Communications Solutions in PC/Mainframe Environment	<i>"Friday - [the] afternoon is quiet as most clients shut down early - I can get on with jobs which need my full attention."</i>	<i>"Monday - the start of another week."</i>
Wholesale Bathroom Products Distributor	<i>"Friday - no delivery vehicles to load so able to round off paperwork and do an orderly shutdown to the week (usually)."</i>	<i>"Monday - maximum deliveries on Tuesday after processing orders from the weekend. Often [it's] a late finish and generally an 'untidy' day for scheduled work."</i>
Operating Public Houses	<i>"Friday - less work Saturday/ Sunday; normally 6 hours work at weekend."</i>	<i>"Monday - too many cheques to control vis a vis cash flow."</i>
Building Materials to the Trade	<i>"I don't have a favourite day because basically I enjoy my job."</i>	
Factoring of Goods	<i>"I don't think I have a favourite day. Things can go right on any day, but not every day ! Similarly, the same thing applies to 'least favourite'. Friday might be the best for the obvious reason !"</i>	
Specialist Suppliers of Computer Systems to the Security Industry	<i>"I have no favourites - each day presents a fresh challenge. As the owner of a small business, it is with me 7 days a week."</i>	
Health Foods and Herbal Remedies	<i>"Monday/Tuesday - the days I take off !"</i>	<i>"Friday - much too much to do !"</i>
Specialised Accessory Equipment to Process Industries	<i>"Monday - I like Mondays best - new week, new program."</i>	<i>"Tuesday - Always seems slow ?"</i>
PC-based Systems for Colour Printing	<i>"Monday - start of another, usually, exciting week."</i>	<i>"Friday - weekends (not as much fun as work)."</i>

## RETAIL AND DISTRIBUTION continued

	<b>Most favoured day</b>	<b>Least favoured day</b>
Communications Wholesaler of Telecom Installation Equipment	<i>"Monday - Start of week with plenty of time to get work done."</i>	<i>"Friday - Any work not completed by Friday is a burden for the following week."</i>
Wine Distributor	<i>"Monday - prospect of another week ahead."</i>	
Photographic Products and Services	<i>"Saturday - because we have more customers spending money, and are interested in the products."</i>	
Transport. Sameday/overnight Collection and Delivery of Parcels	<i>"Sunday - never work."</i>	<i>"Friday - have to pay people."</i>
Specialists in Beds and Pine Furniture	<i>"Sunday - more relaxed day when one can spend more time with a customer or sit down and take a view of one's business without being pestered by the phone."</i>	<i>"Friday - 'no-go day' - customers don't usually make buying decisions and it is a difficult day to motivate staff or outside suppliers of goods or services - probably the best day to be away from one's business."</i>
Selling and Support of Computer Hardware and Software	<i>"Tuesday - still plenty of time to schedule unexpected work."</i>	<i>"The last day before the holidays !"</i>
Retail Newsagent, Groceries	<i>"Thursday - ½ day off: time for my hobby which is angling."</i>	
Suppliers of Woodscrews, Adhesives, Fixings &c.	<i>"Wednesday - because there always seems to be less pressure."</i>	<i>"Monday - because the battles start all over again."</i>
Newspapers, Magazines, and Delivery	<i>"Wednesday - chance to recuperate."</i>	<i>"Saturday - magazine inserts in daily papers."</i>
Retail/distribution	<i>"Wednesday - usually day off."</i>	<i>"As I enjoy work I do not have a least favourite day."</i>
Delicatessen Retailer	<i>"Wednesday/Thursday - both days when staff levels allow me time to plan and work to expand the business."</i>	<i>"Monday - our 'person in charge's' day off."</i>

**ADDENDUM - ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

As an aid to the interpretation of the various figures (histograms), we have included some further information about the firms responding to this survey. The analyses involve key variables, and **industry sector, region and employee size** are those most frequently used as they are reasonably reliable indicators and less prone to misinterpretation.

**Industrial sectors** - based on the descriptions supplied by respondents, each firm is coded according to the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC 1980). Firms are then grouped into manufacturing, business services, retail/distribution. From 1996 onwards, firms falling outside these 3 bands - previously classified as 'other' - are now allocated to the foregoing sector which offers the closest match.

**Regions** - firms are also classified according to their physical location, namely, North, Midlands and the South.

**Employee size** - finally, firms are placed in bands according to the number of employees. Each part-time employee is assumed to be equivalent to 40 per cent

of a full-time employee ('FTE' = full-time equivalent). All of the surveys to date have received only a small number of responses from firms with 50 or more FTE employees. These responses have been **included** in the breakdowns for the sectoral and regional analyses, but have been **excluded** as a '50+FTE' band in the **employee-size** analyses (the 'All' band in each histogram includes all usable responses regardless). This is because a percentage breakdown band based on just two or three firms may not be representative of this size of business.

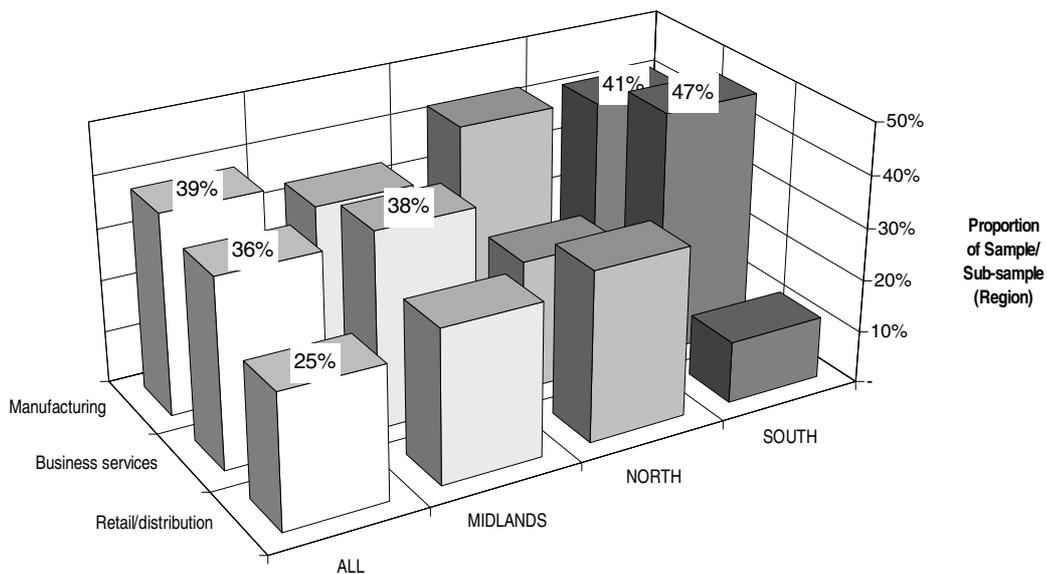
**DISTRIBUTION OF FIRMS**

The highest concentration is in manufacturing (39% of the latest sample, compared to 37% previously, and then in business services), followed by business services, see **Figure 22**.

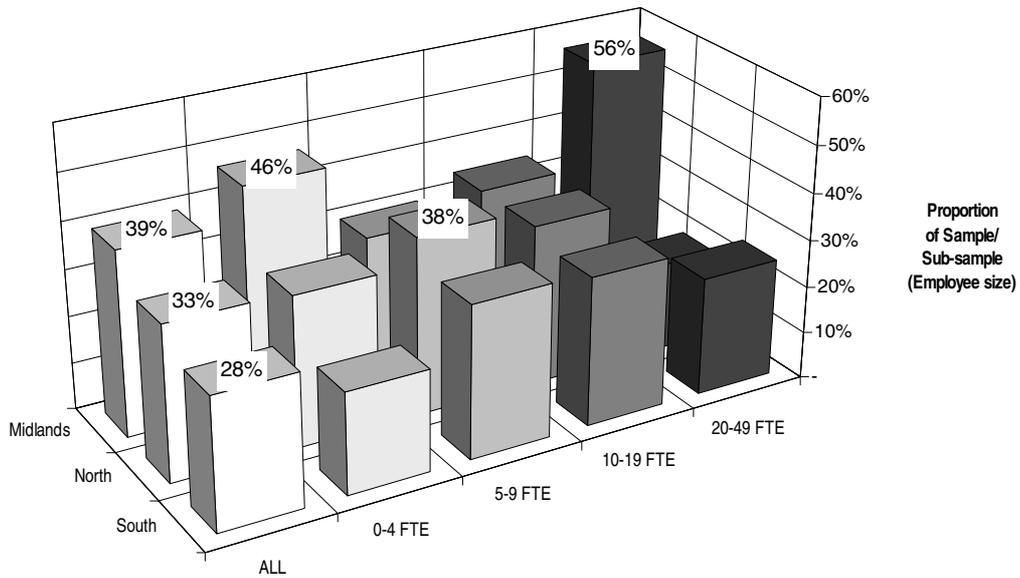
Regionally, the predominant sector in the **North** is **manufacturing**, and for both the **Midlands** and the **South, business services**.

The sub-sample in the **Midlands** for this survey has 46% of the smallest businesses - compared to 55% in the previous survey (see **Figure 23**).

**Fig 22 - INDUSTRIAL SECTOR: BY REGION**

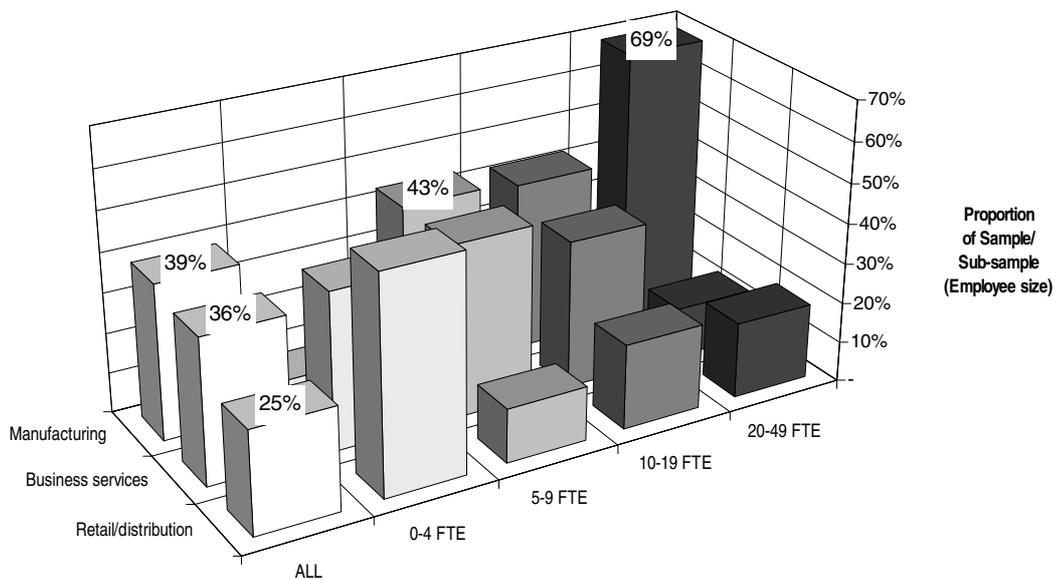


**Fig 23 - REGION: BY EMPLOYEE SIZE**



The **Manufacturing** and **business services** firms in the sample tend to be **larger**, in terms of employees, whereas the firms in **retailing/distribution** tend to have **fewer full-time equivalent employees** (Figure 24).

**Fig 24 - INDUSTRIAL SECTOR: BY EMPLOYEE SIZE**





This questionnaire will take approximately 5-10 minutes to complete - most answers require only a single tick. All information received will be treated in complete confidence. **PLEASE DESPATCH AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.**

### A Day In The Life Of The Small Businessman/woman

**1** a) Please indicate the number of people working in your business (including yourself):

Full-time ..... : \_\_\_\_\_ A

Part-time (16 hours/wk or less)..... : \_\_\_\_\_ B

b) Your age last birthday:

16-24 years.....  A

25-34 .....  B

35-44 .....  C

45-54 .....  D

55-64 .....  E

65 or over .....  F

c) Gender:

Male .....  M

Female .....  F

**2** Which ONE of the following statements would you say most applied to you: *Just ONE ✓ only*

"My week is quite highly structured - I tend to do certain things on certain days. I am usually very aware of precisely what day of the week it is"  A

"Most days are pretty much the same to me - I take a day at a time and just plough on until I reach the end of the week. I'm not always acutely aware of exactly what day of the week it is, except inasmuch as I need to be in order to keep appointments and so on"  B

**3** Extent of 'working day' - Which of the following describes your usual pattern: *Just ONE ✓ only*

'Work' is usually limited to the time spent at your main place of work.....  A

OR Some work is undertaken at home BEFORE travelling to your main place of work.....  B

OR Some work is undertaken at home AFTER travelling home from your main place of work.....  C

OR Some work is undertaken at home BEFORE & AFTER travelling to/from your place of work  D

OR None of the above (Please state):  E

---

**4** Does 'lunchtime' to you usually mean: *Just ONE ✓ only*

A 'protected' break, either by yourself or with others, eating a cooked lunch at a venue away from the office, e.g., in a cafe/restaurant/canteen/pub  A

OR Taking a 'bite on the hoof', usually involving snack food taken in a normal work environment  B

**5** **Exercise - Which ONE of the following statements most accurately describes your circumstances:** **Just ONE ✓ only**

"I try and get some serious exercise **EACH DAY**" e.g. by jogging, visiting a health club, etc. ....  A

"I try and get some serious exercise **AT LEAST WEEKLY**" e.g. by jogging, visiting a health club  B

"I try and get some light exercise **EACH DAY**" e.g. by walking.....  C

"I find it almost impossible to get the exercise I would like" .....  D

"I don't really worry about getting enough exercise" .....  E

**6** **Planning - Which ONE of the following statements most accurately describes your typical day:** **Just ONE ✓ only**

"I start with a plan and usually stick to it regardless" .....  A

"I start with a plan and try to get as far through it as I can with it before I get over-taken by events"  B

"I start the day putting out the 'bushfires' and trying to get things under control and then try to do what I want to do"  C

"In running a business, you are so much at the beck and call of everyone else that it is almost pointless trying to plan your day in any real way"  D

**7** **Perception of time - When you are LEAST aware of what day of the week it is, or time of day, is it usually when:** **Just ONE ✓ only**

Things are going well .....  A

OR You are under pressure.....  B

OR Either of those things is happening .....  C

**8** **The following is a statement owner-managers of small firms sometimes get quoted on in books and articles - Does it apply to you ?** **Just ONE ✓ only**

***"The nice thing about working for yourself is that you can play golf on Wednesday and then make up the time later when it suits you"***

Yes, quite frequently .....  A

OR No, it's a pipe-dream.....  B

OR It does sometimes happen, but it is the exception rather than the rule .....  C

**9** **Finally, please say which is your MOST, or alternatively, LEAST favourite day of the week and the reason/s why:**

MOST \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

LEAST \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

ISSN 0968 6444

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Cover design • Simon Head