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2nd Quarter 2019 Manager Newsletter



Productivity hacks

We all want to work smarter, not harder. You may feel like there “aren’t enough hours in the day” sometimes. But what if you could squeeze more out of the hours you have? Here are some hacks to make the most of your days. ***Learn more about productivity hacks here...***



Types of employee turnover

As a manager, no one can blame you if you’re not overly fond of turnover. It can mean you’ll have to screen applications, interview candidates, make a decision and train a new person — or worse — do the same amount of work with fewer people. ***Read more about the different types of turnover...***



What’s your leadership style?

How much do you understand about how you like to lead? This year we’re walking you through the Blake Mouton Managerial Grid of leadership styles. Each quarter we’re describing one or two of the types outlined in this model. Maybe you’ll see some of yourself in one of these styles. ***Learn about what your style is...***

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Productivity hacks



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Turn up your focus

Sometimes multi-tasking turns into getting less done. Your brain is so busy processing multiple tasks that you end up working more slowly. Or worse, you end up forgetting or messing up one of your tasks (it’s okay; we’ve all been there).

Try to focus on one important task at a time. And get rid of distractions. Turn on your “do not disturb,” put away your cell phone and leave the rest of the items on your to-do list for later.

Don’t trust your memory

Wouldn’t it be great if your brain could remember everything? Sadly, we just have too much to recall throughout the day — appointments, grocery items, phone calls to make. The list goes on and on. Not only are you likely to forget great ideas and important items, but you can waste a lot of energy trying to remember things.

Let your brain focus on doing things. Carry a notepad with you and write down important ideas or information. Your memory will thank you for it.

Use the five minute rule

Do you tend to procrastinate? Have you been putting off a task? Sometimes getting started is the hardest part.

Instead of thinking about doing the whole task, which can feel overwhelming, commit to working on it for just five minutes. Five minutes might not seem like much, but once you start you may want to keep going.

Be predictable

Scientists have found that your ability to make good decisions decreases throughout the day.¹ So, you want to treat your decision-making as a limited resource.

Try making certain things routine to avoid brain drain. Some highly successful people have used this technique to be more productive: Steve Jobs wore the same outfit every day so he never had to think about what to wear. Tim Ferriss eats the same breakfast each day. And President Barack Obama puts his non-urgent emails into three buckets: “Agree,” “Disagree” or “Discuss.”¹

You can’t create more hours in the day but you can make the most of them. Try some of these hacks or ask others what works for them. You might be surprised by what you can accomplish.

¹Cohen, Andrew. [Why You Should Limit Your Number of Daily Decisions](#). Entrepreneur. May 3, 2015.

Types of employee turnover



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As a manager, no one can blame you if you're not overly fond of turnover. It can mean you'll have to screen applications, interview candidates, make a decision and train a new person — or worse — do the same amount of work with fewer people.

While any work environment can be improved, turnover doesn't always mean something is wrong with the job or the culture. Sometimes it means your team is providing an environment in which your employees can grow and spread their wings.

Turnover comes in different forms. Tracking the type along with the numbers can help you and your team find ways to keep unwanted turnover at a minimum.

Voluntary types of turnover can include:

- **Internal promotion.** You may lose your best talent this way. Apart from losing a good team member, it's good for morale. Celebrate this kind of turnover.
- **New job outside the company.** You may also lose top talent to competitors. Exit interviews can help identify the deciding factors and see where your organization and team can improve.
- **Leave of absence.** Sometimes other responsibilities make it necessary for a team member to take an extended leave or quit. If a job isn't flexible enough to accommodate these priorities, there may be nothing that could be done to change the outcome.
- **Retirement.** Exit interviews can help discern whether a team member retires when he or she always planned or early as a result of issues on the job.

Involuntary types of turnover can include:

- **Termination.** Examine what led up to this kind of turnover. If it was job performance, was the team member a poor fit for the position? Would additional training have helped? Or were expectations too high?
- **Reduction in force.** These situations are comprised of unique and often complicated factors. The loss of good team members may be unavoidable. Exit interviews can help identify issues within the organization that may have led to the loss of clients or revenue.
- **Forced retirement.** Certain industries have a mandatory retirement age. Or a team member may be given a retirement package as an alternative to a reduction in force. If you lose long-standing team members this way, |be sure to touch base with them before they go.

There's no one formula for decoding what your team's turnover might be telling you. By paying attention to your team's concerns and monitoring the frequency and types of turnover your team experiences, you can identify issues and work to foster the best possible working environment.

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The Blake Mouton Managerial Grid¹

Robert Blake and Jane Mouton developed their grid to help leaders understand their natural tendencies. It outlines leadership trends on two spectrums:

- **Concern for people.** How much do you focus on your employees' feelings, happiness and interests?
- **Concern for results.** How much do you focus on your organization's needs and production outcomes?

Blake and Mouton defined five leadership styles based on where you fall in these two areas on the grid. This article explores the "produce-or-perish" management style.



Produce-or-perish managers

Last quarter, we talked about "country club managers" who focus on their employees' happiness over productivity. While they mean well, this can lead to frustration and resentment. The polar opposite is a produce-or-perish manager.

These managers focus all their attention on production, to the detriment of their workers' needs. They treat their

employees as means to an end. They may use strict rules and negative consequences as a way of eliciting high performance.

This style might lead to impressive results in the short-term but it often comes with unwanted outcomes. Teams typically have low morale, poor motivation and high rates of burnout. There's often frequent turnover. And these managers regularly struggle to retain talented employees.

Managers with this style often benefit from learning skills related to empathy, listening, team-building, motivation and flexibility. This will help them focus on people as well as results.

Check back next quarter as we explore more leadership styles.

¹Blake, R. and McCause, A. Leadership dilemmas — Grid solutions. Gulf Professional Publishing. March 8, 1991.

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