



Boosting Productivity: 10 top tips for SMEs

When you're a small business with big ambitions, you'll often have limited time and resources to play with. **Maximising your productivity and that of your team members, is therefore vital and the secret to doing that is working smarter, not harder.**

The good news is there are many tried-and-tested strategies – as well as clever tools and software - that can help you take back control and give your productivity a valuable boost!

Have a system

Automation is a big deal right now. Use as many tools as you need to optimise your business operations. That doesn't mean you have to use every app going – and in fact, overloading yourself with tech will not help. Find those areas that would benefit most from it and set up a system.

Know when you're at your best

Do you know when you do your best work and are at your most productive? You need to make the most of that, it's your golden time! Protect it and use it for the most valuable and important tasks - those tasks that will have the biggest impact on the success and growth of your business.

Protect your golden time

Give yourself set time to concentrate on the things that really matter to your business. Be super strict not to let anything get in the way. Block it out in your calendar and make that time which can only be interrupted in an absolute emergency. Avoid distractions by switching off anything that might try and steal your attention, such as your phone or email, before you get started.

Stop trying to multitask – it doesn't work!!!

Multitasking neither works nor saves you time. The only way to optimise your productivity, is to focus on one thing at a time. You may feel that you're a master at multitasking, but even switching quickly between tasks has an impact on focus. Every time you do so, you're setting yourself back. Fully concentrate on one task at a time and you'll be at your most productive and efficient.

Put an end to distractions

Potential distractions are everywhere, but there is an easy answer. Switch off your notifications! Prioritise your time and you'll work much smarter. Work on tasks systematically, don't just keep jumping around every time you're notified you have a new email, message or text.

Inbox management

Email is hugely important for most businesses, but it can also be the biggest drain on your time. Use a system and rules for managing your inbox, don't treat your inbox as your to-do list. Task management tools, such as AirTable, Asana or Teamwork are great for this. Don't jump at every new email, sit down to batch process them – for example, twice a day. There is a helpful methodology for prioritising emails that says if you can sort an email in 2 minutes, then do it right away. If you can't, then either add it to your to-do list (task management system) or pass it on to someone else if appropriate. This way you'll be actioning your emails in the order they should be done – and that will be most beneficial for the business - not just the order they arrive in. This will again help you focus on what really matters.

Batch process tasks

Batch processing isn't just effective for emails, it should be used for all sorts of things. Instead of jumping straight on any task that lands on your desk, set time aside each day to work on them in batches. For example, a time that you'll make your sales calls, go through your emails, sign off invoices, review marketing materials, etc.

Check your IT system is fit for purpose

How much time is being wasted on IT systems that aren't fit for purpose? Or which haven't evolved with the changing needs of the business? Ensuring you have the right IT system in place could prove transformational, making you more efficient and giving you a competitive edge. If team members consistently have issues, that's time that could have been better spent!

Outsource where it will benefit you

Another way to save time and money is to outsource key business functions, such as accountancy or IT support. This allows you to focus on what you do best - making sales and growing the business. Seeking the support of a specialist, external team can be highly cost-efficient and you'll have the support of a team who are up to date on the latest industry issues and proactive in preventing issues before they happen.

Ensure you have your cyber essentials covered

Cyberattacks are one of the biggest threats facing organisations today and every business is a potential target - no matter what size or industry. Prevention is always better than cure and will save you both time and money in the long run, so make sure you have your cyber essentials covered. Speak to a specialist for advice on ensuring your IT systems and processes are both robust and secure.

Book your FREE IT SYSTEM REVIEW

At Dragon IS, we make it simple. No jargon. No surprises. Just expert advice you can trust, backed by superior technology and outstanding customer service. Whether you're a growing business thinking about upgrading your IT system; you're concerned about cybersecurity and data protection compliance; or you need specialist support with a specific IT challenge, we can help! To arrange a free IT assessment, please get in touch on 0330 363 0055 or email lionel@dragon-is.com

About Dragon IS

Dragon IS, based in Milton Keynes, is an IT support company and cyber essentials certified supplier. Established over a decade ago, we specialise in working with small and medium sized businesses.

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