

Do your employees have a case of “businefficiency”?



Matt’s a good guy. He takes on any project you give him. It seems like he works all the time. But while Matt works a lot, he never seems to have much to show for it.

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

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.¹ 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.

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