

The end of full-time employment?

The nation's largest movie theatre chain has cut the hours of thousands of employees, saying in a company memo that ObamaCare requirements are to blame. Regal Entertainment Group, which operates more than 500 theatres in 38 states, last month rolled back shifts for non-salaried workers to 30 hours per week, putting them under the threshold at which employers are required to provide health insurance. The Nashville-based company said in a letter to managers that the move was a direct result of ObamaCare.

This is not an isolated incident at this one company – it is already happening everywhere in the service business. The tree fell in the forest months ago, but it is only just now being heard.

A retail service business, operating campgrounds and public parks, with over 400 employees knew from the day that the PPACA (or “ObamaCare”) passed it would be too large to be exempt from the law and that it would have enormous, even catastrophic effects on its business. So its lawyers have spent a lot of time studying the law and its associated regulations to understand exactly how it will affect the business. Which has been difficult, since some of the key regulations that would apply to us (e.g. around seasonal work forces) have not even been written yet, just 8 months now before the law is to take effect.

But one thing has been very clear: The best way to be “safe” and avoid the costs imposed by the law was to have one's workers be classified as “part-time”, or for this particular law working less than 30 hours per week. The other fact that emerged from some IRS rule-making was that whether a worker was to be classified as part-time on January 1, 2014 would be based on his or her work patterns in 2013. This is why savvy companies were planning hard for work force changes last year. The goal was to get every worker in the company under 30 hours a week before 2013 even started.

With new technologies in place more businesses may follow suit and make their employees switch to other, flexible forms of employment, such as home office. In the future most of us might end up being one-person companies rendering services for multiple clients.

Adapted from *Forbes*

Ex. 1 Find the words or expressions in the text which mean the following:

- 1) selling items to individual clients: _____
- 2) to not be covered by some rule or regulation: _____
- 3) related laws: _____
- 4) to have consequences for somebody or something: _____
- 5) to be able to be used with respect to something: _____
- 6) to become a law that people have to obey: _____
- 7) the American President's healthcare plan: _____
- 8) very big: _____
- 9) rules: _____
- 10) to formally say that something must be done: _____
- 11) to behave in a similar way: _____
- 12) the American tax authority: _____
- 13) teleworking: _____

Ex. 2 Match the expressions from the two columns into logical collocations:

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------|
| 1) movie theatre | hours |
| 2) to cut sb's | shifts |
| 3) a company | health insurance |
| 4) to roll back | costs |
| 5) non-salaried | based company |
| 6) to provide | as part-time |
| 7) to impose | business |
| 8) the service | chain |
| 9) to be classified | workers |
| 10)a Nashville | memo |

Ex. 3 Provide English equivalents of these expressions:

1) sieć	7) przepisy wykonawcze
2) pracownicy nieetatowi	8) stosować się do
3) sektor usługowy	9) spółka z siedzibą w ...
4) handel detaliczny	10)pójść w czyjeś ślady
5) być wyłączonym z	11)odprowadzać składki na
6) wejść w życie	ubezpieczenie zdrowotne
	12)obciążać kosztami

Grammar corner...

The nation's largest movie theatre chain has cut the hours of thousands of employees, saying in a company memo that ...

A retail service business, operating campgrounds and public parks, with over 400 employees ...

... rolled back shifts for non-salaried workers to 30 hours per week, putting them under the threshold at which employers are required to provide health insurance.

The underlined words introduce what is called in English a PRESENT PARTICIPLE CLAUSE. Just like relative clauses, covered previously, they add extra information to your sentences. The difference is that instead of a relative pronoun, e.g. which, whom, whose, we use a verb in a continuous form, i.e. with the -ing ending. It is a more advanced way of adding information in a short, brief and concise way suitable for business purposes.

Ex. 4 Rewrite the sentences using present participle clauses:

- 1) Employees who are working full time may have their hours reduced.
- 2) Many people falsely claim they are exempt from taxation. Doing so puts an enormous strain on the budget.
- 3) He has recently invested a large sum on the IT market. It has made him a billionaire overnight.
- 4) People who have innovative business ideas are often considered crazy.
- 5) If you find yourself in a situation in which you work more than you rest, you should be careful not to become a workaholic. (2 options)
- 6) The new employment laws which the government is introducing will be bad for employees themselves. (please use passive voice)
- 7) The person who is in charge of the project is doing a great job.

- 8) The company which has its registered office in a tax haven will be investigated by the IRS.
- 9) The firm, which owns several subsidiaries, has been charged with using unfair business practices.
- 10) He keeps his full time job. He runs his own business at the same time.
(please use *while*)

GLOSSARY	
a tax haven	raj podatkowy
IRS (Internal Revenue Service)	amerykański urząd skarbowy
a subsidiary	spółka zależna
a registered office	siedziba spółki
to be charged with ...	zostać oskarżonym o ...
to be in charge of ...	być odpowiedzialnym za ...
to find yourself in a situation	znaleźć się w sytuacji
overnight	z dnia na dzień
to falsely claim something	złożyć fałszywe oświadczenie
to put a strain on the budget	nadwyręzać budżet
non-salaried workers	pracownicy nieetatowi / pozaetatowi
a chain	sieć (np. restauracji, sklepów)
to render services	świadczyć usługi
savvy	przezorny
to provide health insurance	odprowadzać składki na ubezpieczenie zdrowotne
to be exempt from ...	być zwolnionym z ... (np. podatku)
to take effect	wejść w życie
to impose costs	obciążać kosztami
associated regulations	przepisy wykonawcze

to require something / a requirement	wymagać czegoś / wymóg
to apply to something	stosować się do czegoś (np. stosuje się przepisy kodeksu cywilnego)
employment pattern	schemat zatrudnienia
seasonal workforce	pracownicy sezonowi

ANSWER KEY:

Ex. 1

- 1) retail
- 2) exempt from
- 3) associated regulations
- 4) to affect sth
- 5) to apply to sth
- 6) to take effect
- 7) ObamaCare
- 8) enormous
- 9) regulations
- 10) require
- 11) to follow suit
- 12) IRS
- 13) home office

Ex. 2

- 1) movie theatre chain
- 2) to cut the hours
- 3) a company memo
- 4) to roll back shifts
- 5) non-salaried workers
- 6) to provide health insurance
- 7) the service business
- 8) to impose costs
- 9) to be classified as part-time
- 10) a Nashville-based company

Ex. 3

- 1) chain
- 2) non-salaried workers
- 3) service business / sector
- 4) retail
- 5) to be exempt from
- 6) to take effect
- 7) associated regulations
- 8) to apply to
- 9) a ...-based company
- 10) to follow suit
- 11) to provide health insurance
- 12) to impose costs

Ex. 4

- 1) Employees working full time may have their hours reduced.
- 2) Many people falsely claim to be exempt from taxation, putting an enormous strain on the budget.
- 3) He has recently invested a large sum on the IT market, making himself a billionaire overnight.
- 4) People having innovative business ideas are often considered crazy.
- 5) If you find yourself working more than you rest, you should be careful about becoming a workaholic.
- 6) The new employment laws being introduced by the government will be bad for the employees themselves.
- 7) The person being in charge of the project is doing a great job.
- 8) The company having its registered office in a tax haven will be investigated by the IRS.
- 9) The firm having several subsidiaries has been charged with unfair business practices.
- 10) He keeps his full-time job while at the same time running his own business.