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Using Internet Monitoring to Track Employee Productivity by Thomasgalvin

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The Internet has opened up a whole new world to many people. Whether youâ€™re looking for information to write a college paper, deciding which new restaurant to try out for dinner, or interested in what the weather is like halfway around the world, youâ€™ll find all that and so much more on the Internet. And while thereâ€™s no doubt that the Internet has changed our day-to-day working lives for the better in many ways, it has also presented company owners and business managers with a whole new set of problemsâ€”namely, the Internetâ€™s negative effect on employee productivity.

It shouldnâ€™t be any surprise that workers are tempted to use the Internet for personal purposes during work hours. After all, most employees have access to the Internet all day long each day on their work computers. And even if the employees choose not to use their work computers to gain Internet access, they can still use their smart phones for the same purpose. When it comes right down to it, if your employees want to access the Internet during working hours, they will find a way to do it one way or the other.

Employee Internet Monitoring

Because employee productivity is such a concern for so many company owners and managers, itâ€™s no surprise that they would be motivated to try employee Internet monitoring to attempt to resolve the problem. This typically involves using a software package that tracks the use of the Internet, informing the manager what websites his or her employees are accessing during work hours.

While this definitely has some utilityâ€”after all, employers need to know if their employees are downloading illegal software or inadvertently downloading computer virusesâ€”there are also pitfalls in using this type of software. This is particularly true if an employer uses computer tracking software that is installed in individual PCs. Many of these software packages are considered â€œspyware,â€• since they essentially spy on the employeesâ€™ activity. Needless to say, many employees would consider this an invasion of privacy. This can easily have a negative impact on employeesâ€™ morale and their attitude toward their employer. This, in turn, can make the problem of low productivity even worse.

Changing the Paradigm

The real solution to the problem is for employers to change their way of thinking. Rather than trying to address the negative behavior, why not motivate your employees to change their own behavior instead? Using software that tracks the amount of time that an employee is productive (as opposed to the amount of time he or she is wasting) provides motivation for the employee to improve. It becomes almost like a game for the employeesâ€”if they know how much time theyâ€™re spending in productive activity, you can challenge them to increase that time during the course of a month or more. Rather than punishing them for their mistakes, reward them for their improvement!

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