

GET
MORE
DONE:

100

WAYS TO INCREASE PRODUCTIVITY

Type “productivity at work” into your favorite search engine, and you’ll get literally millions of results – and you could waste millions of hours trying to determine if they’re any good.

But you don’t have to!

In this eBook, we’ve gathered 100 proven ways to improve your own productivity and that of your team – including your temporary or contract staff. In this eBook, you’ll find:

- ways to boost your personal productivity inside and outside the office,
- how to help your team get more done in less time,
- strategies for keeping your temporary or contract staff productive, and
- methods for allying with your staffing partner to drive efficiency.

MAKE IT PERSONAL: GETTING YOUR TO-DO LIST DONE

When you arrive at work, it can be tempting to just “dive in.” Instead, work smarter...instead of harder:

- 1. CREATE AN EFFICIENT TO-DO LIST.** Delegate where you can, prioritize where you can't.
- 2. SET ONE MAJOR GOAL FOR THE DAY.** Focus on getting the most important to-do done.
- 3. DO SIMILAR TASKS AT SIMILAR TIMES.** Instead of wasting brainpower switching between tasks, group like tasks together – such as making all your phone calls at once.
- 4. SCHEDULE FOR MAXIMUM EFFECT.** Put your most important tasks at the time of day your brain is most alert. Use “slump” times for less-important tasks, like filing.
- 5. STICK TO YOUR ROUTINE.** Brains work more efficiently on a routine. Once you find a daily schedule that works for you, stick to it.

TO DO LIST

①. So

②. Many

③. Things





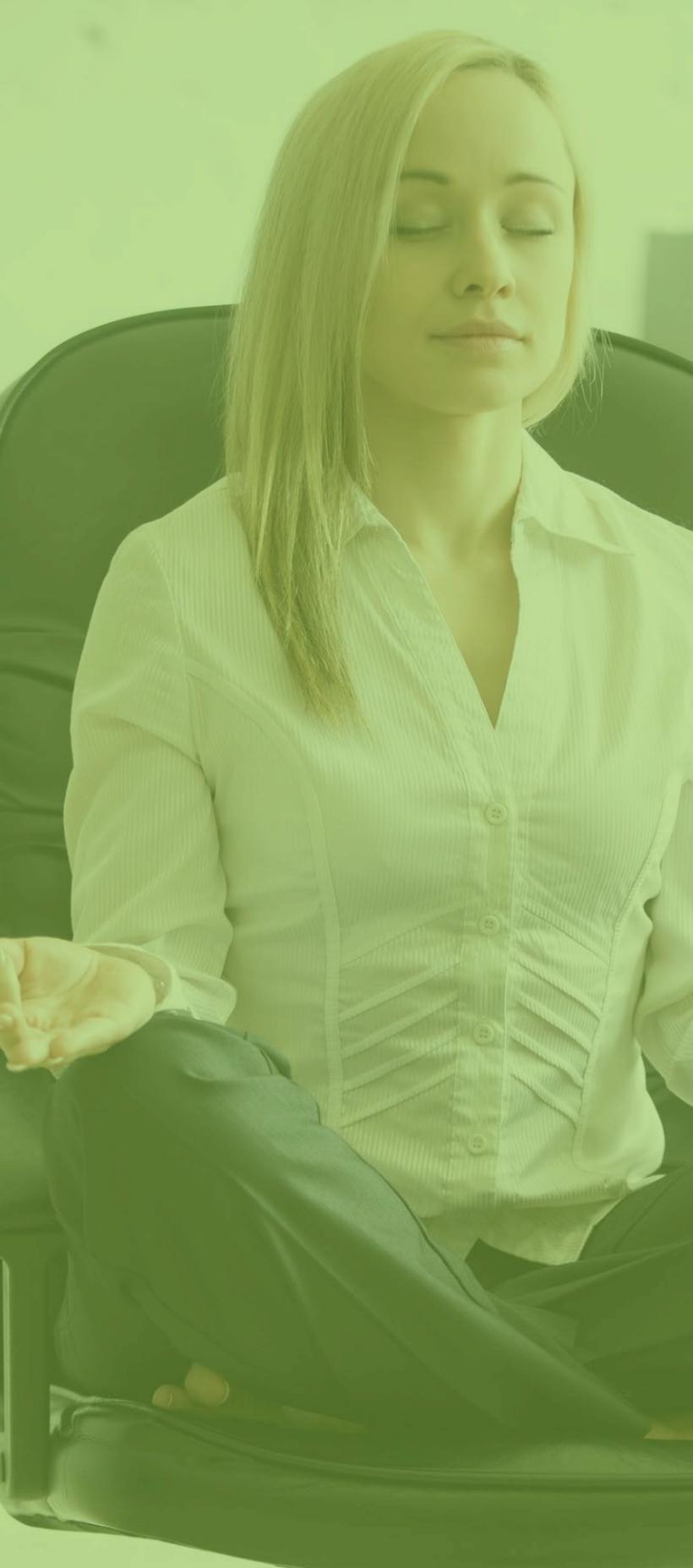
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6. **WORK (A BIT) LESS, ACCOMPLISH (A LOT) MORE.** Your brain becomes fatigued with extensive focus. Try a Pomodoro timer: 25 minutes of focused work, followed by a five-minute break.
7. **STEP OUTSIDE NOW AND THEN.** Get outdoors several times a day if possible. Natural light and fresh air can help you feel more energized.
8. **"JUMPSTART" YOUR PRODUCTIVITY.** Keep a list of "low-brain energy" tasks that take five minutes or less to complete. Whenever you don't feel up to tackling a big task, do one of the smaller ones.
9. **SCHEDULE YOUR EMAIL CHECKS.** Whether it's every 15 minutes or once a day, set a time to check your email and stick to it.
10. **GO TO OHIO.** With email, Only Handle It Once. Open the email and take care of it or forward it to someone who can.
11. **GET QUIET(ER).** Noise can be a huge drain on productivity. Use office space or headphones to reduce noise and improve thought processes.
12. **MAKE TIME TO THINK.** Deep thought allows you to plan better and work smarter, not harder.
13. **TRACK YOUR TIME.** Apps like Rescuetime can help you keep track of how you spend time, so you can make smarter and more efficient choices.

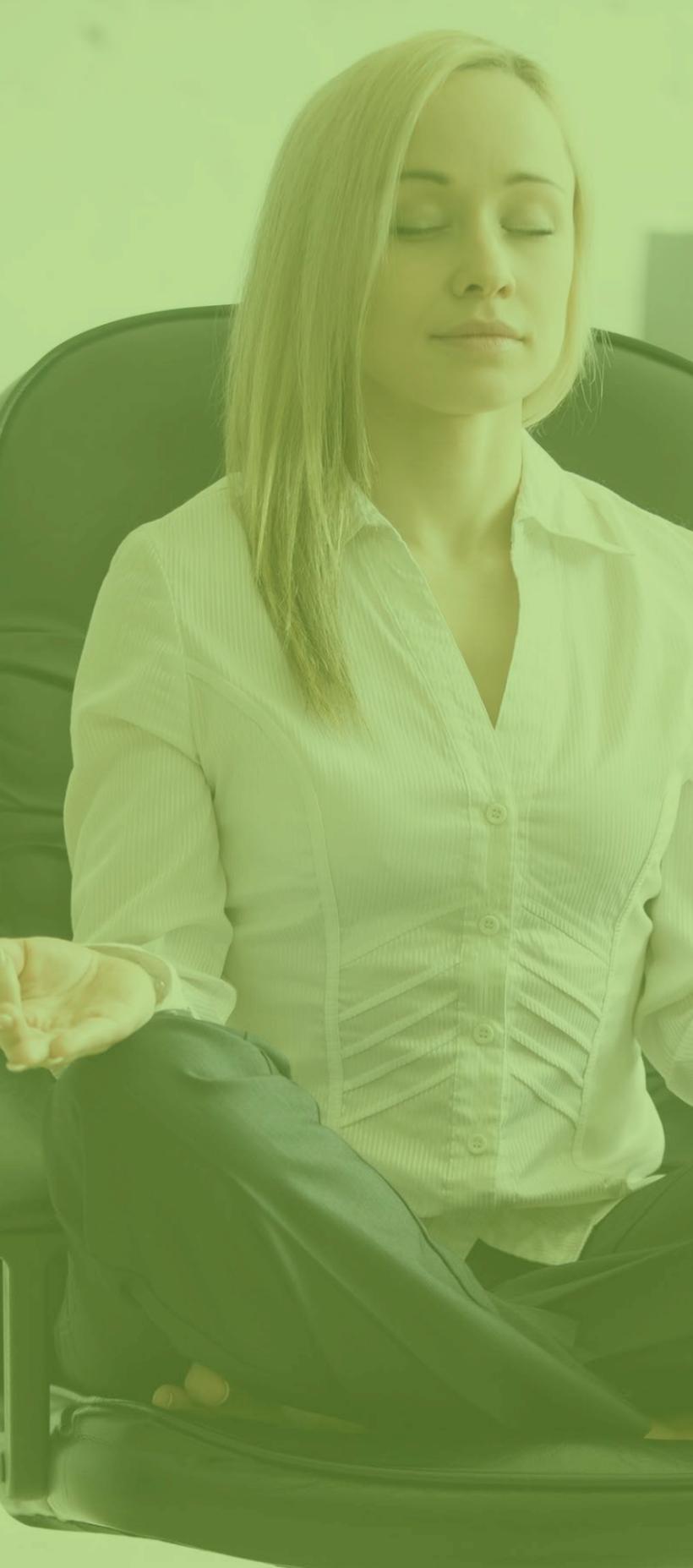


STEP OUTSIDE: WELLNESS+WORK=PRODUCTIVITY

To be your best at work, you need to take care of yourself when you're not. Here's how:

- 14. REBEL AGAINST BURNOUT.** Don't take work home. Stop treating caffeine as a food group. And bow out of "brag battles" in which co-workers talk about how hard they're working. Your goal is to work smarter and live well.
- 15. EAT BETTER.** Stash healthy snacks in your desk so you're not tempted by junk food. At every meal, remember to include all three macronutrient groups: Carbohydrates, protein, and fat.
- 16. HYDRATE.** Water helps the body clear toxins, fight fatigue, and stay alert and focused. Keep a large bottle or cup of water on your desk and sip regularly.
- 17. GO FOR A WALK.** During lunch or longer breaks, take a walk around the office or outdoors. The movement will help reenergize your brain and boost your creativity.





- 18. GUARD YOUR SLEEP.** “All-nighters” might be cool for college students, but not for working professionals. A solid night’s sleep will do more for your productivity than working in the wee hours ever could.
- 19. GET YOUR CHECKUPS.** A yearly physical and dental cleaning can help you maintain good health or address potential problems before they cost you productive time.
- 20. LOVE YOUR HOBBIES.** Find one thing outside work you’re passionate about. When you leave work, focus on that. Hobbies and loved ones help you relax and boost your creativity.
- 21. GIVE BACK.** Volunteering helps people become more empathetic, thoughtful and innovative. Volunteer work that overlaps with your hobbies or family time is a natural choice.
- 22. BREATHE.** Take five minutes at a time to simply focus on your breathing. When your mind wanders, just bring it back to your breathing. This simple exercise can help you relax, be more mindful, and do better work.
- 23. GET SUPPORT.** Put together a group of people to share healthy lunches or go for mid-afternoon walks. Friendship is a big part of wellness.



JOIN THE TEAM: HELPING YOUR EMPLOYEES TACKLE TASKS

Your productivity matters – and so does your team's. Here's how to help employees work more efficiently without overloading your own plate:

- 24. KILL DISTRACTING EMAILS.** If an item can be dealt with face-to-face or on the phone, do it.
- 25. ENCOURAGE PRIORITIZATION.** Start asking employees what their number-one priority is for the day – and checking in to be sure they complete it.
- 26. CLARIFY THE VISION.** If top priorities (as reported by your team) don't fit the overall goal or vision, clarify. Make sure the team understands what they're working toward, so they can do so more efficiently.
- 27. CREATE OWNERSHIP.** Employees who feel they own their work will give it more care and attention. Strive to help workers "own" their jobs as part of their identity.
- 28. MAKE WORK MEANINGFUL.** Ask your team what work they like best or feel they are best at, and assign as much of it as possible.





- 29. SKIP THE MEETING.** If a topic can be handled in a phone call, email or memo, do it.
- 30. STICK TO THE AGENDA.** If you must have a meeting, circulate the agenda in advance. Don't allow off-agenda items at the meeting.
- 31. ASSIGN A TIMEKEEPER.** At each meeting, assign someone to alert the team about the time. (By making the last person there the automatic timekeeper, you also encourage on-time arrivals.)
- 32. REDUCE NOISE.** Noise in the workplace reduces productivity and is a major distraction. Find ways to reduce noise or to create a separate space for phone calls and conversations.
- 33. GET FLEXIBLE.** Use flextime options to let employees do their work at the best time of day for their own focus and well-being.
- 34. PROMOTE WELLNESS.** Build a daily schedule that allows for time to take a walk, grab a healthy snack, or simply sit and breathe for a moment.
- 35. SAY THANK YOU.** Boost engagement and productivity simply by acknowledging when a job is well done.
- 36. CONSIDER HIRING TEMP HELP.** Temporary or contract staff can take on repetitive, low-priority tasks, allowing your team to focus on higher-priority, bigger-impact projects.



THERE'S AN APP FOR THAT: BOOSTING EMPLOYEE PRODUCTIVITY WITH TECHNOLOGY

Mobile phones and tablets are everywhere these days, and the apps that make them powerful productivity tools are easier and cheaper than ever. Here are some of the best ways to use tech to improve productive work:

- 37. PROJECT MANAGEMENT.** Apps like Podio, Asana and Basecamp can help everyone stay on task and communicate about each stage in an important project.
- 38. TIME MANAGEMENT.** Handle is an app that offers a “smart” to-do list, prioritizing tasks, alerting about deadlines, and integrating with email.
- 39. TIME TRACKING.** Want to know how much time you’re using – or wasting – in various activities? Try Rescuetime, an app that runs in the background and tracks how you use other apps and programs.





- 40. BILLABLE HOURS.** Toggl, Timecamp and Hours are all easy ways to help employees track billable hours – and thus manage their own productivity.
- 41. NETWORKING.** In Contactually, you can manage relationships, set follow-up reminders and more. For the “inside scoop” on a new contact, try Charlie, which scours the web to give you a briefing on new contacts.
- 42. MARKETING.** Import content and schedule posts on Fanchimp, track email opens, clicks and views with Yesware, or simply do all your social media in one place on Hootsuite.
- 43. MANAGE THE MONEY.** Take a credit card payment anywhere with Square, or pay and receive payments via Venmo and PayPal – both of which also generate invoices and expense reports.
- 44. STAY ORGANIZED.** For keeping track of notes, reports and other documents, try EverNote, which also streamlines sharing among teams.
- 45. GO PAPERLESS.** Apps like CamScanner and Scannable use your phone’s camera as a mobile scanner, allowing you to organize documents without losing them.
- 46. COLLABORATE.** Streamline conference calls with Uberconference, create a shared digital whiteboard in Syncspace, or pool document sharing, editing, and messaging in Quip – or in Google Drive.



EMPLOYEE SPACE-TIME: IMPROVING PRODUCTIVITY IN WORK/PLAY SPACES

The physical space in which employees work – and the space they occupy outside the office – also has a significant effect on their well-being. These tips can help you improve the space and thus boost efficient, smarter work:

- 47. RETHINK THE CUBE FARM.** Cubicles are efficient ways to use space, but can hurt productivity. Rethink their installation or use.
- 48. MAKE ACCESS A PRIORITY.** Create a work space that gives employees access to team members for easier communication and brainstorming sessions.
- 49. DIFFERENT SPACES, DIFFERENT USES.** If noise is a problem, move louder conversations to an enclosed space.
- 50. CUT DOWN ON NOISE.** Headphones, white noise generators, or simply rearranging work spaces can all reduce noise, allowing workers to think.
- 51. CREATE A “GATHERING SPACE.”** A centrally located table or a separate meeting room can help people work together without interrupting their neighbors.





- 52. GO TOWARD THE LIGHT.** Natural light helps boost mood and therefore productivity. Use full-spectrum bulbs, windows, and other tools to help increase light in the space.
- 53. HOW DOES IT FEEL?** Good air circulation and climate control are essential to reduce distractions, from smells to sweating.
- 54. MAKE IT PERSONAL.** Allowing workers to customize their work spaces helps them feel more comfortable, which makes it easier to work.
- 55. BE POLITE.** Address etiquette in the workplace, from loud personal phone calls to visiting another person's cubicle. Clear rules help make workers more comfortable and better able to focus.
- 56. CREATE "DO NOT DISTURB" OPTIONS.** Use signs or other signals workers can put up when they need to focus without interruptions or when a deadline is looming.
- 57. DON'T STARE.** Worker productivity tends to drop when managers watch them. Schedule periodic check-ins, rather than looming.
- 58. GET THEM OUT.** Encourage staff members to take periodic walks outside, if possible, rather than sitting in their work space the entire day.
- 59. SCHEDULE EVENTS OUTSIDE THE WORKPLACE.** If you can hold a meeting at a local coffee shop or schedule an outdoor company charity event, do it! Changing the space changes the thought process, making workers more creative and productive.



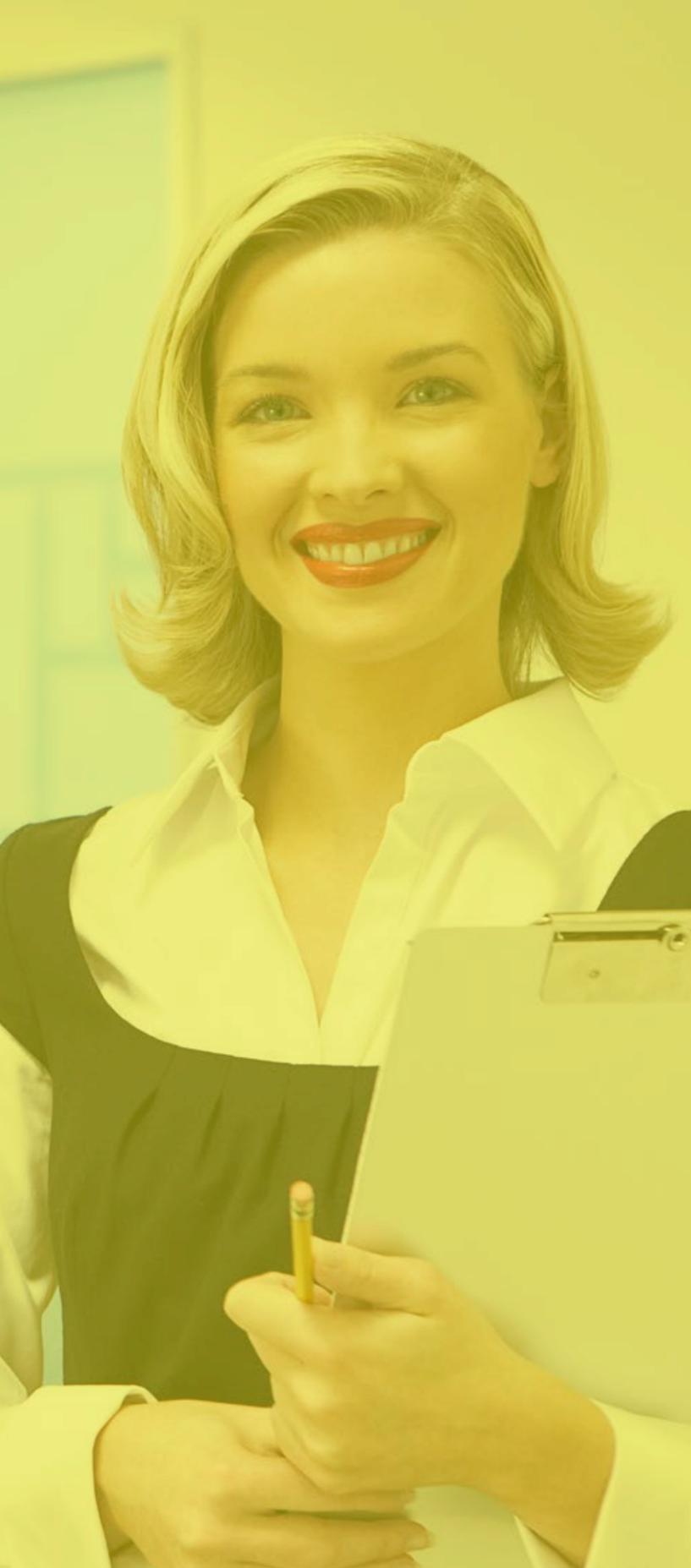
TEMPORARY STAFF, PERMANENT RESULTS: USE CONTINGENT WORKERS TO BOOST PRODUCTIVITY

Temporary staff can be a big boost to your productivity – if you know how to deploy their help effectively. Here's how:

- 60. USE THE RIGHT SOURCING CHANNELS.** Don't assume that high unemployment means a large number of qualified temp staff. Instead, look for seasonal hires in pools of candidates who really want seasonal work.
- 61. FIND TEMP STAFF WHO CAN TAKE ON ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS.** Many temporary workers are pros at data entry or filing. They can do these tasks more efficiently, leaving your core staff free to do what they do best. Win-win.
- 62. CHOOSE TEMP STAFF WITH THE RIGHT SKILLS.** From data entry and filing to complex technological abilities, the right temp staff members will have the skills you need to keep business moving.
- 63. SHRINK THE LEARNING CURVE.** Bring in temp experts to train your team when switching to a new technology or process, so everyone learns new skills more quickly.



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- 64. "COVER" WITH LESS STRESS.** Have an opening in a key position? A temporary staff member can help ensure the core responsibilities of that job are fulfilled while you look for the best replacement.
 - 65. TRY-BEFORE-YOU-HIRE.** Work with contingent staff until you find the best person for the job, and then hire them. The work gets done while you're searching for the right candidate.
 - 66. HIRE FOR ATTITUDE.** Find staff who are flexible, enjoy a challenge, and are dependable.
 - 67. REDUCE TURNOVER.** Burnout can lead to decreased productivity and increased turnover. Temp staff can help reduce the workload, forestalling burnout and keeping your best people on the team.
 - 68. BEAT THE (SEASONAL) RUSH.** Be ready for a seasonal rush with temporary workers who can help ramp up operations without increasing overhead.
 - 69. GATHER DATA.** Temp staff who help with a seasonal rush keep your team productive, while you evaluate the rise in demand and plan your long-term hiring accordingly.
 - 70. OPEN THE BOTTLENECK.** Understaffing leads to reduced productivity, increased stress, and lost sales. Qualified temp staff can help alleviate all three.
 - 71. CHAT WITH YOUR STAFFING PARTNER.** The more your recruiter knows about your needs, the easier it is for them to provide the temp workers you need when you need them.



PRODUCTIVE FROM DAY ONE: EFFECTIVE ONBOARDING OF TEMP STAFF

To get the most out of working with temporary staff, you'll need to plan ahead for a productivity boost. Here's how:

- 72. DEFINE REQUIRED SKILLS.** Know exactly what capabilities you need.
- 73. TALK TO THE TEAM.** Meet with managers and workers who will operate day to day alongside temp staff. Ask them what skills they most need on the team.
- 74. DESIGNATE AN "ONBOARDER."** Assign onboarding of temp staff to a specific core staff member.
- 75. TEACH ESSENTIAL INFORMATION FIRST.** Working hours, breaks and lunch schedules, safety regulations, essential company rules, and contact information for direct supervisors should be front and center during onboarding.
- 76. PUT EXPECTATIONS IN WRITING.** This helps temp staff know what is expected of them.





- 77. CREATE AN OPEN LINE OF COMMUNICATION.** Give temp staff a “point person” they can speak to in order to ask questions or provide feedback, so they can focus on their tasks instead of looking for information.
- 78. CHECK IN SEVERAL TIMES ON DAY ONE.** Check in with temp workers to gauge progress and answer questions.
- 79. SCHEDULE CHECK-INS – AND STICK TO THEM.** Let workers know when you’ll be checking in throughout the assignment, so they can ask questions and show you their progress.
- 80. MAKE REVIEW EASY.** Keep copies of essential information in a place that temp staff can easily access them for a “refresher.”
- 81. THINK “COMPANY REPRESENTATIVES.”** Temporary employees who deal with the public are the face of your company, just as core staff are. Train them accordingly.
- 82. SWITCH WHEN YOU NEED TO.** If a temporary worker isn’t meeting your productivity expectations, talk to your staffing partner about a switch.
- 83. PLAN FOR TURNOVER.** Even seasonal employees may leave mid-season. Consider offering incentives for those who finish, and plan ahead to replace a few if necessary.
- 84. THINK “SAME TIME NEXT YEAR.”** Make it clear that you prefer candidates who are likely to return next season. This will help streamline next year’s hiring.



STAFFING PARTNERS PART 1: HELP WITH HIRING

Your staffing partner is one of your best allies in the quest for better productivity. Here's how your staffing firm can help in the short term:

85. CONNECT YOU WITH QUALITY TEMP OR CONTRACT WORKERS.

Temporary and contract staff can take on many of the repetitive or low-priority tasks in your workplace, allowing you and your team to focus on more critical work.

86. DON'T BYPASS HR – OUTSOURCE IT. It's tempting to shortchange HR for temporary workers, but it can cause productivity-killing trouble later. Instead, rely on your staffing partner to handle these tasks as the employer of record.

87. IMPROVE JOB DESCRIPTIONS. The worker you describe in a job posting is the one who will apply. Your staffing partner can help make sure you're getting qualified applicants.

88. POST IN THE RIGHT PLACES. Where do the best candidates for this position actually look for jobs? Your staffing partner knows.





- 89. SCREEN APPLICANTS.** Stop wasting time reading resumes – let your staffing partner tackle this task, so you can focus on more high-value work.
- 90. SPEAKING TO REFERENCES.** Contacting references can become a game of phone tag that saps your energy. For your staffing partner, it's part of the job!
- 91. ALERTING "PASSIVE CANDIDATES."** Staffing partners know which employed superstars are looking quietly for a new job, and they'll pass along your name when you're the right fit.
- 92. TRACKING COMPANY CULTURE.** Staffing firms specialize in finding the right people for your company culture as well as the right capabilities for the job itself.
- 93. MAKING SEASONAL HIRING MORE EFFICIENT.** Staffing firms connect with a wide range of qualified temp workers, helping you ensure you have the right people just when you need them.
- 94. CREATING A STRATEGIC STAFFING PLAN.** Plan for better hiring in the long term by connecting with your staffing partner.

STAFFING PARTNERS PART 2: STRATEGIC PLANNING

Want productivity boosts that stick? Talk to your staffing partner for help with long-term increases in efficiency and output. Your staffing partner can help with tasks like:

- 95. ARTICULATING YOUR COMPANY'S CULTURE.** Know who you are to attract people who will thrive on your team – and boost everyone's productivity.
- 96. BUILDING A STRONG EMPLOYMENT BRAND.** Reach out to candidates who offer a great "fit" by telling the story of your team and company.
- 97. REACHING ACROSS SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS.** Use social media and multigenre approaches to bring the right candidates to your door.
- 98. TARGETING THE CAUSES OF HIGH TURNOVER.** Find out why people leave – and stop the slide into reduced productivity and high costs.
- 99. PLANNING AHEAD.** Your staffing partner can help you incorporate your company's long-term plans into your hiring vision, allowing you to hire the right people at the right times.



100.

DEVELOP A RELATIONSHIP

The more closely you work with your staffing firm, the better your relationship becomes – and the easier it is to delegate staffing tasks, so you can focus more efficiently on your top priorities.