

Redefining productivity

2nd Quarter 2015 Manager Newsletter



If your team relies on collaboration, chances are you feel the tug of conflicting priorities. Go here. Do this first. No, this!

Do you ever feel like you're in too many meetings to get work done? Or maybe you think you need more meetings so you'll know how it needs to be done.

Here are some tips to help you think of productivity in new and exciting ways:

Focus during your meetings. You might feel like it's more productive to check e-mail while going over last month's numbers with the team. Especially if alerts keep lighting up your screen. But consider this: If you miss just one key fact, how much more time will it take for you to track it down later? Turn those notifications off if you can't resist checking each new message as it arrives.

Collaborate before, during and after a project. If your project has multiple stakeholders, be sure to check in early and often. It might seem like a drain on your time. But it's easier than re-doing the whole thing when Gary from accounting realizes he sent you the wrong spreadsheet. (Warning: Even with great collaboration, that can still happen.)

Relationships count. All that time spent with your nose away from the grindstone isn't just fun and games. Building lasting collaborative relationships is a big part of most managers' jobs. And it's at least as important for your team's success as your "producing measurable output" time.

Understand the vision first. Whether you're initiating a project or you're helping someone else, the more you know about the intended results, the better you can contribute. It can be truly inspiring to work on a project that unites a clear vision with a practical purpose.

Adapt on the run. Proactivity is key. If your team's goals change, for instance, take some time to think through how it will affect each project in the pipeline. Then create a plan of action that saves as much effort as possible. Your team will thank you for it.

Instead of spitballing ideas, snowball them. Bring in unique talent to help your ideas grow into something special. This kind of meeting time might not always yield short-term results. But it can lead to fresh innovations, new processes and, if you're lucky and/or have a knack for bringing out the best in your team, even game-changers.

By looking at productivity with a wider angle lens, there's no telling what your team can accomplish together.