



# Strength

## *2nd Quarter 2017 Manager Newsletter*



### **Do your employees have a case of “businefficiency”?**

Matt’s a good guy. He’s smart. He’s nice. He takes on any project you give him. It seems like he works all the time. But here’s the rub — While Matt works a lot, he never seems to have much to show for it. Do you have a Matt on your team? **More...**



### **Five ways a mentor can help you make better decisions**

If you’ve never had a mentor, you might have heard the word and wondered what it’s all about. Mentors aren’t managers. They help guide and coach you with your career. Maybe you’ve acted as a mentor for someone else. **More...**



### **Manage less for a stronger team**

You may feel as if you have to be a continuous presence for your team to exceed expectations. But once your staff is trained and knows what’s expected, checking in less often gives them more time to get the work done. It also can help build trust. And let’s face it: It’s not as likely to burn you out. **More...**

## **Resources *for* Living®**

# Do your employees have a case of “businefficiency”?



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Managing the Matts of the world can be a challenge. After all, they look like hard workers. They're busy. But they're inefficient. We've given this a name — businefficiency.

## Busy doesn't mean productive

If being successful simply came down to being busy, we'd all be winners. But success isn't measured by how many things you're doing. It's about getting the right things done.

There are a few possible culprits behind the businefficient phenomenon:

- Poor time management
- Lack of organization
- Too much multi-tasking

## Are things in the right quadrant?

When everything's given the same level of importance, you sweat things of little significance. In *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, Steven Covey has this system:

	Urgent	Not urgent
Important	<b>I:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pressing problems</li><li>• Crises</li><li>• Deadline-driven projects</li></ul>	<b>II:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Long-term strategizing</li><li>• Relationship-building</li><li>• Preparation and planning</li></ul>
Not important	<b>III:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Interruptions and distractions</li><li>• Some meetings</li><li>• Demands from other people</li></ul>	<b>IV:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gossip and private calls</li><li>• Time-wasters</li><li>• Internet surfing</li></ul>

## Turning busy employees into productive staff

Having a Matt on your team can be frustrating. However, businefficient employees are usually eager to please. With supervision, you can help them get more done. Coach these staff members on:

- **Time management.** Discuss Covey's quadrants and work to ensure projects are given the right priority. And monitor staff's work to make sure they're not busy because they're spending too much time in the fourth quadrant.
- **Solo-tasking.** Many people think that multi-tasking helps them get more done. But studies show it can reduce productivity by up to 40 percent.<sup>1</sup> Help your staff slow down and tackle one project at a time.
- **Organization.** Look at their workspaces, calendars, and to-do lists. How do they know what has to get done? Are they wasting time looking for things they misplace? Have them talk to coworkers with great organizational skills to learn how to streamline their workspaces and workflows.

Some people like to brag about being “busy.” But everyone is busy these days. And nothing's worse than a case of businefficiency. Instead, help your staff focus on what really matters — productivity and efficiency. Because those are things you can brag about.

<sup>1</sup>Quast, Lisa. Want to be more productive? Stop multi-tasking. Forbes. February 6, 2017. Accessed March 2017.

# Five ways a mentor can help you make better decisions



If you've never had a mentor, you might have heard the word and wondered what it's all about. Mentors aren't managers. They help guide and coach you with your career. Maybe you've acted as a mentor for someone else.

Mentors can help with identifying your next move or mapping out your larger career plan. They can help you add to your skill set to prepare you for your next big opportunity. Mentors can offer:

- **Perspective.** They know the lay of the land before you. You may be so focused on getting to the next level that you don't think as much about what you'll do once you're there. Mentors can help you prepare for future challenges.
- **Reflection.** Self-awareness is critical to success. A mentor can act as a mirror. That can help you make the most of your strengths and mitigate your weaknesses.
- **Support.** Mentors won't be attached to your decisions. It's not about following the same or a certain path. They can help you weigh all the options and support the decisions you make.
- **Ideas.** Mentors might help you create a new or bigger vision for yourself. It's not just about where you'll go and what you'll do. It's also about others whose lives you touch along the way.
- **Hindsight.** Ask your mentors what they would have done differently. Learning what they know might just help you save time and energy along your journey.

## Finding a mentor

Are you interested in having a mentor or becoming one for someone else? Check with your organization to see if they have a program for matching people together. If they don't, maybe you can start one. Even if there's no formal process, don't worry. Simply asking a respected colleague for advice can begin an informal mentoring relationship.

Throughout your career, you can learn from many mentors. In the end, it's not as important what you call such a relationship as it is that you get the guidance you're looking for at a time you can make good use of it. And if you decide to act as a mentor for others, you're likely to find there's a lot to learn from taking that role on, too.



# Manage less for a stronger team



You may feel as if you have to be a continuous presence for your team to exceed expectations. But once your staff is trained and knows what's expected, checking in less often gives them more time to get the work done. It also can help build trust. And let's face it: It's not as likely to burn you out.

Some managers like to see the wheels turning to put their minds at ease. We're only human. And seeing can help with believing. But try this exercise: Take a minute to write down all the things you're responsible for when it comes to your team.

When you boil it all down, your top priorities probably fall into a few main categories. And you likely have processes in place to address them. Here are some common examples:

Category	Processes
Work quality and timeliness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Audits and/or reviews, both internal and external</li><li>• Track appropriate turnaround times and project deadlines — use “milestone” deadlines for long-term projects</li><li>• Team meetings and 1:1 meetings with team members</li></ul>
Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review code of conduct or other guidelines</li><li>• Bring questions or complex issues to HR</li></ul>
Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Proactively build a positive culture</li><li>• Model the behaviors you'd like to see</li></ul>
Staff training and education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Schedule enough time to go over new processes</li><li>• Allow team members time to absorb what they learn and build up to full speed</li></ul>
Removing obstacles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Manager meetings with larger business area</li><li>• Call or e-mail helpful coworkers in your network</li></ul>
Planning and talent development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discuss development goals with each team member and help set a plan in motion</li><li>• Recommend trainings and on-the-job opportunities that align with each team member's goals</li></ul>

If you came up with different categories, you can add them to the chart, along with processes already in place that address them. If your organization is missing built-in processes such as those listed, see if you can implement them. And try not to overdo requests for status reports. Remember — they take time away from the work itself.

As long as your team's performing well and you're managing where it counts, you can think of yourself as the rudder rather than the oars. Less can really be more when it comes to guiding your team to success.

## Resources for Living®



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