



CRESTCOM®

# **The Productivity Edge: Strategies for Getting More Done in 2024**

# Table of Contents

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>CHAPTER 1: TAKING A CLOSER LOOK AT PRODUCTIVITY</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>CHAPTER 2: GETTING MORE DONE: INDIVIDUAL STRATEGIES FOR A SUCCESSFUL 2024</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>CHAPTER 3: GETTING MORE DONE: LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES FOR A SUCCESSFUL 2024</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>25</b>




# Introduction

Everyone gets the same 24 hours each day, but how can leaders make the most of each hour? In a world of distractions and ever-expanding to-do lists, it can feel like getting everything done is impossible. In fact, a single distraction can waste 4.8% of the workday! According to a [University of California Irvine study](#), it takes an average of 23 minutes and 15 seconds to resume a task once you have been interrupted.

As we enter a new year, most people have set goals and resolutions to achieve more than the year before. Leaders need effective strategies to help employees and team members achieve more in less time. If you and your team want to be more productive, it is crucial to understand the four key components of productivity and how to manage them effectively.

In this eBook, we will take a closer look at productivity in the workplace to understand its key components and common barriers while also exploring strategies to overcome those challenges to get more done each day!





# Chapter 1: Taking a Closer Look at Productivity

The Impact of Productivity in the Workplace

The Four Keys to Productivity

Productivity can be defined in several ways. In economic terms, it measures the output per unit of input. In the workplace, we tend to see it as the amount of work that can be executed over a certain period. Workplace productivity indicates how well employees contribute to support an organization's overall goals. Productivity can also indicate the overall health of a company's culture. Measuring individual, team, and overall productivity can reveal as much about employee morale as it can about a business's profitability.

## The Impact of Productivity in the Workplace

Productivity significantly impacts an organization's success, competitiveness, and efficiency. Some critical impacts of productivity on an organization include:

- **Financial Performance:** Improved productivity often leads to cost savings and increased revenue. Organizations that produce more with fewer resources are better positioned to generate higher profits.
- **Competitive Advantage:** Productive organizations are more competitive in the market. They can respond quickly to changes, deliver products or services faster,

and adapt to customer demands, giving them an edge over competitors.

- **Innovation and Growth:** Productive environments foster innovation. Employees in a productive workplace have the time and resources to think creatively, problem-solve, and contribute new ideas— driving innovation and supporting organizational growth.
- **Employee Morale and Satisfaction:** When employees can accomplish their tasks efficiently and contribute to the organization's success, it positively impacts their morale and job satisfaction. This, in turn, can lead to higher employee retention rates.
- **Operational Efficiency:** Productivity improvements often result in streamlined processes and enhanced operational efficiency. This can reduce delays, errors, and inefficiencies in various aspects of the organization, contributing to smoother operations.
- **Customer Satisfaction:** Timely and efficient delivery of products or services contributes to customer satisfaction. Satisfied customers are more likely to become repeat customers and advocates for the organization.

- **Adaptability to Change:** Productive organizations are better equipped to adapt to changes in the business environment. A productive organization can navigate changes more effectively, whether it's market fluctuations, technological advancements, or other external factors.
- **Strategic Goal Achievement:** Productivity is directly linked to achieving strategic goals. Organizations with a focus on productivity are more likely to meet their objectives, both short-term and long-term.
- **Overall Organizational Success:** The cumulative impact of productivity on various aspects of the organization contributes to its overall success. It ensures the organization's sustainability, resilience, and ability to thrive in a competitive business landscape.



## The Four Keys to Productivity

Productivity has four key components: time, energy, focus and learning, and each one contributes to the overall success of individuals and organizations.

### Time

One of the most challenging aspects of improving productivity is time management. Today's fast-paced work environment is filled with distractions, interruptions, and demands on our time. It can feel overwhelming, especially if you aren't managing your time effectively.

### Energy

To be consistently productive requires having enough energy to do your best work. Sleep, diet, stress, and overall mental health can affect our energy levels. Managing energy to perform at your best is essential to productivity.

### Focus

Productivity requires us to stay focused on specific tasks. The ability to both think about and remain focused on our work has become more challenging than ever in today's distraction-filled workplaces.

**Time****Energy**

## Learning

Knowledge and skills development is an often overlooked component of productivity. Keeping up with industry trends and developing the right skills to complete tasks is essential in the workplace. From learning new technology to developing critical leadership skills — learning is essential to a productive workplace.

In the following chapters, we will explore each of the four keys and how to manage them to improve individual and organizational productivity.

**Focus****Learning**





# **Chapter 2: Getting More Done: Individual Strategies for a Successful 2024**

Time Management

Energy Management

Staying Focused

Never Stop Learning

Boosting productivity at work starts with implementing individual strategies that will allow you to master the four keys: time, energy, focus and learning.

## Time Management

The first key to productivity is time. There are only so many hours in the day, and in today's fast-paced workplaces, it is easy to get through the workday and not know where the time went or what you have accomplished.

There is no shortage of advice out there about how to manage your time better. It is important to realize that not every technique works for everyone, and it may take a few tries to find one that works best for you. To assist in finding what works for you, we've compiled time-oriented strategies and tips that can be tailored to your preferences.

### To-Do Lists vs. Calendar Blocking

To make the best use of our time first requires knowing what needs to be done. Many people use the tried and true technique of making a to-do list. To-do lists are a great memory aid, and it can be very gratifying to check things off of a list, which can provide motivation and a sense of accomplishment.

However, the problem with most to-do lists is they lack prioritization and can be overambitious. That's why calendar blocking may be a better strategy. When you block time on your calendar for each task on your to-do list, you must be thoughtful about priorities, which helps you be more realistic about what can be accomplished each day.

For calendar blocking to work well, you should schedule your entire day, preferably for at least a week at a time. This means blocking time on your calendar for sleep, eating and breaks in addition to daily tasks. This will give you a better picture of where your time is going each day. If you also track how much time each task takes to complete, you will better predict how much time you need to set aside for your regular activities.



## Time-Blocking Strategies

There are different approaches to blocking your time, so you may want to experiment with each to see what works well for you.

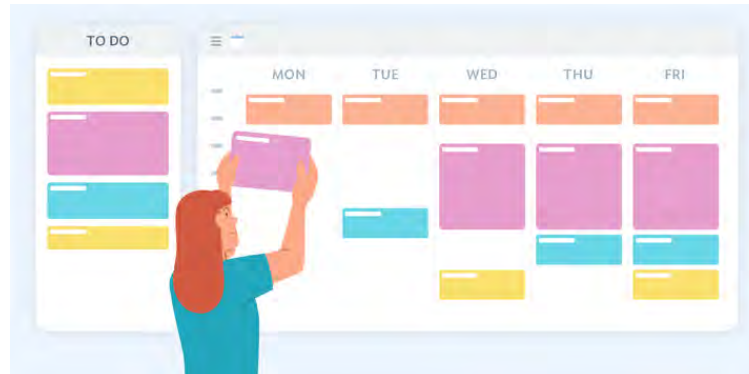
- 1. The 3/3/3 Method** – If you are not ready to block each hour of your day, you can start by structuring your day using the 3/3/3 method. To do this, you commit to spending 3 hours on your most important task, then completing 3 shorter tasks you have been putting off, and working on 3 “maintenance” tasks that keep life in order.

For example, you can block off three hours in the morning to work on an important report. Then, once those three hours are up, you would move on to three shorter tasks, like returning three phone calls, answering three emails, etc. Finally, you would work on three “maintenance” tasks, like running errands, organizing files or tidying your work area.

This method allows for flexibility but provides a real sense of accomplishment each day.

- 2. Timeboxing** – This technique can help if you are prone to procrastination. It is a goal-oriented strategy where you plan a start and end time for each task you must complete. First, you will figure out how long the task should take, then find a time on your calendar to box off that much time to work on the task.

Set your notifications to “do not disturb” during that time box, and focus entirely on that task. This technique is meant for shorter tasks, so if you are looking at a large project that will take several hours, use time boxing to break that project up into smaller tasks. Setting time aside for each step in a larger project can help you set realistic timelines and avoid becoming overwhelmed.



**3. Zones** — If time boxing is too rigid for your liking, consider blocking zones on your calendar instead. For example, you might want to set aside time for three zones each day: Deep Work Zone, Meetings Zone and Personal Zone.

For example, you could set aside a few hours each morning for deep work, setting your calendar to “busy” or “do not disturb.” During this time, coworkers will know you are busy and allow you to focus on tasks that require more thought or concentration.

Then, you can block a Meeting zone on your calendar each day where employees and colleagues know they can schedule time with you. Then, you would block personal time on your calendar to indicate when you start and end your work day, take a lunch, etc.

Using zones on your calendar will allow you to group similar tasks together to reduce the time lost switching between tasks.

No matter which time-blocking strategy you choose, remember to leave unscheduled time on your calendar. If there is no blank space on your calendar, one unexpected event might derail your entire day. Real life is full of

interruptions, shifting priorities and unplanned emergencies. Leaving some unscheduled time on your calendar will allow you to move tasks to a new time when needed so you can manage life’s surprises!

Also, if you are not already using them, explore the many calendar apps available to help you stay organized. For example, Google Calendar has features to help teams see each other’s availability, color code your different blocks, set blocks of time as “busy” or “free,” and more. Use technology to your advantage by setting notifications to help you know when it’s time to switch tasks and send you reminders about tasks that need to be done.

## Energy Management

Another crucial step to improving your productivity is to manage your energy. For our purposes, energy refers to your physical health, mental health, stress levels and your level of motivation. You can block your calendar as much as you want, but if you are too tired to read a spreadsheet, that work is not getting done (or is not getting done well). In fact, Gallup reports that workers who typically get a poor night’s sleep have double the rate of unplanned absenteeism compared to other workers, costing an estimated \$44.6 billion in lost productivity each year!

One of the most important things you can do to increase productivity is to take care of yourself first. Getting enough sleep, eating regularly, and finding time for movement is crucial to maintaining your ability to do great work and get things done. Putting these things on your calendar is as important (if not more) than scheduling a weekly check-in meeting, answering emails or writing a report.



It is also important to realize that your energy will fluctuate throughout the day. Think about organizing your calendar so that your most complex work is scheduled when you have plenty of energy. If you are a morning person, that might mean scheduling your most difficult task first thing in the morning. Then, you can schedule more mundane or simple tasks in the afternoon when you may not have the energy to do more complex work.

In addition to practicing healthy habits, what if you could make your work more energizing? In his book *Feel Good Productivity*, Ali Abdaal explores strategies for using positive psychology to boost energy and increase productivity. He posits that if you can find ways to have more fun at work, it will become less stressful, which allows for more energy, creativity, and, importantly—happiness!

## Energizing Strategy 1: Be More Curious

One of Abdaal's strategies to make work more energizing is to embrace your curiosity. Researchers at the University of California Davis Center for Neuroscience found that people are 30% more likely to recall a fact they found interesting than they are to remember something boring. They discovered that when people are curious about a topic,

their neurological activity changes, activating the part of the brain responsible for learning and forming memories.

The more you can approach tasks with curiosity, the more likely you will be engaged with work. Try asking thoughtful questions, taking a new approach to completing tasks, or collaborating with colleagues to generate new ideas.

## Energizing Strategy 2: Have More Fun

To make work more energizing, look for ways to make it fun. Dale Carnegie once said, "People rarely succeed unless they have fun in what they are doing." Finding the fun in daily tasks is not always easy, but it does not need to be complicated.

Having more fun might mean playing your favorite music while you answer emails. Or, starting a friendly competition for who can get closest to guessing how many customer service issues come through the system that day. When faced with a mundane or dreaded task, ask yourself how you can make it a little more fun. Just asking questions can help shift your attitude and make the work less daunting.

## Energizing Strategy 3: Lower the Stakes

Abdaal recommends reframing failures as opportunities for learning and growth and learning to focus on the process rather than the outcomes of your work. To do this, he advises approaching your work with sincerity rather than seriousness.

He explains this approach with an example, "If you were approaching a difficult project at work sincerely rather than seriously, you might focus on the process of completing each task rather than becoming fixated on the end result. You might also seek out the input and collaboration of others, rather than trying to tackle the project on your own. By doing these things, you may find that it's easier to approach it in the spirit of play, and that you're better able to stay focused and motivated throughout."

## Staying Focused

In her book, *Attention Span: A Groundbreaking Way to Restore Balance, Happiness and Productivity*, [Dr. Gloria Mark details research on the decline of our ability to focus](#). In her research, she found, "In 2004, we measured the average attention on a screen to be 2½ minutes. Some

years later, we found attention spans to be about 75 seconds. Now, we find people can only pay attention to one screen for an average of 47 seconds. In fact, our research shows it takes 25 minutes 26 seconds before we go back to the original working sphere or project.”

Her research also found that in terms of work, people spend about 10.5 minutes on any work project before being interrupted (internally or by someone else). Then, instead of returning to the original work project, people tend to move on to another task. And that's not all. Typically, we are interrupted again on that third work project and move to a fourth!

So, how do we reclaim our ability to focus? Here are a few strategies to help you improve your ability to concentrate and reach a flow state for optimum productivity.

## Stop Multitasking

The modern workplace has glorified the word multitasking. It is considered a top skill to place on your resume and is listed in almost every job description as a requirement for success. Unfortunately, humans are not able to focus on two tasks at once. We can only switch focus quickly back and forth between tasks, diminishing the quality of our

work on both.

Switching between tasks wastes time, so multitasking actually takes longer than doing one thing at a time. Each task switch may waste only a fraction of a second, but it can eventually add up to a 40% loss in productivity. It also increases the chance of making errors and limits your ability to think creatively.

The most common cause of task-switching during the workday is to check email. Therefore, if you want to improve your ability to focus, looking at your email habits might be a good place to start.





Here are some ways you can adjust your approach to email:

- **Don't check your email first thing in the morning.** Instead, think about your time management strategies and block the first one or two hours of your schedule for deep-focus work, followed by a block of time for checking email.
- **Use your "out of office" message to let people know you are busy.** If you need to complete a task that requires your total focus but feel uncomfortable not constantly checking your email, set your out-of-office message to let people know when you will be checking your email.

For example, it might say, "I am working on an important project and will have limited access to my email. I will respond as soon as I am able. I appreciate your understanding." You could also provide times of day that you will be responding to emails, etc.

- **Work in full-screen mode.** Use technology to your advantage. Whatever you are working on, use full-screen mode on your computer to avoid visual notifications from other applications. You can also use

- do-not-disturb features on instant messaging and phone apps so that you aren't distracted by pings and dings!

Putting limits on your email may be difficult at first. Making a drastic change in how you get work done might require communicating with your coworkers and clients to set expectations. At first, it may feel like you are ignoring an essential part of your job. However, when done correctly, you will get more done, produce higher quality work, and still be responsive to your emails.



## Never Stop Learning

The fourth key to productivity is to never stop learning. Increasing your productivity requires keeping your skills sharp, learning new ways technology can empower you, and staying curious about the world. Learning boosts confidence, improves cognitive function, and is good for your mental health, which will help you increase your productivity at work.



## Read More Books

One way to keep learning throughout your life and career is to read more books! According to a study from the Pew Research Center, people read fewer books than forty years ago, with only 31% of the population reading at least one book a year. That is unfortunate because reading has many benefits:

- Reading strengthens your brain, allowing you to process information more efficiently.
- It strengthens visual and auditory comprehension, especially if you listen to someone read out loud (so audiobooks count too).
- Reading reduces stress levels by up to 68%. In as little as six minutes, your heart rate slows, your blood pressure lowers, and your muscles begin to relax.
- It enhances your creativity and imagination. A 2007 study between Appalachian State University and Angelo State University found that college students who read for pleasure had higher levels of creativity and achieved their academic goals more easily.
- Reading improves your memory. You strengthen both your episodic and working memory by engaging your

- brain through verbal recall and activating your short and long-term memory as you track the information or storyline.
- It improves focus and concentration by reducing the time spent on your phone. Think of it as retraining your brain to sustain focus on one thing for an extended period of time.

Chances are, if you are reading our productivity tips, you may wonder how you will find the time to read more books. The author of *Atomic Habits*, James Clear, has some strategies for working more reading time into your day.

### Make Reading Obvious

Clear explains that most of our habits and behaviors result from cues we receive from our environment. Use that to your advantage, and place reading materials visible and within easy reach around your home.

For example, keep a book on your nightstand, by your favorite “TV” spot, or anywhere else you find yourself scrolling on your phone. Or, you can even put a reading app on your phone and move it to your home screen. Apps like Audible, Kindle or Pocket allow you to read books as conveniently as you can scroll social media. So, move your



other apps out of sight and start clicking on a book instead!

### **Strategy 2: Make Reading Fun**

Building a habit is easier when you enjoy what you are doing. So, make reading an activity you look forward to! For example, choose topics you are genuinely interested in. If you love a murder mystery, go for it! If you want to read research on tropical birds, that's great!

You can also make it a social activity by joining a book club or having regular book swaps with friends. If you have friends who like reading, reading becomes more attractive.

### **Strategy 3: Set (Easy) Goals**

Make reading an easy habit by setting some easy-to-reach goals to get started. For example, instead of setting a grand target of 30 books in a year, start with a goal of one page a day! Committing to reading one page a day is achievable, and there is nothing to stop you from reading more than that if you want to. But, even on a hectic day, reaching your goal of one page will feel like an accomplishment and help you build a strong reading habit.



# Chapter 3: Getting More Done: Leadership Strategies for a Successful 2024

Common Barriers to Workplace Productivity -  
And How to Overcome Them

The Productivity Edge

Now that you have some personal strategies to improve your productivity, let's look at how leaders can support productivity in the workplace. Great leaders create a workplace environment that helps their teams excel. The first step to building a productive workplace is understanding the common barriers to productivity at work.

## Common Barriers to Workplace Productivity – And How to Overcome Them

A leader's job is to remove as many obstacles to productivity as possible to help their team succeed. We have identified 6 common barriers that affect your team's productivity and have developed some strategies you can use to overcome them!

### Barrier # 1: Poor Communication

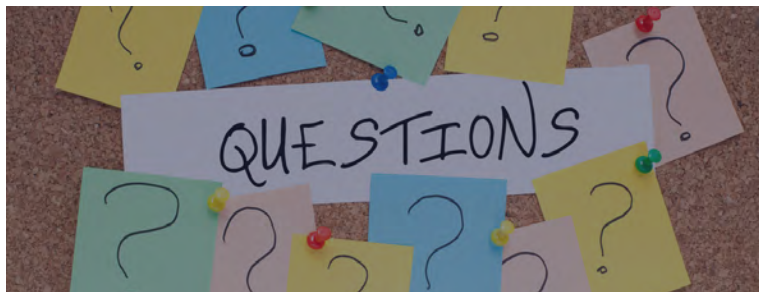
Communication is one of the most significant barriers to productivity in the workplace. It is a challenge for leaders everywhere, whether it is a lack of clarity around goals, ineffective feedback or overwhelming employees with too much—or conflicting—information.

To improve communication on your team, leaders must set an example and build trust within the organization. Leaders must master the art of communication while also helping their employees develop their communication skills. Here are three ways to improve team communications:

- **Resolve conflicts quickly.** Nothing shuts down a team's ability to communicate like an unresolved conflict. Misunderstandings and missed deadlines may seem inconsequential, but frustrations can cause significant disruptions if they build over time. Teach your team members how to manage conflict, and encourage them to let you know when there are problems within the team.
- **Encourage bottom-up communication.** Encourage employees to feel comfortable speaking up and communicating their ideas and opinions. Leaders can miss out on great ideas or become unaware of significant problems when front-line employees are afraid to speak up. Help them feel comfortable sharing with you by seeking their ideas and feedback. This might be in a one-on-one meeting or a casual conversation in the hallway.

- **Ask the right questions.** At Crestcom, we like to use the concept of the “Afters” to guide communication. In his book, *The Jelly Effect: How to Make Your Communication Stick*, Andy Bounds, author and Crestcom faculty member, explains how focusing on your “Afters,” or your desired results, future needs and expectations, will help you communicate more effectively.

For example, you don’t want a newspaper; you want the news you get from it. You don’t want toothpaste; you want clean teeth. And you don’t want a report; you want the information the report will provide. The best way to get what you want the first time is by asking future-based questions focusing on results and deliverables. Ask yourself: “What am I looking to achieve?” and “What must happen after this project is done for this to be successful?”



## Barrier # 2: Low Employee Engagement

Employee engagement is vital to productivity. In their State of the Global Workplace: 2023 Global Report, Gallup estimated that “Employees who are not engaged or who are actively disengaged cost the world \$8.8 trillion in lost productivity... That’s equal to 9% of global GDP.”

The same report found that only 32% of full and part-time employees are engaged at work, which is a massive barrier to productivity in most organizations.

Overcoming low employee engagement is a challenge for most workplaces. It is a complex problem that requires a thoughtful approach. Leaders can start with these three actions:

1. **Start with communication.** Working on barrier number one— communication— is a great way to improve employee engagement. Ask for candid feedback from employees about their level of engagement through either a formal engagement survey or informal conversations. You can’t solve problems you don’t know about, so open and honest communication is critical.

2. **Connect work with meaning.** People thrive at work when they feel they contribute to a greater purpose. As a leader, you can help employees see their impact on the organization and how they make a difference.
3. **Empower your employees.** Give your team autonomy. Set clear expectations and define responsibilities, then let employees determine how their work gets done. Micromanaging is a huge engagement killer. When employees feel empowered to make decisions and control how their work gets done, it will boost their confidence and productivity.

### Barrier # 3: Burnout

Workplace burnout is another common reason for lowered productivity. It is crucial to understand the impact burnout can have on an entire team. Too often, leaders confuse increased workload and work hours with increased productivity. However, overloading employees and not supporting their physical and mental well-being will ultimately cause burnout.

Employees who experience burnout have a 57% increased risk of workplace absence for more than two weeks due to illness. According to Dennis P. Stolle, JD, PhD, APA's Senior Director of Applied Psychology, burnout seriously affects organizational effectiveness. "When workers are suffering from burnout, their productivity drops, and they may become less innovative and more likely to make errors. If this spreads throughout an organization, it can have a serious negative impact on productivity, service quality, and the bottom line."

**"When workers are suffering from burnout, their productivity drops, and they may become less innovative and more likely to make errors."**

-Dennis P. Stolle

To overcome this problem, leaders can take the following steps:

1. **Prioritize employee well-being.** Leaders must support the mental and physical well-being of employees. Providing adequate breaks, paid time off, and encouraging healthy behaviors can significantly reduce workplace stress.
1. **Distribute workloads carefully.** Managers must be aware of their team's workload and be realistic about their capacity to get things done. Check in with employees regularly to assess how they are handling their current workload and determine if adjustments need to be made.

1. Recognize signs of burnout. Learn the signs of burnout so you can recognize it in employees and take steps to mitigate it. If you notice these changes in an employee, it is important to intervene. Schedule a one-on-one to share your concerns and determine what is happening. Then, you can work together to find solutions. Some common signs of burnout are:

- Lack of interest or enthusiasm
- Exhibiting a negative attitude or irritability
- Moving slower than normal
- Frequent tardiness or absences
- Producing lower-quality work





## Barrier #4: Distractions

Distractions are a real productivity killer. Noise distractions alone can cause a 66% drop in productivity, and more than 46% of employees describe their workplace as noisy and distracting. But it's not just noise; it is instant messaging applications, emails, phone calls and walk-ins. Some researchers estimate that workplace distractions account for 759 lost hours per employee per year!

In his book, *Stolen Focus: Why You Can't Pay Attention - and How to Think Deeply Again*, Johann Hari explains, "The average office worker now spends 40 percent of their work time wrongly believing they are "multitasking" - which means they are incurring all these costs for their attention and focus. In fact, uninterrupted time is becoming rare. One study found that most of us working in offices never get a whole hour uninterrupted in a normal day."

To help your team overcome distractions in the workplace, you can share your new personal strategies discussed earlier in this eBook! Help employees understand the drawbacks of "multitasking" and create a work culture that respects each other's calendar blocking and need for uninterrupted work time.

For organizations working in person, leaders can also look

at the office environment. Are there changes you can make to the office layout to minimize distractions? Is the temperature too hot or too cold? Can you provide noise-canceling headphones for employees who cannot focus in an open-concept or cubicle-based office?

## Barrier #5: Meetings

Workers spend an average of 31 hours each month in unproductive meetings. Some research shows that 70% of meetings keep employees from doing productive work. While the average length of meetings has shortened since remote work became more common during the COVID pandemic, the number of meetings a worker attends rose by 13.5% on average.

We have all been in a meeting that "could have been an email." Take ownership of the meetings you lead, and make sure they are necessary, have a clear agenda, and include the right participants. Here are some tips for making meetings more productive:

- **Create and distribute the agenda beforehand.** When meeting participants know the topics for discussion, they will be prepared with the information needed to keep the meeting on track.



- **Set strict time limits.** Put meetings on a shared calendar and ensure they start and end on time. Create a culture of respecting everyone's time by adhering to the time limit so employees can plan their work day.
- **Limit the number of attendees.** Research by Robert Sutton, a professor of organizational behavior at Stanford University, found that the most productive meetings include 5-8 people. When meetings are too large, there is not enough time for everyone to participate, time is wasted with information sharing and catching others up, and people become less candid and willing to share their opinions. However, smaller groups build a sense of intimacy and allow time to hear from each attendee.
- **Don't hold meetings for status updates.** Use technology to your advantage. There are numerous ways for people to share a status update with the team—emails, productivity platforms like Slack, or a shared Google Sheet, just to name a few. Set expectations for how and when people should report their progress and save meeting time for more meaningful discussions.

## Barrier #6: Lack of Training

Employees who are not adequately trained to succeed in their roles or whose skills are not up-to-date can harm

workplace productivity. Rapid changes in technology can leave poorly trained employees using outdated tools, causing them to miss out on opportunities to improve their efficiency.

Additionally, a lack of leadership training for managers can be a root cause of several of the barriers we have listed here. Often, employees are promoted for doing their job well but lack the skills to lead teams effectively. Do your managers have the skills they need to build productive teams?



Crestcom's leadership development program is designed to help managers develop the 12 core skills needed to lead an effective and productive team:

- Communication
- Customer Focus
- Decision-Making
- Delegation
- Developing Productive Teams
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Emotional Intelligence
- Innovation
- Leading Through Change
- Managing Time and Energy
- Problem-Solving and Strategic Thinking
- Recruiting and Retention

When employees and managers have the skills they need to succeed, productivity will increase throughout the organization.

## The Productivity Edge

As you work towards success in the next year, what new strategies will you implement to make this your most productive year ever? Self-improvement writer Paul J. Meyer once wrote, "Productivity is never an accident. It is always the result of a commitment to excellence, intelligent planning, and focused effort."

Our final productivity strategy is simply to focus on the four keys to productivity: Time, Energy, Focus and Learning. Making even minor improvements to any of these four areas will help give you and your team the productivity edge and help you get more done in 2024!

**"Productivity is never an accident. It is always the result of a commitment to excellence, intelligent planning, and focused effort."**

-Paul J. Meyer

# References

Abdaal, A. (2023). Feel-good productivity: How to do more of what matters to you. Cornerstone Press.

American Psychological Association. (2023, May 12). Employers need to focus on workplace burnout: Here's why. American Psychological Association. <https://www.apa.org/topics/healthy-workplaces/workplace-burnout>

American Psychological Association. (n.d.). Multitasking: Switching costs. American Psychological Association. <https://www.apa.org/topics/research/multitasking>

Axtell, P. (2018, June 22). The most productive meetings have fewer than 8 people. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2018/06/the-most-productive-meetings-have-fewer-than-8-people>

Clear, J. (2023, March 23). James Clear: How to make reading habits: Penguin Random House. PenguinRandomhouse.com. <https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/articles/james-clear-make-reading-a-habit/>

Essential workplace distractions statistics in 2024 • ZipDo. ZipDo. (2024, January 3). <https://zipdo.co/statistics/workplace-distractions/>

Hari, J. (2023). Stolen focus: Why you can't pay attention--and how to think deeply again. Crown.

Kwik, J. (2023, February 24). 10 brain reasons to make reading a habit. Medium. <https://kwikbrain.medium.com/10-brain-reasons-to-make-reading-a-habit-aa628d4b498c>

# References

Mark, G. (2023). Attention span: A groundbreaking way to restore balance, happiness and productivity. Thorndike Press.

Mark, G., Gudith, D., & Klocke, U. (n.d.). The cost of interrupted work: More speed and stress. The Cost of Interrupted Work: More Speed and Stress. <https://ics.uci.edu/~gmark/chi08-mark.pdf>

Pendell, R. (2024, January 8). Employee engagement strategies: Fixing the world's \$8.8 trillion problem. Gallup.com. <https://www.gallup.com/workplace/393497/world-trillion-workplace-problem.aspx>

Witters, D. W., & Agrawal, S. (2022, October 31). Poor sleep linked to \$44 billion in lost productivity. Gallup.com. <https://news.gallup.com/poll/390797/poor-sleep-linked-billion-lost-productivity.aspx>

Zippia. (2023, July 7). 28+ incredible meeting statistics [2023]: Virtual, Zoom, in-person meetings and productivity. Zippia. <https://www.zippia.com/advice/meeting-statistics/>

# About Crestcom International

Crestcom International specialized in developing managers into leaders...  
**and we're different.**

Crestcom is a trusted leadership training partner for firms ranging from small and medium-sized businesses to Fortune 500 enterprises. Over the last 30 years, our accredited and award-winning leadership development programs have impacted more than 1 million executives in over 60 countries worldwide.

We've leveraged a proprietary training process that emphasizes measured development, effective implementation and ultimate accountability to create consistent and sustained behavior change. Our subject matter experts and live facilitated classes help participants develop lifelong skills that yield long-term results.

It's why Crestcom has been and will continue to be the top choice for transforming managers into leaders.

