



COMPLETE

UNTAPPED PRODUCTIVITY:

How To Find It. Reclaim It. And
Accomplish More, Every Day.

Productivity is a crucial factor that can make or break an organization's success. Without it, work goes unfinished. Deadlines get missed. Revenue dips.

Your organization needs to access that untapped productivity. But how?

In this eBook, you will:

- » Learn about the productivity challenges we're currently facing.
- » Identify potential bottlenecks to your organization's productivity.
- » Find actionable tips to boost productivity and get more work done.

Let's get started.



Understanding the Productivity Challenge

Consider these facts and figures:

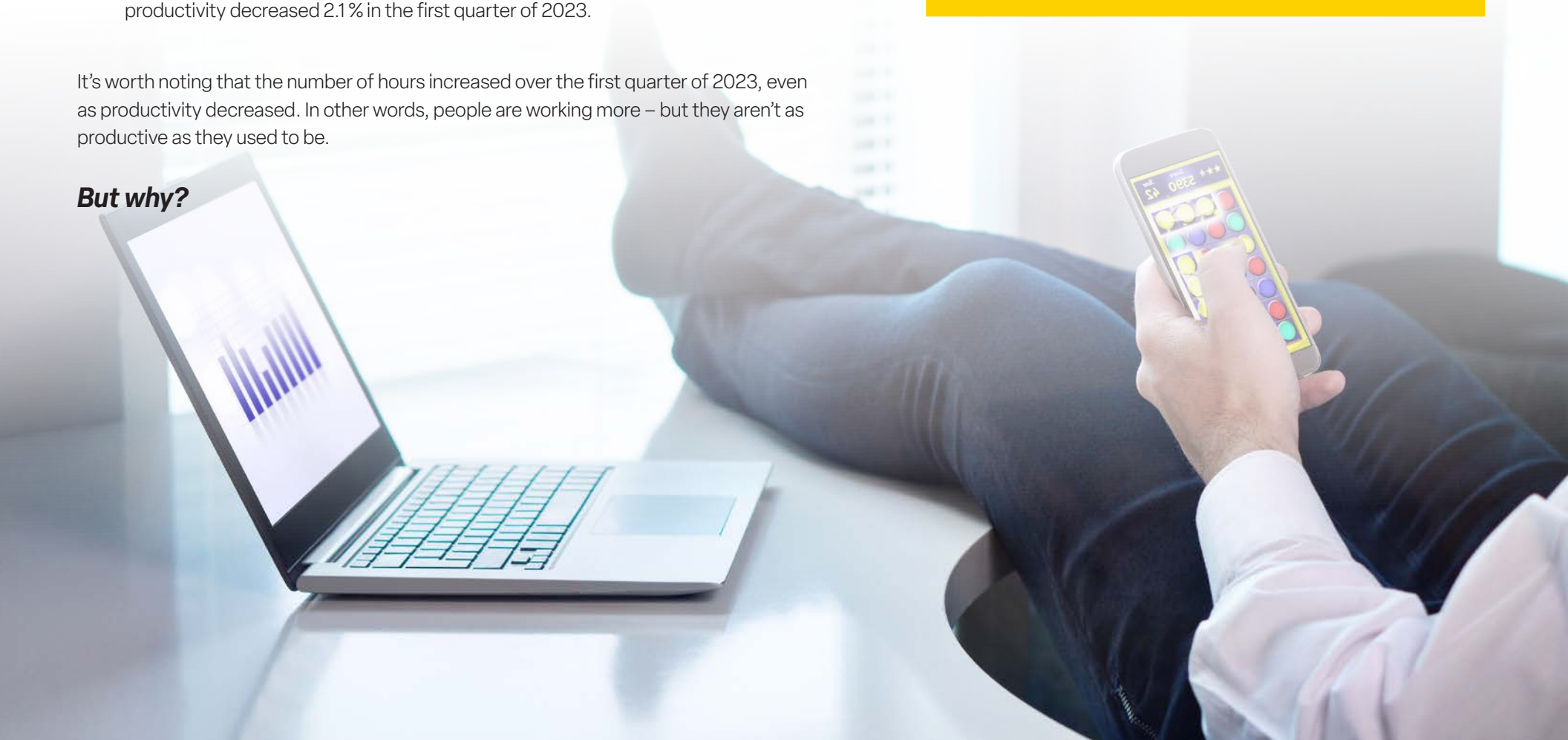
- » Worker productivity year-over-year has declined for five straight quarters for the first time on record, according to the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM).
- » U.S. labor productivity has grown at a rate of only 1.4 % since 2005, according to data from McKinsey.
- » From the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS): Nonfarm business sector labor productivity decreased 2.1 % in the first quarter of 2023.

It's worth noting that the number of hours increased over the first quarter of 2023, even as productivity decreased. In other words, people are working more – but they aren't as productive as they used to be.

But why?



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Why the Drop in Productivity?

It's easy to scapegoat the rise of remote work for the drop in productivity. But a non-productive remote team has much more to do with an individual company's poor implementation, not the practice of remote work itself.

The SHRM points to multiple factors that are causing our current productivity challenges:

- » **Quiet quitting.** This is the phenomenon of workers simply meeting their job description and not going above and beyond.
- » **Digital workplace transformations.** Adapting to new technologies takes time, and companies that roll out new tech may experience a negative impact on productivity.
- » **Lingering recession fears.** Many experts predict we'll be in a recession soon, if we're not already.
- » **Mass layoffs.** High-profile layoffs in fields like tech continue to affect productivity.
- » **Worker burnout.** Post-pandemic, burnout levels are at an all-time high.
- » **The Great Resignation.** The pandemic triggered record-high levels of exits from the workforce, including record baby boomer retirements. Though experts agree that this mass exodus is over, its impact on workplace productivity has been dramatic and lasting.
- » **Supply chain issues.** Inflation, energy shortages, geopolitical and economic uncertainty, and even extreme weather events are contributing to ongoing supply chain problems.



Identifying Bottlenecks and Barriers

We've learned about the current productivity challenges many industries are facing, as well as some of the broad reasons for these challenges. Now, let's take a look inward:

What are the potential bottlenecks and barriers in your organization causing a drop in productivity?

And where might you be able to find untapped productivity to capitalize on?

Here's What to Do

1. Conduct a Productivity Audit

The first step is to take a hard look at your organization's numbers, workflows, and practices. Consider where things might be getting held up:

- » What tasks could potentially be eliminated without affecting results?
- » Is there something that seems redundant in your workflow?
- » Are there things that have "always been done this way"?

2. Conduct Employee Check-ins

Remember: The people who know the most about bottlenecks and barriers are often the employees you trust to get the work done. Check in with your best people and ask them questions like, "What do you wish I knew about your job that I don't?" or "What wastes the most time in your day?"



The Human Element: Motivation and Engagement

At the end of the day, productivity is all about people. It's a human issue – and it requires human solutions.

Simply put, motivated and engaged employees will be more productive.

The Impact of High Employee Engagement

Gallup conducted meta-analyses of the relationship between team engagement and performance over the past two decades, analyzing more than 82,000 teams across 230 organizations worldwide.

Here's what they found:

1. Teams with high engagement produced substantially better business outcomes.
2. Teams with high engagement treat customers better and attract new ones.
3. Team members with high engagement are likelier to remain with their organizations than those who are less engaged.

So, how can your organization foster increased engagement?

- 💡 Implement employee recognition programs.
- 💡 Offer career development opportunities.
- 💡 Promote healthy work habits and prioritize employee well-being.
- 💡 Encourage collaboration.
- 💡 Make your company's mission, vision, and values clear to all employees.



Embracing Technology and Automation

The digital age offers a tool for boosting productivity that simply cannot be ignored: technology.

It's no secret: If your organization doesn't embrace technology and use it to increase productivity, you'll be blown away by the competition.

That doesn't mean you have to invest thousands of dollars in every new innovation. But it does mean you should systematically evaluate modern tools that could be implemented to streamline your workflows and eliminate repetitive tasks.

Today, several technologies can help increase your team's productivity:

- » **AI Solutions:** Artificial Intelligence has been around for some time, but with tools like ChatGPT, it's more accessible than ever. Take time to consider how tools like these could support your employees' work – not to replace them, but to enhance what they're already doing.
- » **Process Automation:** You can use automation technology in all sorts of areas, from communications and inventory management to customer support, accounting, and support ticket processing, just to name a few examples.
- » **Digital Collaboration Platforms:** Especially important in today's remote and hybrid workforce, digital collaboration is another great way to ensure your team stays productive, even if they're not physically in the same place.

Cultivating a Culture of Productivity

We've learned about ways to identify bottlenecks that affect your productivity, as well as some tips on keeping your team engaged. We've even touched on using technology to your advantage to overcome the productivity challenge.

But the question remains:

How can you create a culture of productivity within your organization?

Such a broad concept can seem daunting to tackle. Let's break it down.

Focus on Health and Well-Being

In the post-pandemic workplace, employees want to work for organizations that truly care about their wellness. That includes physical and mental health. Aside from creating a physically safe work environment, take steps to focus on your employees' health and well-being by:

- » Promoting work-life balance
- » Offering PTO
- » Encouraging breaks in the workday
- » Offering access to resources, like mental health hotlines
- » Supporting schedule flexibility
- » Encouraging social interactions

Stressed or unhealthy employees are not productive. By supporting your team's wellness, you're boosting productivity across the organization.





Champion Better Wages

Low-paying jobs tend to attract low-performing employees. If you want to attract and keep employees who will really transform your organization and perform productively, you need to pay in line with the market average – or above.

If you can't boost wages, consider other forms of incentivization:

- » Benefits
- » Profit sharing
- » Wellness programs
- » Professional development opportunities
- » Parking and/or transportation stipends
- » Learning and development stipends
- » Tuition reimbursement

Communicate, Communicate, Communicate

Communication and transparency have a huge impact on productivity in any workplace.

Ensure that every employee in your organization can easily communicate with each other, their managers, and even top management.

Remember that communication involves listening, too. Don't talk at your employees – listen to what they have to say and solicit feedback regularly. You want to cultivate an environment where employees feel trusted to speak up and aren't afraid to say what they really think.



Improve Your Training

When employees feel they're stuck in a dead-end position with no room for growth, they're less likely to be productive. That's why ongoing training, growth, and development initiatives are so important.

Use your training sessions to reinforce good habits, help employees master new skills, and introduce new processes or workflows. As your employees improve progressively over time, your organization's productivity rises as well.

Manage Remote Teams Properly

If your organization employs remote or hybrid workers, be sure you're managing them in a way that fosters productivity. Since you can't check in with these employees face-to-face, do it virtually. Maintaining communication is vital for keeping up productivity. You'll also want to:

- » Set clear goals and expectations for performance.
- » Individualize preferences regarding schedules, communication, and work style.
- » Regularly give and ask for feedback.

Lead by Example

Remember: creating a culture of productivity requires a top-down approach. When company leaders follow the practices outlined above – focusing on employee health, communicating frequently, improving training – and use these methods to be productive, it trickles down throughout the organization.

Employees who see their leaders being productive (and tackling productivity in a healthy way) are more likely to do it themselves. It's that simple. Lead by example if you want to cultivate a productive culture within your organization.

Don't Go Too Far (Yes, Toxic Productivity Is a Thing!)

When it comes to productivity, too much of a good thing can actually be a bad thing. Productivity can turn toxic if you're not careful.

Asking too much of employees can harm their well-being. Pushing productivity to excess results in employees feeling like they're never doing enough, which will quickly lead to burnout. And once employees are burnt-out, they're not productive.

To combat toxic productivity – and prevent it before it begins – prioritize work-life balance for employees and make it clear you support their self-care. Set realistic work expectations and check in with employees frequently to make sure they're not overloaded. Distribute work appropriately to make sure no one person is shouldering more of the work than they're able to handle.



A close-up photograph of a hand interacting with a control panel. The panel features three rows of buttons, each with a corresponding indicator light and a three-dot status icon. The top row is labeled 'READY' and has a red indicator light. The middle row is labeled 'SET' and has a yellow indicator light, which is being pressed by a finger. The bottom row is labeled 'GO!' and has a green indicator light, which is also being pressed by a finger. The background is dark, and the lighting highlights the buttons and the hand.

READY

SET

GO!

Ready to Reclaim Untapped Productivity?

Whether you feel your company's productivity has slipped, or you want to avoid the issue ahead of time, a staffing partner can help you navigate today's productivity challenges.

- » Aligning with the right staffing partner lets you:
- » Access skilled, qualified temporary workers.
- » Alleviate pressure on your existing team to avoid burnout.
- » Reduce overtime costs and control overhead.
- » Plan for future staffing needs.
- » And more!

Get in touch with your staffing partner to start improving productivity today.

Resources:

<https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/news/hr-news/pages/worker-productivity-is-down-is-remote-work-to-blame.aspx>

<https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/employee-relations/pages/is-remote-work-to-blame-for-lower-productivity.aspx>

[https://www.bls.gov/productivity/#:~:text=Productivity%20decreased%202.1%20percent%20in,\(seasonally%20adjusted%20annual%20rates\)](https://www.bls.gov/productivity/#:~:text=Productivity%20decreased%202.1%20percent%20in,(seasonally%20adjusted%20annual%20rates))

<https://www.vox.com/money/23733244/bullshit-jobs-work-employment-lazy-jobless-employed-nothing-to-do>

<https://www.mckinsey.com/mgi/our-research/how-to-revive-us-productivity>

<https://mailchimp.com/resources/toxic-productivity/>

<https://www.gallup.com/workplace/284180/latest-worldwide-employee-engagement.aspx>