



## ESL Podcast 700 – Starting a New Workweek

### GLOSSARY

**rough** – difficult; challenging; not easy or smooth

\* Last year, Adolfo lost his job and his mother passed away. It was a rough year.

**weekend** – Saturday and Sunday; the days of the week when most offices are closed and most professionals do not work

\* Do you want to go to the beach this weekend?

**to party** – to go to one or more exciting parties; to spend a lot of time with other people, especially in a noisy way with lots of alcohol and excitement

\* How can you party every weekend and still get such good grades?

**you said it** – a phrase used when one fully agrees with what another person has said; that's exactly right

\* - I'm not sure how to fill out these forms. They are so confusing!

- You said it!

**to ease into** – to begin to do something gradually, in a slow, gentle way

\* Most new employees ease into their job, but Johannes jumped right in and started working as hard as he could from the very first day.

**workweek** – Monday through Friday; the days of the week when most offices are open and most professionals work

\* When Melissa was younger, she didn't mind a 70-hour workweek, but now that she has children, she'd like to spend less time at the office.

**to chill** – to relax and not do anything or think about anything

\* This past week has been so stressful! I just want to chill in front of the TV.

**to take a meeting** – to attend a meeting; to agree to have a meeting with someone

\* Do you have time to take a meeting with these journalists? They want to conduct a quick interview and learn about our new facilities.

**hump day** – Wednesday; the day in the middle of the workweek

\* This is going to be a difficult week, but if we can just make it to hump day, we'll be fine.

**can't come soon enough** – a phrase used when one is very eager for something to happen and is looking forward to it

\* Money is really tight, so our year-end bonuses can't come soon enough!



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**You got it** – a phrase used to mean that what another person has said is 100% correct; that's exactly right

\* - Does this mean that if the police see me talking on a cell phone while driving, they can give me a ticket?

- You got it.

**to slack off** – to relax, be lazy, and not do one's job or meet others' expectations

\* If you keep slacking off like this, you're going to fail all your courses.

**lion's share** – the larger or greater part of something; the majority of something; more than 50% of something

\* As Director of Media Relations, Hazel writes the lion's share of the company's press releases.

**just this once** – only one time; this time but never again

\* Suzanne never helps out around the house. It would be wonderful if just this once she would offer to wash the dishes.

**to return the favor** – to do something nice for someone because he or she has done something nice for oneself

\* Kaitlynn helped us move last summer, so now we need to return the favor and help her move next weekend.

**to sit back** – to observe something from a distance, without becoming involved or without participating; to see how something is done without affecting it

\* How could people just sit back and watch those boys fight, without doing anything to try to make them stop?



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### COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What is Aaron asking Naomi to do?
  - a) To go to a client meeting for him.
  - b) To schedule a client meeting.
  - c) To cancel a client meeting.
2. Why doesn't Naomi want to do the lion's share of the work?
  - a) She doesn't want to have to do most of the work.
  - b) She doesn't want to work on the noisiest projects.
  - c) She doesn't want to do the most difficult work.

### WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?

#### **rough**

The word “rough,” in this podcast, means difficult or challenging: “That exam was really rough! I didn’t know any of the answers.” The word “rough” can also be used to describe things that do not have a flat surface: “She was surprised by how rough the frog’s skin was.” The word “rough” can also mean not gentle: “Don’t be so rough with your baby sister!” The phrase “to be rough around the edges” means to not be polished, elegant, or well educated: “He’s very good at his job, but he’s rough around the edges, so his manager doesn’t let him interact with clients very much.” Finally, the phrase “rough and tumble” refers to noisy physical behavior, especially when talking about children: “Jakey always liked rough-and-tumble play, but his sister preferred to sit quietly and read a book.”

#### **to sit back**

In this podcast, the phrase “to sit back” means to observe something from a distance, without becoming involved or without participating; to see how something is done without affecting it: “We’ve decided to sit back for a while and see what happens before making any decisions.” The phrase “to sit up” means to sit with better posture, with one’s back and neck in a straight line: “Sitting up can make you look younger and more confident.” The phrase “to sit in judgment” means to form opinions about something, especially when one disapproves of something, but doesn’t really have the right to disapprove: “How can you sit in judgment over her decision to quit college if you’ve never been in that position?”



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### CULTURE NOTE

#### Popular Phrases Used to Talk About Workweeks and Weekends

Americans look forward to the weekend and on Fridays you'll often hear them say, "TGIF," which means "Thank goodness it's Friday," or "Thank God it's Friday." They're looking forward to what they'll do over the weekend. Many of these people are "working for the weekend," meaning that their main reason for working is to earn enough money to have fun on their "days off" (days when one is not working).

People especially like "long weekends," which are 3- or 4-day periods when one does not have to go to work. Long weekends are common around "official holidays" (days celebrated by the government) that "fall on" (are held on) a Monday or Friday. On those holidays, many offices are closed for three days "in a row" (consecutively) and people often "go away" (go out of town; go to another place) for a long weekend.

Sometimes people get tired of working "week after week," doing the same thing over and over again without a "break" (rest; pause). Many Americans have only two weeks of vacation each year, so working week after week can be "exhausting" (very tiring). Of course, some weeks are worse than others, and sometimes people refer to the bad weeks as a "week from hell," describing a week when things were terrible and could not have been worse.

However, there are some "workaholics" (people who love working and do not want to stop working) who enjoy work so much that they sometimes "work on the weekend" or "work over the weekend," coming into the office to work on Saturdays or Sundays when everyone else is out having fun.

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Comprehension Questions Correct Answers: 1 – a; 2 – a



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### COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 700: Starting a New Workweek.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 700. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you, as we have for the last 699 episodes, from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

Our website is eslpod.com. Download a Learning Guide for this episode, and help support ESL Podcast by becoming a member. More information is on our website.

This episode is called "Starting a New Workweek." It's a dialogue between Naomi and Aaron. Let's get started.

[start of dialogue]

Naomi: Wow, you look like you had a rough weekend. A little too much partying, huh?

Aaron: You said it. I'm planning to ease into the new workweek. I need time to chill and to recover. Could you take a meeting this morning with our new client?

Naomi: What will you do?

Aaron: I'll be sitting here waiting for hump day. The weekend can't come soon enough!

Naomi: It's Monday and you're already looking forward to next weekend?

Aaron: You got it.

Naomi: And you want to slack off, while I take on the lion's share of your work. Is that what you're saying?

Aaron: Just this once. I'll return the favor the next time you have a rough weekend.

Naomi: What are you planning for next weekend?

Aaron: Why do you ask?



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Naomi: I want to know how long I'll have to wait for a chance to sit back and watch you work!

[end of dialogue]

Naomi begins by saying to Aaron, "Wow, you look like you had a rough weekend." "Rough" (rough) here means difficult, or not easy. There are some other meanings of "rough," which can be found in the Learning Guide for this episode. Naomi says Aaron had a rough weekend. The "weekend" is typically Saturday and Sunday. Some people will talk about a "three-day weekend," that's usually Saturday, Sunday, and Monday, when you don't have to work for a holiday. Normally, the weekend is Saturday and Sunday, with some people including Friday night.

Naomi says, "A little too much partying, huh?" The "huh" – (huh) is how it is generally spelled – is a noise that you may make at the end of a statement to make it into a question; it's an informal way of making something into a question. Naomi says, "A little too much partying." "To party," as a verb, means to go to exciting parties, to spend a lot of time with other people, usually drinking a lot of alcohol and such.

Aaron says, "You said it." The phrase "you said it" means you are exactly correct, or what you just said is right, or I agree completely with what you said. You might say, "English can be so confusing," and your friend would say, "You said it," meaning that's right, that's correct. It's not confusing, of course; that's why you have ESL Podcast!

Aaron says, "I'm planning to ease into the new workweek." "To ease (ease) into (something)" means to begin something slowly, gradually, not try to do everything at full energy or using all of your energy to begin to do something. You're going to start slowly, easily; that's to ease into something. A "workweek," which is the word "work" plus the word "week" made into a single word, is the days of the week you have to work, typically Monday through Friday – Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. That's for most people their workweek.

Aaron says, "I need time to chill and recover." "To chill" as a verb here means to relax, not to do or think about anything serious or important. It's an informal verb, or informal way of using this verb to mean relax. "I need time to chill." Sometimes if you are very excited and someone wants you to calm down, they might use this as a command: "Hey, chill!" meaning take it easy; again, very



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informally. Aaron says he needs time to chill and to “recover,” to get better from the weekend so he feels better. He says, “Could you take a meeting this morning with our new client?” “To take a meeting” means to go to a group of people who are sitting down and talking to each other about something, to go to a meeting – to take a meeting. Aaron wants Naomi to take a meeting with their new “client,” their new customer.

Naomi says, “What will you do?” Aaron says, “I’ll be sitting here waiting for hump day.” “Hump day” is Wednesday, the middle of the week. The idea is that during the first part of the week you’re going up a hill, or a hump, and the second part of the week you’re going down. A “hump” is something you would find on a camel for example, the animal that survives in the desert. So, “hump day” is Wednesday. Aaron is basically saying he’s not going to do any work or very much work. Aaron says, “The weekend can’t come soon enough!” The expression “can’t come soon enough” means that you are very eager for something to happen, you are looking forward to something, you hope that it happens soon, or that time will go by quickly so that this thing can happen. Aaron is someone who doesn’t want to work, and is just waiting for the workweek to end so he can continue partying on the weekend.

Naomi says, “It’s Monday and you’re already looking forward to next weekend?” Aaron says, “You got it.” “You got it” means that you are correct, you are 100 percent correct. It’s similar to “you said it,” although we usually use the phrase “you said it” when we are complaining about something or talking about the negative aspects of something. “You got it” could be used in probably more situations than “you said it.” Here, Aaron says, “You got it,” meaning that’s correct, that’s exactly right.

Naomi says, “And you want to slack off.” “To slack (slack) off” is a two-word phrasal verb meaning to relax, to be lazy, not to do your job the way you should do it. Someone who slacks off a lot is called a “slacker.” It’s a term meaning someone who is lazy, who doesn’t work very much or very hard; it’s an informal expression. Naomi says, “you want to slack off (Aaron), while I take on the lion’s share of your work.” “To take on” means to do, to begin a new project. “The lion’s share” means the majority of something, more than 50 percent, the greater or larger part of something. We often use it when talking about work. “He has the lion’s share of the work,” he’s doing most of the work for that project.

Naomi says that Aaron wants her to take on the lion’s share of his work. “Is that what you’re saying?” she asks. Aaron says, “Just this once.” “Just this once” means only one time, this will never happen again, I will never ask you to do this again – just this once. He says, “I’ll return the favor the next time you have a





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rough weekend.” “To return the favor” means to do something nice for someone who has done something nice for you.

Naomi then says, “What are you planning for next weekend?” What are you going to do next weekend? Aaron says, “Why do you ask?” meaning why are you asking me. Naomi says, “I want to know how long I’ll have to wait for a chance to sit back and watch you work!” “To sit back” means to observe something from a distance without participating, without becoming involved, to see how something is done without affecting it. It’s sometimes used when someone else is working or you don’t have to work, you can relax a little. But more generally, it means to watch something without getting involved. So, what Naomi is saying at the end here is that she wants to know when she can watch Aaron work, and she’s suggesting it would be a very long time before she can do that since Aaron seems to go out partying every weekend. That’s why she asks what Aaron plans to do the following weekend.

Now let’s listen to the dialogue, this time at a normal speed.

[start of dialogue]

Naomi: Wow, you look like you had a rough weekend. A little too much partying, huh?

Aaron: You said it. I’m planning to ease into the new workweek. I need time to chill and to recover. Could you take a meeting this morning with our new client?

Naomi: What will you do?

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Naomi: And you want to slack off, while I take on the lion’s share of your work. Is that what you’re saying?

Aaron: Just this once. I’ll return the favor the next time you have a rough weekend.

Naomi: What are you planning for next weekend?





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Aaron: Why do you ask?

Naomi: I want to know how long I'll have to wait for a chance to sit back and watch you work!

[end of dialogue]

The next wonderful script by our scriptwriter can't come soon enough. That's because it's the wonderful Dr. Lucy Tse, who never slacks off!

From Los Angeles, California, I'm Jeff McQuillan. Thank you for listening. Come back and listen to us again here on ESL Podcast.

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