# Executive IT Insider

### ...The Exclusive Edge to Today's Technology

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How did your team perform during your first quarter? Do you want to increase your staff efficiency? Gear up for your second quarter by getting our **Employee Productivity Package**!

See how your employees spend company time. You can **track** and **analyze** how productive your employees are. This allows you to replicate productive workflows throughout your business. Visit www.itsupportri.com/employee-productivity/ to learn more!

# 5 Surefire Ways to Boost Employee Productivity, Efficiency, and Your Business

Do you ever wish that you could just press a button and—**POOF**—you've increased employee productivity and efficiency? We all know the phrase "time is money." But if your employees aren't working as hard as they *should* be, they're wasting your time, money, and resources. After all, you're not paying employees to update their Facebook status, tweet their followers, or play games all day.

However, there's a fine line between encouraging employees to produce high quality work and overworking them. Your attempts to increase their output could ultimately backfire and cause employees to become frustrated, lose motivation, or burn out.  Here are five ways to increase productivity and workflow throughout your business.

**Communicate Effectively**
Communication is the key to success. Positive, clear, and open communication is the basis for creating productive employees. When managers clearly state expectations and responsibilities, they will get an engaged and productive team. Allowing staff to voice their opinions, concerns or problems can help to avoid conflicts. Effective communication can also improve employee productivity, motivation, and morale.

**Avoid Micromanaging**
Believe it or not, if you want employee productivity to increase you need to back off a little. Wait—what? By encouraging employees to take ownership of how they manage their time, you're allowing them to be independent. Studies show that employees are motivated by having a sense of independence.

You can still check in on employees to make sure they're *actually* working, just **avoid hovering**.  Hovering decreases productivity because employees tend to get nervous or

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stressed, and start to perform poorly. If you manage employees less, you get better work results. Seems a little counterintuitive, but it makes sense, right?



### Allow "Brain Breaks" and Chitchat
To increase employee productivity and efficiency, you need to allow for short breaks throughout the day. In fact, short breaks have been proven to *increase* work production and performance. Everyone needs a few minutes to scroll through social media, play on their phones, or just stare out the window. You can also encourage employees to participate in some old-fashioned "water cooler chats".

Employees need to be able to step away from their desks, chat, and unwind during the day. Not only do these breaks allow employees to recharge and refocus on their tasks, but it also fosters employee relationships. Relationship building produces a healthy staff, improves employee engagement, and builds a positive company culture.

Just make sure that employees return to their desks and don't take advantage of these little breaks.

### Acknowledge Specific Contributions
No matter how big or small, **always** acknowledge employee contributions or accomplishments. Instead of giving an employee a generic praise, focus on mentioning a specific effort. Rather than saying "Good job!" say something like "Good job on finding a solution to that problem!"

When an employee receives praise for a *specific* action, they realize that their work matters. Employees want to feel useful and like they're making a difference. Praising employees will also work towards your goal of communicating effectively.

### Establish SMART Goals
Make sure all your goals are "**SMART**." SMART, or Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely goals help employees stay *focused* and *efficient*.

Employees need to have clear goals. After all, how do you expect them to be efficient if they don't know what they're trying to achieve? If goals aren't clear or realistic, employees will be less productive.

As a manager or owner, you know that employee productivity and efficiency are crucial to complete day-to-day operations. By applying these tips to your business, you can increase productivity, efficiency, and morale while reducing employee burnout and turnover.

Overtime, you will notice that your company's atmosphere has changed. Employees will be more engaged, have a strong sense of teamwork, and look forward to coming into work. At the end of the day, the more **efficient** your staff is, the more **successful** your business will be!

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# Technology Spotlight:
## Apple HomePod

Apple finally joined Google and Amazon in the home assistant race, with their latest release, the Apple HomePod. If you're an Apple person, and swear by all Apple products, then this device is for you!
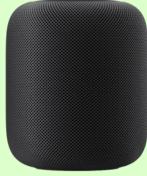
When compared to other devices, this Siri speaker offers the best sound quality. It is equipped with spatial awareness, allowing it to tune its speakers and automatically adjust to its surroundings. What does all this mean? It means that the Apple HomePod will sound richer and fuller than most speakers.

Not only do the speakers deliver superb sound quality, but the microphone is equally amazing. The Apple HomePod's microphone can detect the "Hey Siri" command over loud music, from other rooms, through closed doors, and even in rooms with echoes.

The Apple HomePod can handle everything from giving you the latest news, traffic, and weather updates to controlling your smart home products. Because the device is heavily integrated with Apple Music, Siri will learn your taste in music, and become your own, personal DJ. You can even ask Siri for more information about any of the songs that the pod plays.

If you'd like to get the most out of your HomePod, it's best to have an Apple Music subscription and your smart home devices integrated with the Apple HomeKit platform.

You can purchase the Apple HomePod at Apple.com, starting at $349.99

# Increase Capacity: Expanding Your Skill And Confidence

You and I know what is probable, but we seldom understand what is possible.

Andrew Shapiro is an example of someone who blew past "probable" and set a new standard for "possible." Inspired by his father's triumphant battle with cancer, Shapiro committed himself to setting a Guinness World Record for pull-ups. He practiced incessantly, building his endurance by doing 10 pull-ups a minute for six hours while watching movies to pass the time. He pressed on despite sore muscles and blistered hands. Then, at a Relay for Life event in Virginia, he achieved his goal, performing 7,306 pull-ups in 24 hours. Andrew not only set a new record that day, but also raised $4,000 for the American Cancer Society.

In my new book, *The Potential Principle*, I offer four powerful tools for creating breakout improvement, personally and professionally. The fourth tool is this:

**Increase your capacity in order to grow your confidence and move closer to realizing your true potential**.

Success breeds confidence, and confidence breeds success. It's a virtuous cycle that begins when you commit yourself to spending the time and effort it takes to raise your level of skill.

*The Potential Principle* includes many tips about how to start this process and keep it going. A great way to begin is to take inventory of the abilities you have right now. You get better by both *exploiting* what you already know and the skills you've developed, and by *exploring* new skills and knowledge.

As you consider adding new skills, make sure you know which ones, if developed, will enhance your existing skills toward the performance you desire. Study the most important skills in your priority areas. Ask yourself, "What one thing, if I started doing it and kept doing it, would give me the biggest return on my investment of time and energy?"

Improvement is hard work, but it pays off. To better your best, dedicate yourself to doing what it takes to increase your capacity. It will give you the confidence you need to achieve your goals and become the person you were meant to be.

*Mark Sanborn, CSP, CPAE, is the president of Sanborn & Associates, Inc., an "idea studio" that seeks to motivate and develop leaders in and outside of business. He's the bestselling author of books like* Fred Factor *and* The Potential Principle *and a noted expert on leadership, team building, customer service and company change. He holds the Certified Speaking Professional designation from the National Speakers Association and is a member of the Speaker Hall of Fame. Check out any of his excellent books, his video series, "Team Building: How to Motivate and Manage People," or his website, marksanborn.com, to learn more.*

# Experts of the Month: Dr. Maria Jablonski & Linda Carpentier from "EyeSite RI"

Out of all the doctors, eye doctors have always been the "fun" ones to visit—mostly because they don't give any shots! If you're looking for an eyecare practice that is warm and welcoming, then EyeSite RI is the perfect place for you. We selected Maria Jablonski and Linda Carpentier as our *Experts of the Month*, because you can *feel* the love and care in their office.

EyeSite RI was founded in 2009 by Dr. Maria Jablonski and optician Linda Carpentier. Having worked together previously, the duo decided to open their own practice. When they opened the practice, they had one goal in mind; they wanted to treat their patients like they would *treat their family members* if they came in for a visit.

What makes them stand out from other eyecare practices? Here at EyeSite RI, you **won't be just another number**. Maria and Linda didn't want to be like other practices, where doctors don't get to know their patients. They knew that they wanted to create a "family practice type of atmosphere," while bringing back the *personal touch* to office visits. These ladies know that "the best care happens when you get to know your patients."

At EyeSite RI, they offer complete primary care, as well as full service of contact lenses. They do everything from your annual eye exam to emergency visits. If they can't treat you, or you need the next level of care, they have  specialists they trust and readily recommend. Maria and Linda believe in the "continuity of care," where the patients don't leave their practice without having a proper plan of attack. When it comes to their eyecare and customer service, they go **above and beyond** to elevate their care to the next level.

When asked what they like about working with us, Maria and Linda agree that they don't have *any* complaints! They like how easily they can contact us. Linda likes how we can give the results they **need**. She states that "If we have any problems, we know that we can count on you guys to fix it." Maria believes that we stand out because when they call us, they get a person answering the phone. She states that "It's huge being able to just be in contact with you. Nobody likes [to call and] get a menu, and select the wrong menu option."

EyeSite RI is located at them at 110 Atwood Ave, Cranston, Rhode Island. If you want to learn more, visit their Facebook page or give them a call at (401) 943-4770. They'll help you to "*see the difference*"!

**Do These Things to Keep Your Best Employees From Leaving** —According to the Gallup's 2017 "State of the American Workplace" report, 51% of currently employed adults in the U.S. are on the hunt for a new job, using company time to search far and wide for a better opportunity. How can you prevent this trend from forcing your best people out of your company?

First, you should give the best people in your organization abundant opportunities to move around and apply their strengths where they're best suited. This means new job roles in addition to lateral growth. Every step of the way, you should be having conversations about their personal and professional development, convincing them to grow with you, instead of outgrowing you. One great way to "re-recruit" your employees is to conduct regular "stay interview" questions. What do they like about their job? What don't they like? What are they passionate about doing?

But none of this will matter if you don't recognize your top performers. Learn how your team likes to be recognized and cater to their needs. Everybody wants to feel appreciated. *Inc.com Jan. 22, 2018*
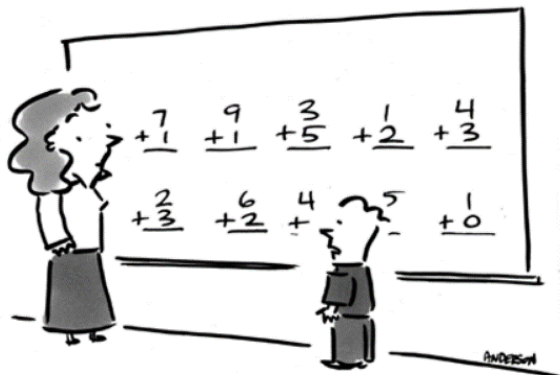


"All I'm saying is we plug these into Excel, let it do its thing, and then we can all play until lunch!"

**Follow These Basics To Help Protect Your Company From Cybercrime**
Modern businesses spend a lot of time and resources protecting themselves from the latest scams and cybercrimes, but it's important not to lose sight of the basics. The same goes for your team. Everyone in the company should be well-versed in essential security principles. Security protocols should be thoroughly documented and included in every new employee's training. Strict policies for violating these items should also be detailed.

Your security plan should mandate strong passwords, requiring users to only ever connect to the network via VPN, with guidelines for regular password changes. A little prevention goes a long way — remembering the security basics and doing some research are the best ways to protect yourself and your company.