

Today's Efficiencies

You've got all of the technology: the cell phone, the Blackberry, the wireless laptop. You are the epitome of modern day business efficiency. But are you really? A recent statistic told us that before you got that Blackberry you worked forty-seven hours a week. Now, with it, you are putting in seventy-one hours every seven days. On top of that, you spend a lot of your day in endless meetings. That doesn't sound that efficient to us. And when is the real work getting done? Are we more effective or are we facilitating burnout? This month we take a step back and look at what is happening in spite of, or because of, technology.



People Crazy Like Me By David Colman

I've often dealt with clients whose employees work in an environment that is, sadly, so typical of twenty-first century business.

Firstly, employees have the latest technological toys: a Blackberry, a cell phone, a wireless laptop. This, in and of itself, is not a bad thing. My concern is in how these tools are used or, dare I say, abused. But more on this later.

My bigger concern, of which the technology is just a contributor, is the misuse of time as well as the total disrespect shown to fellow employees and their time. Brutal as it may seem, many employees spend too much of their work day in meetings. People are often expected at meetings that follow immediately after a previous meeting even though the second meeting may be a ten-minute walk away.

I won't dwell upon the impact of the quality of meetings because of the sheer number, but would ask you to focus upon the impact on the balance and quality of life for these employees. The obvious fallout is that,

because most of the day is spent in meetings, the 'real work' has to be done at other times namely by: staying late, taking work home or coming in on weekends. This, of course, takes a big toll on the personal lives of the employees involved. The imbalance is obvious.

This all brings me back to the technological toys we talked of earlier – the tethers that keep employees 'plugged in' at all times. Not only do meetings eat up so much time, not only do employees have to work evenings and weekends, now employees can be interrupted at any time, be it weekends or vacation breaks.

Some people, people crazy like me, have suggested that this should stop or change drastically.

We can lead as I've described already: by holding too many meetings, having no respect for employees' time, and pushing them to work evenings and weekends. Or, as an alternative, we can lead by creating a culture of balance. We can encourage that, for the most part, our employees leave their work at

the office, that they turn their electronics off at reasonable times including weekends, and that they don't take work with them on vacations.

Some people, people crazy like me, believe that our employees will contribute more to everyone's success if they have the right balance in their lives.

Crazy huh?

TriOpus Group's dynamic "Meetings That Count" program has had a positive impact on the culture of many organizations. If your staff would benefit from learning the important skills involved in efficiently and effectively running meetings, or learning when *not* to run them, give us a call. Our program helps you to:

- Prepare for effective meetings
- Set expectations prior to & during meetings
- Use techniques to encourage participation
- Encourage diverse points of view
- Deal efficiently with disruptive behaviours
- Resolve differences in a 'win-win' way
- Keep everyone focused and moving forward
- Create meaningful and specific action plans



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“ That's the great thing about a tractor. You can't really hear the phone ring. JEFF FOXWORTHY

This a monthly publication intended for clients and associates of TriOpus Group. We welcome any comments, suggestions or questions you may have. Please contact us at 1-800-864-2721 or email Tamara Kerr, Partner at tamara@triopusgroup.com