

TIPS FOR A

GREAT HIRE

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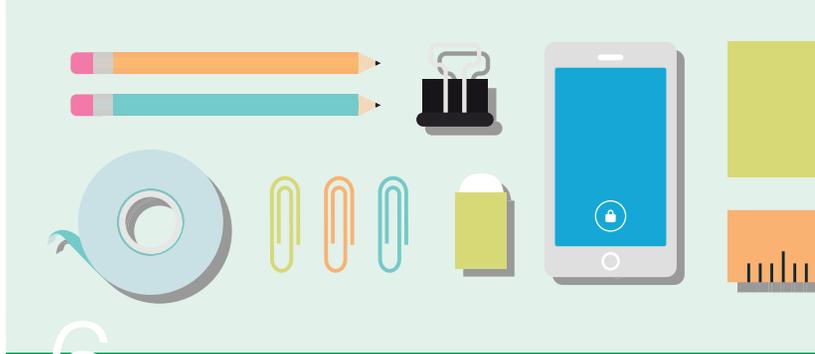
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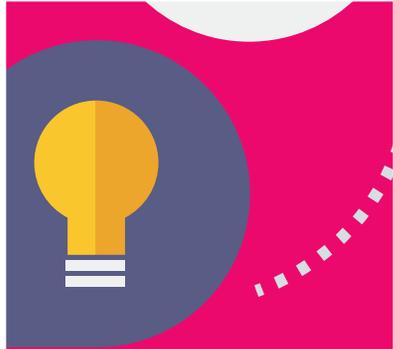
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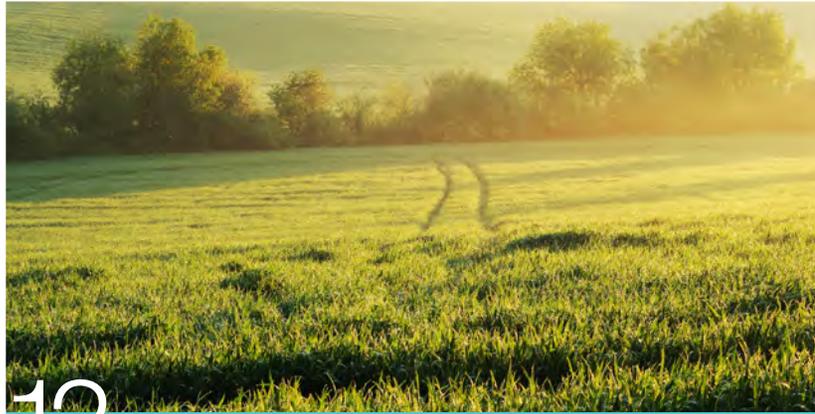
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WHEN SHOULD YOU HIRE MORE EMPLOYEES

by Lorna Collier

PeggyBank's web ad was more successful than company founder James Simon could have possibly hoped. After placing the ad, the firm — which digitizes photos, VHS tapes and slides — suddenly found itself deluged with orders, reports *The New York Times*.

While this was certainly good news, it also presented Simon with a problem. So many orders came in that employees couldn't fill customers' demands fast enough, taking up to five weeks instead of the normal two-week turnaround. Management had to ask employees to work more overtime — up to 15 hours per week.

Simon saw both excessive overtime and excessive backlogged orders (more than 100) as signs that it was time to hire more employees because his business was growing.

But it's not always that easy to know when to add to your staff. Growing a business means walking a tightrope. You don't want to increase costs more than you have to, but you also need to be able to meet customer demand.

So how do you decide? Here are some signs you may need to hire more employees.



YOUR EMPLOYEES ARE OVERLOADED

Your employees are telling you they're overwhelmed and, as with PeggyBank, overtime is increasing. Even your top workers are making uncharacteristic mistakes. Vacation time is down while sick days are up.

CUSTOMERS ARE GETTING ANGRY

You are taking too long to fill orders, you're missing deadlines, or you're making mistakes in finished work. You don't have enough staff to wait on customers or answer their calls, emails and web inquiries.

YOU'RE MISSING OPPORTUNITIES

You aren't following leads because you're too busy, or you actively turn down projects because you can't fulfill them.

YOU SEE CONTINUED DEMAND AHEAD

You can see that there is opportunity in your industry and you want to strike while it's hot. But be sure you're not just going off gut instinct, says Bill Pepler, managing partner of staffing firm Kavaliro, in Ziprecruiter.

Study your profit-and-loss statement, analyze trends, and look at key data and metrics to be sure you're seeing sustainable growth and not just a temporary bubble.

YOUR CURRENT EMPLOYEES DON'T HAVE THE RIGHT SKILLS

As your business expands, you may find that you need workers who have higher-level or different expertise, points out Strategic Contract Resources.

YOU'VE TRIED RECONFIGURING STAFF AND IT STILL HASN'T WORKED

One way to handle expansion is to get more efficient: to use your employees in the best possible way. Sometimes shifting responsibilities to different people is all that's needed to meet demand. But if you've tried shifting these tasks and personnel around and you still can't get the work accomplished, you'll need to consider adding people, notes Ziprecruiter.

YOU CAN AFFORD THE COST OF HIRING

Adding workers means not just their salaries, but benefits, worker's compensation and payroll taxes, plus their desks, computers, software licenses, and training and supervision costs, notes Erik Sherman in Inc. These costs might need to be carried until revenues pick up enough to cover them.

If you decide to hire, remember that this doesn't mean you're restricted to just full-time, permanent workers. Consider hiring temporary or contract workers for a few months, to see how they will work out and to verify that your company really does need the help, advises Rachel Hartman at Intuit. You can also use a contract worker while seeking permanent employees to add to your expanding business.

Lorna Collier is a Chicago-area writer whose articles about business and technology have appeared in the *AARP Bulletin*, *Intuit Small Business Blog*, *Workforce Management*, *Crain's Chicago Business*, *CNN.com*, *USNews.com*, *the Chicago Tribune*, and many others.

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HOW TO HIRE INTERNS AT YOUR BUSINESS

AND WHY YOU SHOULD

by Kelly Spors

Small-business owners often overlook an effective way to bring new talent and expertise into their business: Hiring interns.

The idea behind internships is to give young adults — often high school or college students — the chance to gain professional skills and career experience through a short stint working for a business.

BENEFITS

HELP ON KEY PROJECTS

An intern can perform work that on-staff employees don't have the time for.

FRESH PERSPECTIVE AND EXPERTISE

A newly educated young adult may have skills you don't have in-house, such as website building, social-media marketing or graphic design. You can hire an intern to handle tasks that you need help with that don't overlap with your current staff's expertise.

TRIAL WORK PERIOD

If you're thinking of hiring a new employee in the near future, an internship can be a good way to test out a young prospect. "You'll get to see their skills and work ethic as an intern — and might choose to bring them on as a paid employee down the line," writes the organization YEC Women on Forbes. Indeed, many of today's growing entrepreneurial companies, including TOMS, hired many interns in their early days and continue to do so today.



HERE ARE SOME TIPS FOR MAKING AN INTERNSHIP WORK

CONSIDER YOUR NEEDS FIRST

Before you find an intern, consider what kind of skills and personality would be most beneficial to your business. Similar to how you would look for a new employee, it's important to make sure you find the right fit for an intern.

LOOK IN THE RIGHT PLACES

Some websites, including InternMatch and InternQueen, help companies find prospective interns. But you may also contact departments at local colleges and universities to find students that may be open to interning over the summer months.

TRAIN THEM

An important part of the internship experience is on-the-job learning. Make sure you can provide that to your interns. Give them an orientation and introduce them to your employees, so they feel part of the team and get a true experience working for your business.

GIVE THEM MEANINGFUL WORK

Interns want to gain valuable work skills and experience, so don't bury them in mindless grunt work. Make sure to give them experience that will look good on their resume.

Kelly Spors is a freelance writer and editor based in Minneapolis. She previously worked as a staff reporter for The Wall Street Journal, covering small business and entrepreneurship.

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AN EXPLANATION THE FOUR BASIC BUSINESS MODELS

by Cam Merritt

Your business model describes what your company does and how it makes money doing it. Companies tailor their business models to their specific needs and circumstances, so naturally, each firm's model is different. Even so, researchers who study what makes businesses tick have identified four broad categories that fit most models. Those categories are creators, distributors, landlords and brokers.

THE CONCEPT

The four basic business models were first described in a landmark study from the Sloan School of Management. Researchers there recognized that while companies can and do blend elements of different models, every company has one model that it most closely identifies with. Say you own a shoe store. You might repair shoes, too. Maybe you rent your spare storage space to another company. However, your business is selling shoes. So you're a distributor. Thinking in terms of creators, distributors, landlords and brokers can help you keep your focus on your core mission, understand who your competition is and devise growth strategies for the future.

CREATORS

Creators are companies that make things and sell them to their customers. They buy raw materials, ingredients or components from suppliers and then assemble them into finished products. Manufacturers are obviously creators, but so are small business owners such as farmers, restaurant owners and artists. An important consideration with creators, as defined by the Sloan researchers, is that when they sell something, they sell all rights to it. The creator doesn't tell customers how they can and can't use it. In the researchers' model, if they retain control over how the product can be used, they're really landlords.

DISTRIBUTORS

Distributors buy things from suppliers and then turn around and sell them to customers. Just about all retail store owners are distributors, as are the wholesalers they buy from. A defining characteristic of the distributor model is that distributors do not make significant changes to a product between the time they buy it and the time they sell it. They might add value through packaging, marketing or servicing the product, but not by modifying the product itself. For example, a kid who buys lemonade at a store and then sells it at a lemonade stand is a distributor — all he does is assume temporary ownership of the lemonade and market it before passing it along.

LANDLORDS

A landlord makes money by renting the use of something to someone else. Property owners who rent to tenants are obviously landlords, but so are taxi drivers and theater owners — they rent a seat for a ride or a show to their customers. Lenders are landlords, too; they let people "rent" their money for a fee. Service businesses qualify as landlords. When someone hires a lawyer or consults with a doctor, he's effectively renting that person's expertise. An important distinction with landlords is that they do not transfer ownership of any assets. A rental apartment always belongs to the landlord, a taxi seat always belongs to the cab company, and the doctor's medical knowledge remains with the doctor.

BROKERS

Brokers make transactions possible by bringing together buyers and sellers. The main distinction between brokers and distributors comes down to ownership. Distributors take ownership of things and make money by selling them for more than they paid to buy them. Brokers, by contrast, make money by arranging sales and charging for their services. The item being sold goes directly from the seller to the buyer. Real estate agents, independent insurance agents, staffing agencies, classified ad services and auctioneers are all examples of brokers.

With over 20 years of professional writing and editing experience, Cam Merritt specializes in writing about business and personal finance, health care and tax law. He previously worked at publications including *The Boston Globe*, *The Des Moines Register* and *USA Today*.

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PREP

YOUR MORNING FOR A PRODUCTIVE DAY

Not everyone's a natural morning person, rolling out of bed with clear eyes, a bright smile and a fully functioning brain. Learning to make a productive start to your day is a fundamental workplace skill. It starts with establishing a good morning routine.



BEFORE YOU COME IN

- START EARLIER**
Give yourself the gift of extra time. If you're racing the clock as soon as you roll out of bed, you'll arrive at work already stressed.
- EAT SOMETHING**
Don't skip breakfast. Some good choices include whole grains, fresh fruit and lean protein.
- GET SOME EXERCISE**
A brisk walk or a few minutes' jog can leave you feeling energized and mentally sharp.
- DODGE THE TRAFFIC**
Leaving a few minutes earlier can often make your commute quicker and less crowded. If that's not an option, consider using a GPS device with a live traffic feature to help avoid delays.



GETTING STARTED

- SKIP THE BREAK ROOM**
Social time around the coffee machine is pleasant, but it can soak up a big piece of your morning.
- IN AND OUT OF THE INBOX**
Don't feel like you need to read every email when you get in each morning. Prioritize the important things, and set up filters in your email program for emails you can leave for later.
- TRIAGE, TRIAGE, TRIAGE.**
Whether it's in the form of a simple handwritten note or a sophisticated app on your computer or tablet, comb through your day's activities and prioritize the most important.
- PICK YOUR STARTING POINT**
Some people like to start by clearing a few easy things from their schedule, thereby building psychological momentum. Others tackle the day's biggest, toughest job first to get it out of the way. Learn which approach works best for you, and try to follow it every day.



THE LOGISTICS

- MAKE ONE TRIP**
If your morning's to-do list requires reports from another department, two shipping boxes from the mail room and a few consumables from central stores, take care of it all in one trip rather than trekking around the office repeatedly.
- ARRANGE YOUR SPACE**
Whatever you need for your current task should be grouped together, within easy reach, at your work-station.
- KNOW WHAT'S UP NEXT**
Keep an eye on your to-do list, and know what's coming next. Often, while you're getting or putting away things you currently need, you can save time by retrieving items or supplies you'll need for the next activity.
- GO DARK**
Say no to distractions by blocking out high-focus time when you avoid calls and emails to focus on the task at hand.



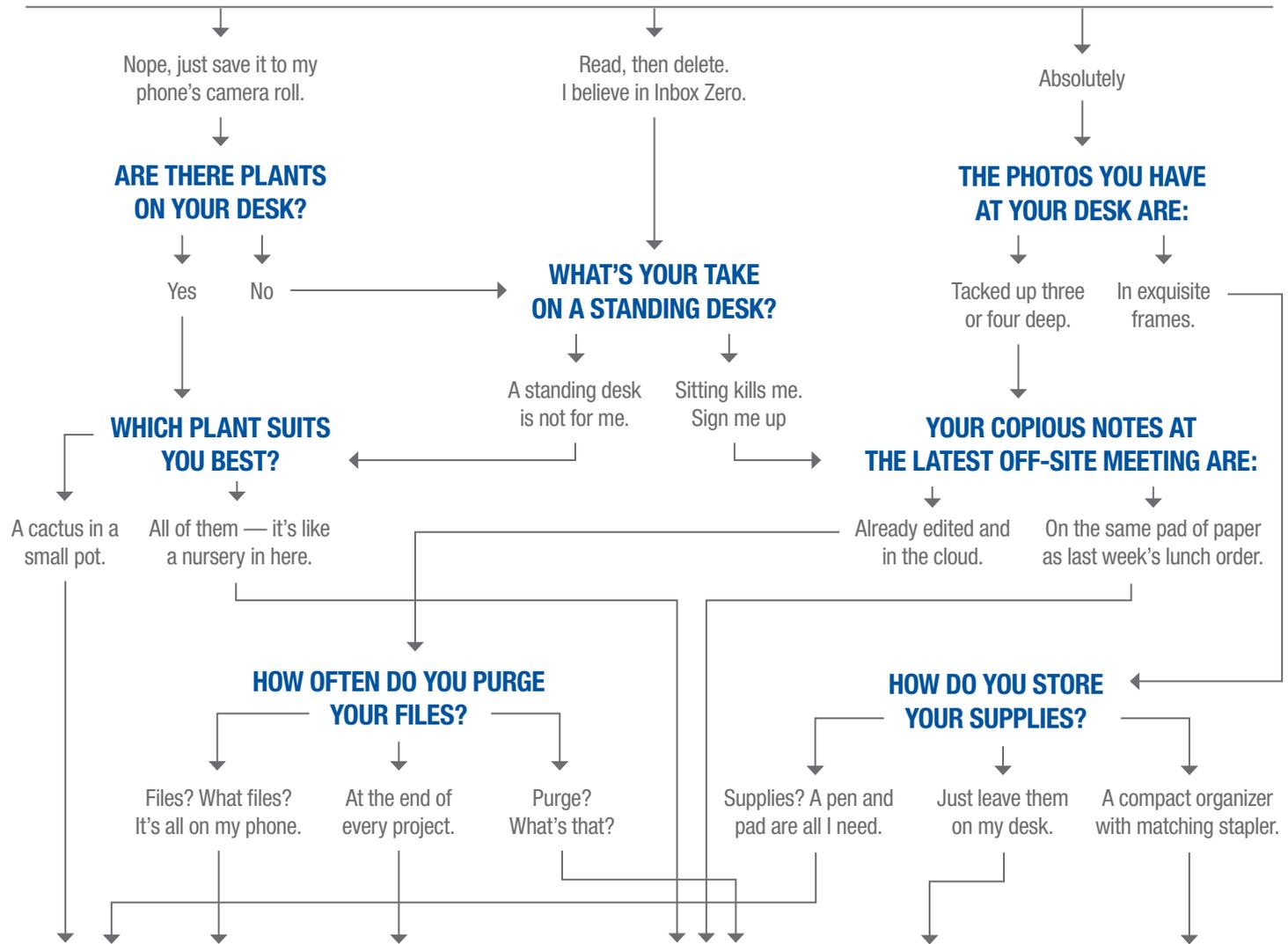
SETTING THE STAGE

- TOMORROW MORNING STARTS TODAY**
Building a good end-of-day routine can help you ease your way into a good start-of-day routine.
- STOCK UP**
Whether it's topping off your paper or replacing your discarded highlighter, replenish what you've used today, so you don't have to do it in the morning.
- CLEAR THAT DESK**
While you're at it, clear and straighten your desk. Tomorrow you can walk in, sit down, and start your day.
- GET SOME SLEEP**
Mornings are a lot more manageable when you're well-rested. Structure your evenings to allow for winding-down time, and try to get to bed at the same time each night.

WHAT'S YOUR ORGANIZATIONAL STYLE

In an open workplace, you see all types of cubicle organizational styles. There are those who hoard, those who purge, those who decorate like it's a room of their own, and those who barely look like they've moved in, even though they've been there for years.

DO YOU PRINT AND POST THE FAMILY PHOTO YOUR MOM EMAILED YOU TO YOUR WALL?



THE MINIMALIST.

Only the barest essentials — your laptop and somewhere discreet to charge it. Everything worth keeping is in the cloud, and the rest can be resourced if and when. Hanging files and drawers full of pens and post-its are for suckers.

A PLACE FOR EVERYTHING. EVERYTHING IN ITS PLACE.

Organization is your middle name. You arrange and rearrange, you purge regularly, shred confidential documents and recycle your old batteries. The state of your work area is an ever-evolving project, and you take pleasure in making it work.

YOU PACK IT IN.

You have notes from that meeting here, somewhere. You keep every pad of paper (and notebook, and business card, and pile of sticky notes) in case you need them down the road. You hit print like there's no tomorrow, and you stuff it all into a cabinet that barely closes. The walls of your cube are lined with birthday cards and pictures — pinned three or four deep.

IS THAT YOU, DECORATOR?

You pick a theme and a color scheme. Then, you go with it. The stapler matches the pen holder, which matches the mouse pad and the throw you hang on the back of your Aeron chair. Your favorite splurge: fresh flowers. Your nemesis: everyone else's drab cube.

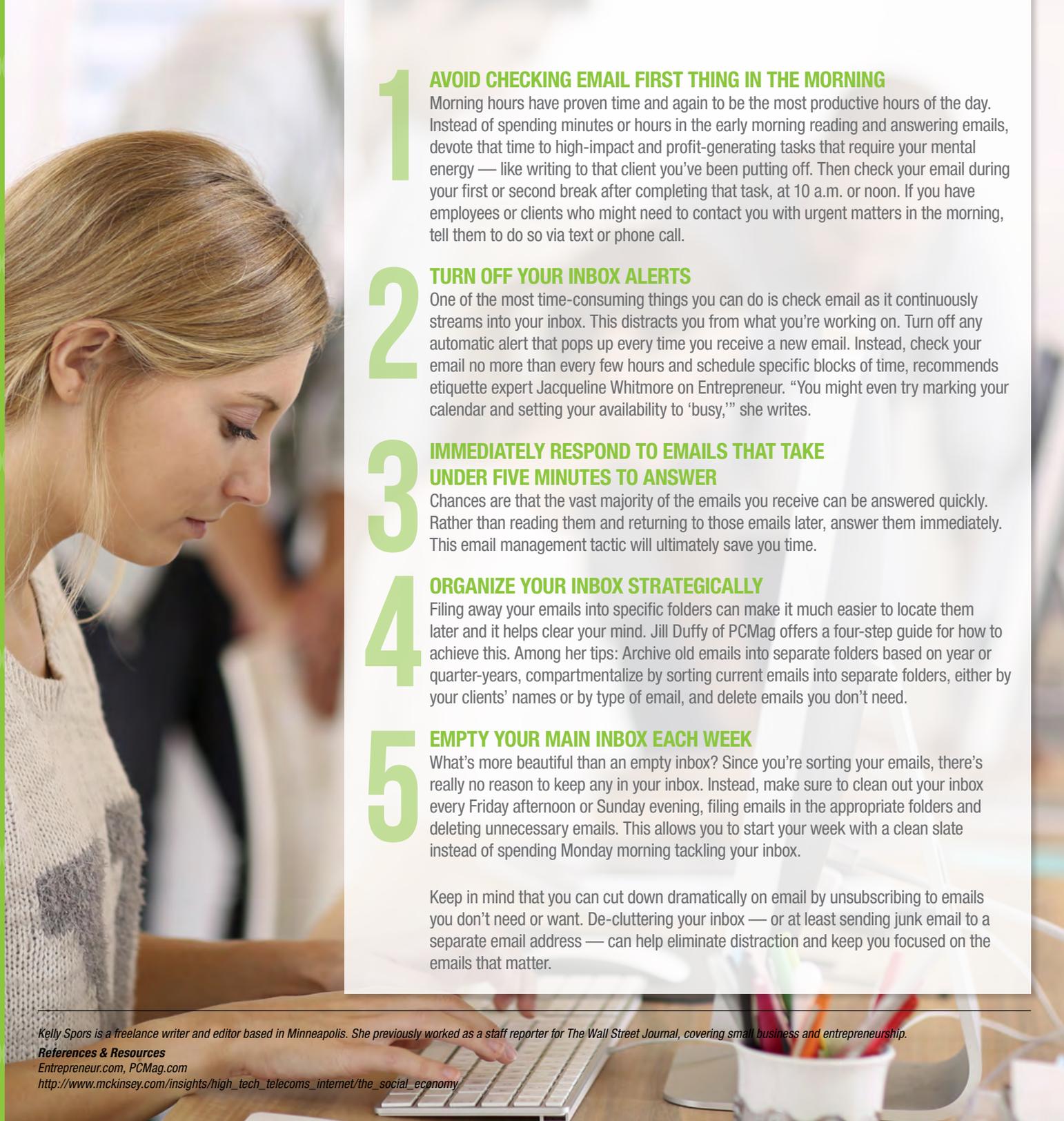
5 TIPS FOR MANAGING YOUR INBOX LIKE A PRO

by Kelly Spors

Email has been a dominant form of business communication for nearly 20 years. Yet while few people deny that it makes our work lives more efficient overall, email management does carry its own productivity drain.

A 2012 study by McKinsey Global Institute found that U.S. workers spend 28% of their workweek reading and answering emails. A large body of research has found that email notification pop-ups and other technological disruptions can harm the employee's memory of tasks that were being performed before the disruption occurred.

For business owners, spending too much time managing their inbox can be especially productivity sapping and ultimately, a profit killer. How do you make email work for you, rather than against you?



1 AVOID CHECKING EMAIL FIRST THING IN THE MORNING
Morning hours have proven time and again to be the most productive hours of the day. Instead of spending minutes or hours in the early morning reading and answering emails, devote that time to high-impact and profit-generating tasks that require your mental energy — like writing to that client you've been putting off. Then check your email during your first or second break after completing that task, at 10 a.m. or noon. If you have employees or clients who might need to contact you with urgent matters in the morning, tell them to do so via text or phone call.

2 TURN OFF YOUR INBOX ALERTS
One of the most time-consuming things you can do is check email as it continuously streams into your inbox. This distracts you from what you're working on. Turn off any automatic alert that pops up every time you receive a new email. Instead, check your email no more than every few hours and schedule specific blocks of time, recommends etiquette expert Jacqueline Whitmore on Entrepreneur. "You might even try marking your calendar and setting your availability to 'busy,'" she writes.

3 IMMEDIATELY RESPOND TO EMAILS THAT TAKE UNDER FIVE MINUTES TO ANSWER
Chances are that the vast majority of the emails you receive can be answered quickly. Rather than reading them and returning to those emails later, answer them immediately. This email management tactic will ultimately save you time.

4 ORGANIZE YOUR INBOX STRATEGICALLY
Filing away your emails into specific folders can make it much easier to locate them later and it helps clear your mind. Jill Duffy of PCMag offers a four-step guide for how to achieve this. Among her tips: Archive old emails into separate folders based on year or quarter-years, compartmentalize by sorting current emails into separate folders, either by your clients' names or by type of email, and delete emails you don't need.

5 EMPTY YOUR MAIN INBOX EACH WEEK
What's more beautiful than an empty inbox? Since you're sorting your emails, there's really no reason to keep any in your inbox. Instead, make sure to clean out your inbox every Friday afternoon or Sunday evening, filing emails in the appropriate folders and deleting unnecessary emails. This allows you to start your week with a clean slate instead of spending Monday morning tackling your inbox.

Keep in mind that you can cut down dramatically on email by unsubscribing to emails you don't need or want. De-cluttering your inbox — or at least sending junk email to a separate email address — can help eliminate distraction and keep you focused on the emails that matter.

Kelly Spors is a freelance writer and editor based in Minneapolis. She previously worked as a staff reporter for The Wall Street Journal, covering small business and entrepreneurship.

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MENTORSHIP IN THE WORKPLACE

Mentoring colleagues and being mentored yourself pays dividends. We tapped into talented associates at Office Depot® and asked them about their mentor and mentee experiences. Here's what they had to say:

"The mentor/mentee relationship provides a platform for open and honest communication in a confidential environment. My mentor's guidance continues to be invaluable to me as I grow my skills as a leader at Office Depot."

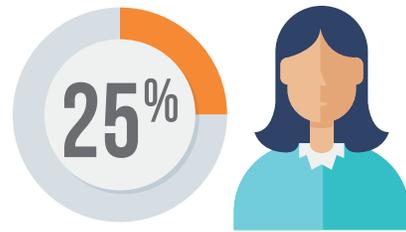
- Jonas S., Store Operations

"Watching my mentee grow into a greater leader is one of my proudest accomplishments."

- Christine B., E-Commerce

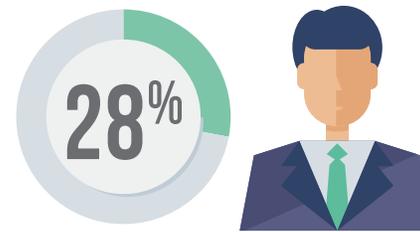
"My mentor is fantastic. It was reassuring to hear and gain insights from an individual outside of my direct organization. We tend to be so focused on our day-to-day activities that we lose sight of the challenges and opportunities. My mentor's frankness and honest feedback challenged my thoughts and perceptions, which has helped me clarify my professional objectives in becoming a more effective leader."

- Barry G., IT



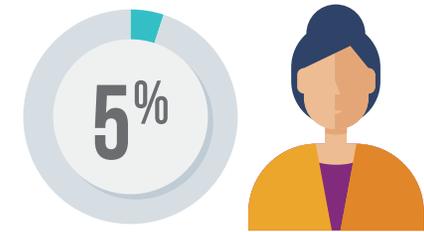
the percentage of
MENTEES

who received a raise over a 5-year period, according to a study at Sun Microsystems



the percentage of
MENTORS

who received a raise over a 5-year period, according to the same study



the percentage of
MANAGERS

who received a raise over a 5-year period and did not mentor anyone



\$25,000

the average additional amount that
MENTORS
are compensated each year, compared to their counterparts



1/4

the number of
MILLENNIALS
(male and female) who credit a mentor for helping them seek a leadership role at work



21%

the average pay increase for a
MAN
who was mentored, according to a Catalyst study



2%

the average pay increase for a
WOMAN
who was mentored, according to the same study



60%

the percentage of
COLLEGE AND GRADUATE STUDENTS
who list mentoring opportunities as a criteria when choosing an employer

74%

the percentage of Fortune magazine's top 25 companies that offer
MENTORING PROGRAMS



JUST 1

the number of mentors it can take
TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

WORK PERSONALITY TEST

If you don't mesh with your co-workers, you might not understand their personality types. Don't fret! Here are tips to learn to work together – and boost productivity.

**HERE'S MY
IDEA!**

THE EXTROVERT

The Extrovert loves to be the center of attention, enjoys group projects, talking through his ideas and connecting with others.

HINT: Provide plenty of time and space for The Extrovert to discuss ideas and brainstorm solutions.

**I GOT
IT!**

THE WORK HORSE

The Work Horse is dedicated, motivated and consistent and will put in the extra time and effort to complete a task.

HINT: Keep The Work Horse on track by sticking with a plan of action. Making last minute changes might derail his ability to complete a task.

**YEAH,
BUT...**

THAT GUY

That Guy knows how to work the system and often passes off work to others – without being noticed.

HINT: Set specific guidelines and expectations to keep That Guy in line and prevent him from finding a way to avoid completing a task.

UH OH!

THE FORGETFUL ONE

The Forgetful One may be a hard worker, but it can take her longer to complete a task because she lacks attention to detail.

HINT: Give The Forgetful One a checklist when assigning work to prevent “forgotten” details.

YES!

THE YES MAN

The Yes Man always says “yes” to tasks assigned to him, rarely complains about work load and consistently has a positive attitude.

HINT: Avoid giving The Yes Man too much more as he might take on more than he can complete.

SHH!

THE QUIET ONE

The Quiet One tends to keep to herself, preferring one-on-one conversations and solo work.

HINT: Help The Quiet One thrive by giving her clear expectations and a lot of space. If goals and deadlines are understood, there is no need to micromanage.

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HOW GRATITUDE BRINGS GROWTH

by Cheryl Alkon

Her silver beaded floor-length gown sparkled, offset by a glittering diamond bracelet, matching earrings, and a huge smile.

But despite being all dressed up, what Janice Kaplan remembers most when she sees the photo of herself, taken when she was the executive producer of FOX television special “The TV Guide Awards Show,” was that she was focused only on “the obligations of the show and whether the ratings would live up to expectations,” she writes in her latest book, “The Gratitude Diaries: How A Year Looking on the Bright Side Transformed My Life.”

It’s one example of how Kaplan, an accomplished media professional, didn’t fully appreciate the job she had. As she writes “The Gratitude Diaries,” changing her perspective — from focusing on the narrow day-to-day stresses to being thankful for the bigger picture, both at work as well as at home and in her relationships — helped her understand the advantages of appreciation.

As a small business owner, such benefits can help your company’s bottom line.

Kaplan’s book expands on a John Templeton Foundation study, which found that 81% of people surveyed said they would work harder for a more grateful boss, and 70% felt better about themselves — and therefore, more likely to be productive employees — if their boss expressed appreciation.

WHAT CAN YOU LEARN FROM BEING THANKFUL?

SAVOR THE SUCCESS

Whether it’s meeting a sales amount, landing a new project, or hiring a fantastic new team member, ambitious people may consider setting and achieving goals while on the job. But instead of simply moving on to the next one, recognize the right now with a big dose of gratitude, writes Kaplan.

Doing so lets you recognize what you’ve accomplished and allows you to appreciate it. If you always only look ahead and only focus on personal and professional growth, you won’t be happy with what you already have.

RECOGNITION, NOT RESIGNATION

It’s not a sign of weakness to show appreciation. “Being grateful for your current job doesn’t make you less ambitious,” she writes. “It just makes you happier — and probably more productive — in the moment. You can be grateful for the now of your career — and still soar in the future.”

Similarly, bosses who think that paying their employees is all the gratitude they need don’t see the bigger picture. “Executives who assume that saying thank you, or appreciating someone’s work, lessens their power are missing the point,” Kaplan writes. “Being appreciated is one of the great motivators on the job — even better than money.” It will encourage employees to seek additional opportunities for professional growth.

RECOGNITION BUILDS RELATIONSHIPS

Sometimes you can’t achieve professional growth alone. Strong ties to others, through networking or having good interactions with others, can be the building blocks of a great career.

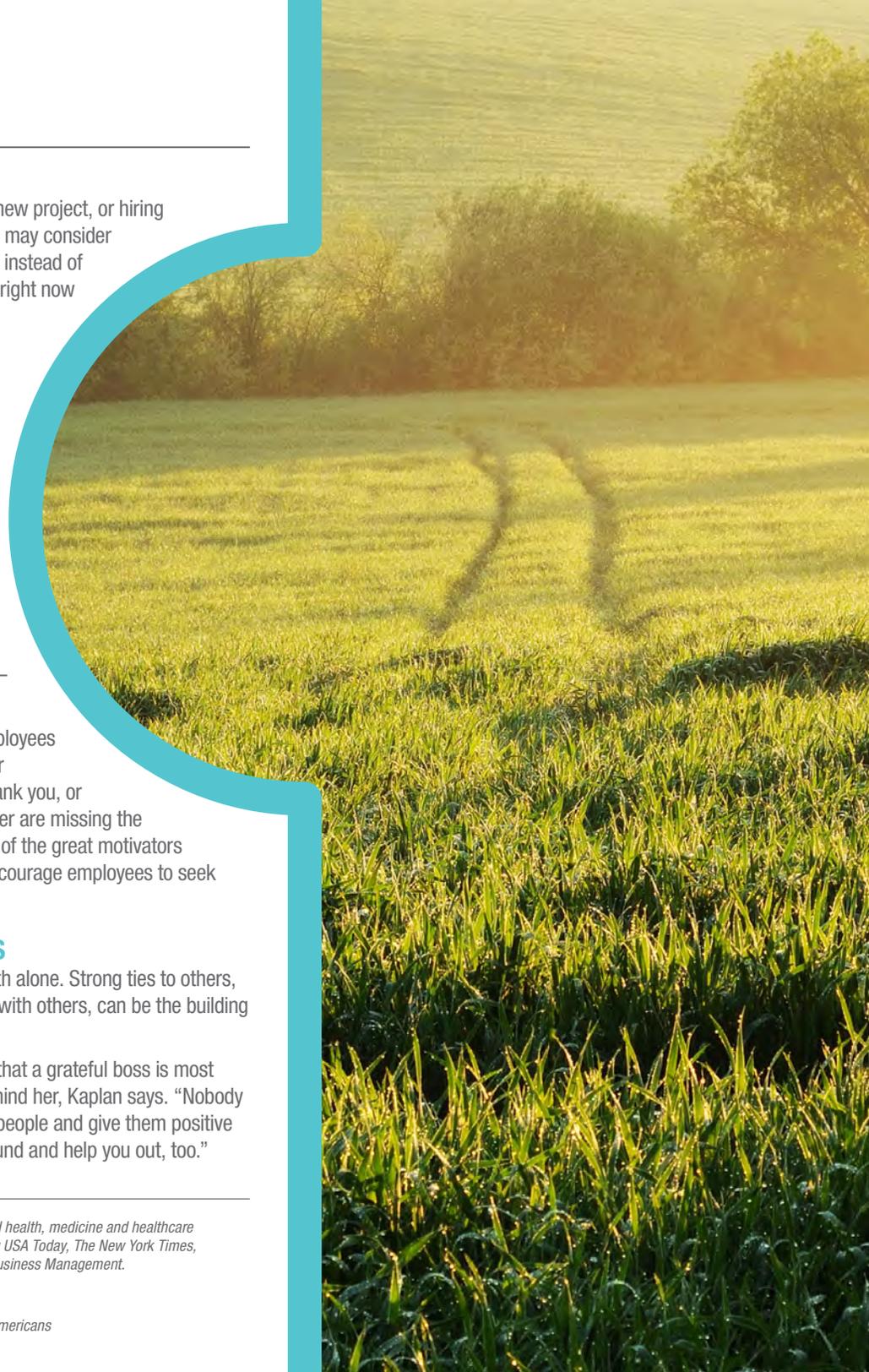
In the Templeton survey, 96% of people agreed that a grateful boss is most likely to be successful, since people will rally behind her, Kaplan says. “Nobody gets to the top on their own. If you help enough people and give them positive feedback, there’s a good chance they’ll turn around and help you out, too.”

Cheryl Alkon is a freelance writer and researcher who has covered health, medicine and healthcare extensively. She has written for a variety of publications, including USA Today, The New York Times, Prevention.com, More, Women’s Day, ENT Today, and Oncology Business Management.

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