

# TECH TIPS

TECHNOLOGY INSIGHT THAT BUILDS BUSINESS



**HODGSON**  
CONSULTING & SOLUTIONS

## What's New

### IT MANAGERS SUMMER SCHOOL FREE Webinar Series

is coming back in 2023!

We are excited to announce that our popular webinar series is returning this summer! In this 3-part series, **Securing Your IT Infrastructure From Risk To Recovery**, we'll cover topics including Risk Analysis, Incident Response, and Disaster Recovery.

This webinar series is designed for IT professionals across all industries. Don't miss out on this amazing opportunity to gain valuable knowledge, enhance your skills, and further your career!

For more information, see **page 3**.

## May 2023



This monthly publication provided courtesy of **Robert Zehnder** President of **Hodgson Consulting & Solutions**.

### Our Mission:

To eliminate every technical frustration, obstacle and inefficiency for companies with multiple locations and/or a remote workforce.



## Get More Done In Less Time

### Tech Tips To Improve Productivity And Focus

Technology has become essential to our society. We use it for nearly every aspect of our lives, from entertainment to personal security. Unfortunately, it's not all good, and over time, many of us have developed some negative tech habits. When we're supposed to work or stay productive, we might turn to our phones or tablets and scroll through social media or the news. There's no better time than the present to shake these harmful habits so we can become more productive. The good news is that technology can actually help improve our overall productivity.

The pandemic forced many of us to start working remotely or in a hybrid environment, which makes it even more important for us to use technology to stay focused and productive. Technology does not have to be a distraction: it can help us stay on task and achieve our goals. Below, you'll find a few ways to use technology to improve productivity.

### Cleaning Up Your Digital Space

For many of us, our workdays revolve around our electronic devices. We spend nearly eight hours each day bouncing from our computers to our cell phones, trying to stay in touch with everyone while keeping up with our workload. Over time, our digital areas can become cluttered with unnecessary documents, e-mails, and other information.

Take time to review and reorganize your computer's desktop, smartphone's home screen, e-mail inbox, and cloud storage accounts. Delete any unnecessary files, e-mails, and apps you no longer need. By doing this, you'll have an easier time navigating through your digital space and locating necessary documents when they're needed.

### Using Time-Tracking And Focus Apps

Time can easily slip away from us if we're not paying close attention. We've all gotten lost in a project or task and spent way too much time on it. One of the best ways to stay

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focused and productive is to track your time. Many apps are available that help you do this, including Toggl, RescueTime, and Harvest. These apps allow you to track how much time you spend on specific tasks and can help you identify where you might be wasting time. By tracking your time, you can make adjustments to your schedule and ensure you're making the most of your hours.

Focus apps like Freedom, Cold Turkey, and Self Control can also help you stay productive, as they'll ensure you aren't wasting your time on social media or other websites that take you away from your work. These apps allow you to block access to certain websites or apps for a specified amount of time. In fact, using a focus app is one of the best ways to remove distractions from your workday.

**Automating When Possible**

Automation has truly revolutionized the way many businesses operate. You can use automation for e-mail communication, marketing efforts, data collection, and so much more. Introducing automation to your business can help streamline repetitive, time-consuming tasks that previously had to be done manually. By automating

**“Technology does not have to be a distraction: it can help us stay on task and achieve our goals.”**

various processes and functions, you'll free up more time for your employees to focus on higher-level tasks and improve their productivity. Automated systems are also less prone to errors than human beings, so you won't have to spend as much time going back through your work to fix simple mistakes. Automation improves productivity by reducing the time, effort, and resources needed to complete a task while providing valuable data insights.

**Strengthening Your Cyber Security Practices**

A successful cyberattack can completely dismantle your business. It can take days, weeks, or even months to recover from a cyberattack, which can put an end to your hopes of improving productivity. Cyber breaches, such as malware infections or ransomware attacks, can cause significant downtime for any business. Employees may be unable to access necessary files or systems, leading to delays in work and missed deadlines. Just the risk of a cyberattack can take you away from your work, as you may constantly worry about the security of your systems or the safety of personal data. When it comes to improving cyber security practices, you must be proactive. Don't wait until a cyberattack has already occurred; start boosting your cyber security practices as soon as possible.

Improving focus and productivity is not something that happens on its own. It takes time, effort, and dedication to make a change that has an impact on your work style. Stop using technology as a distraction and find ways to use it to improve productivity and focus.

# IT MANAGERS

## FREE SUMMER WEBINAR SERIES

**ATTEND TO WIN PRIZES!**  
For every session you attend, you will be entered to win one of our prizes!

### Securing YOUR IT Infrastructure From Risk To Recovery

The IT Manager Summer School webinar series is a perfect way for the busy IT professional to find opportunities for continuing education.

This 3-part series will have monthly LIVE webinars from June - August and will cover a variety of topics, including:

Risk Analysis, Evaluation and Assessment

June 22  
1:00pm CST

Incident Response

July 20  
1:00pm CST

Disaster Recovery

August 3  
1:00pm CST

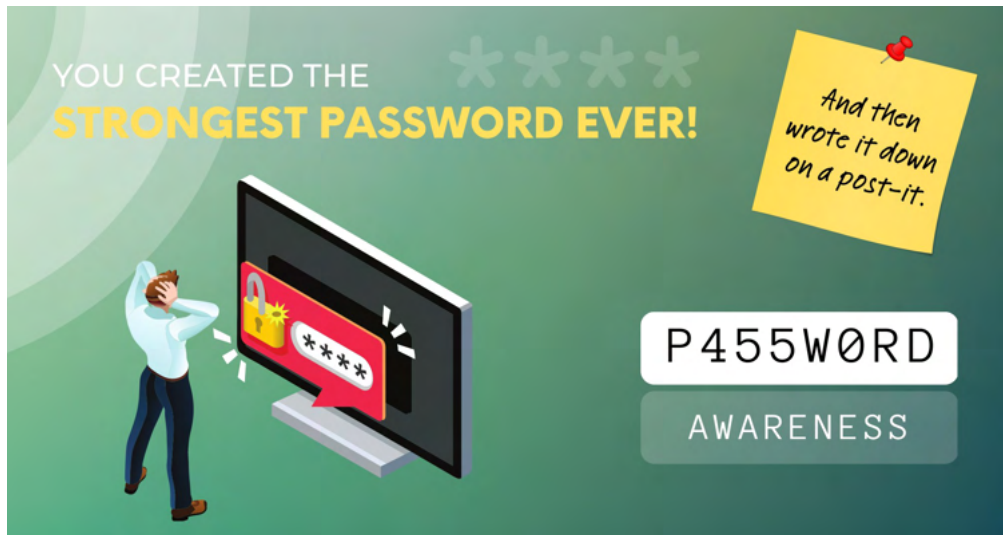




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# 10 Password Best Practices



With the business world heavily reliant on digitalization in this day and age, the use of technology in your organization is unavoidable. Although technology can undeniably give your business an advantage in increasingly competitive markets, there are many troublesome areas to keep an eye on. This is why interest in cybersecurity has risen in recent years.

Password protection is the best place to start if you want to ramp up your cybersecurity. Setting a password to secure an entity's data is called password protection. Only those with passwords can access information or accounts once the data is password-protected. However, because of the frequent use of passwords, people tend to overlook their significance and make careless mistakes, which could lead to breaches in security.

This makes it imperative for businesses to devise strategies to educate employees about best practices when using passwords.

## 5 Password "Don'ts"

Protect the confidentiality of your passwords by following these five password "don'ts":

### 1. Don't write passwords on sticky notes.

Although you may feel that writing down passwords improves password protection and makes it more difficult for someone to steal your passwords online, it can make it easier for someone to steal your passwords locally.

### 2. Don't save passwords in your browser.

Web browsers are terrible at protecting passwords and other sensitive information, like your name and credit card number. Browsers can easily be compromised, and a wide range of malware, browser extensions, and software can extract sensitive data from them.

### 3. Don't iterate your password (for example, from PowerWalker1 to PowerWalker2).

Although this is a common practice among digital users, it is unlikely to protect against sophisticated cyber threats. Hackers have become far too intelligent and can crack iterated passwords in the blink of an eye.

### 4. Don't capitalize the first letter of your password to meet the "one capitalized letter" requirement.

Out of habit, most of us tend to capitalize the first letter of our passwords to conform with the "one capitalized letter" requirement. However, hackers are aware

of this, making it easy for them to guess the capitalized letter's position.

### 5. Don't use "!" to conform with the symbol requirement.

However, if you must use it, don't place it at the end of your password. Placing it anywhere else in the sequence makes your password more secure.

## 5 Password "Do's"

Protect the confidentiality of your passwords by following these five password "do's":

### 1. Create long, phrase-based passwords that exchange letters for numbers and symbols.

For instance, if you choose "Honey, I shrunk the kids," write it as "h0ney1 \$hrunkth3k!d\$." This makes your password harder for hackers to crack.

### 2. Use multi-factor authentication.

It's your responsibility to do everything in your power to keep nefarious cybercriminals at bay. One of the best approaches is to barricade them with multiple layers of authentication.

### 3. Always use passwords that are longer than eight characters and include numbers, letters, and symbols.

The more complicated things are for hackers, the better.

### 4. Always use a different password for every account.

If you use the same password across multiple accounts, you are handing cybercriminals a golden opportunity to exploit all your accounts.

### 5. Use a password manager.

A password manager can relieve the burden of remembering a long list of passwords, freeing up time for more productive tasks.

Need a password manager? We can help.

Adhering to password best practices requires constant vigilance and effort on your part. As a result, it is best to work with an expert managed service provider (MSP) like us, who can help you boost your security and put your mind at ease. Contact us for a no-obligation consultation.

# Conquering Your To-Do List

## 2 Reasons You're Not Making Progress



to other employees. It's hard to maintain focus when you have too many things to do. Allow your team to take control of certain tasks so you can focus on what's most important.

### How To Exceed Customer Expectations And Create Loyal Fans

Strong customer service is at the core of every successful business. There may be times when it feels like you can't please every customer or meet every expectation, but there are things you can do to create a better chance to wow your customers. Perform these strategies well enough, and you may create lifelong, loyal customers.

#### Personalizing The Experience

Don't treat every customer the same. Build and develop a relationship through your interactions.

#### Having Fun With Your Work

Customers do not want to be helped by someone who acts as if they hate their job. Try to have fun while you work, as it will create a more enjoyable experience for your customers and co-workers.

#### Underpromising And Overdelivering

Many businesses promise their customers the world but fail to live up to expectations. Promise what you know you can do. Anything extra will appear as a pleasant surprise to your customers.

Have you ever gone to work and felt like you couldn't get anything accomplished? It's a problem that regularly plagues business leaders. You have a list of projects you need to complete, but the end of the day arrives before you can even make a dent. It can be difficult to pinpoint exactly what's preventing you from accomplishing your tasks, but some common culprits exist. Here, you'll find a few reasons why you can't get anything done at work and how to overcome them.

#### Out Of Sync Work-Life Balance

Working too much is bound to come back and haunt you. It might give you a substantial head start, but over time, you'll find difficulty focusing, and you may even experience the symptoms of burnout. Stop before it's too late and ensure you're giving yourself enough time to enjoy other aspects of your life.

#### Too Much On Your Plate

Many business leaders have a hard time passing off tasks to other employees, but it's imperative that you delegate less important projects

## Are You Living Your Best Life?

### Question To Ask Yourself!



Are you happy with the current state of your life and career? This is a question everyone should ask themselves at least once a year. Figuring out the answer might not

be as easy as saying yes or no. You should think deeply about it, because if you're unhappy, you must make an adjustment. Here are three other questions you should ask yourself when determining whether you're happy in your current situation.

1. Am I living the life I want?
2. Would I carry on with my normal routine if today was the last day of my life?
3. Am I doing what I love?

Answering these questions will help you understand if you feel fulfilled in your life and what you need to do to improve your situation.

