

“MEASURE WHAT IS MEASURABLE...” Galileo Galilei

In an age of information, computer productivity is a key to the success of many companies. Ironically, when many companies do little is measure the productivity of their employees. Knowing what your people do when they use their computer can help you more effectively manage your business.

WHY MEASURE WORK?

Even a cursory reading of management writings and plain common sense tells us that "You can't manage what you don't measure" (Reth, 2007)ⁱ.

At the start of the 20th Century marked this principle was well understood. The Motion Study work of Frank and Lillian Gilbreth was combined with the Time Study work of Frederick Winslow Taylor. The resulting Time-Motion methods provided managers with a business efficiency technique capable of both increasing worker productivity and decreasing worker fatigue to optimize productivity. These methods allowed managers to develop efficient mass production and industrial assembly operations that still power the economic engine of many countries.

Measuring how much people work and how well they do this is a key to improve the efficiency of any business operation.

MEASURING COMPUTER WORK

At the start of the 20th Century the growth in computer use marked a transition from an industrial economy to an information age, yet somehow in the process of transformation the basic principle of “measuring and managing” work was overlooked.

At the start of the 21st Century employees are referred to as “information workers’ or “knowledge workers” and many have argued that their productivity cannot be quantified because information work is mental work and not physical work. Yet such arguments overlook three basic facts:

1. **“Knowledge workers” typically are paid for their time (e.g. annual salary) rather than a specific output.**
2. **The vast majority of work at a computer involves using either a keyboard, mouse or speech recognition software system.**
3. **The amount of computer use and the accuracy of computer use now can be measured, and it can be managed**

To do computer work you have to do physical work! And the quantity and quality of this work now can be measured.

WHAT DOES YOUR COMPANY MEASURE?

How do you measure and manage computer work in your company? Ask yourself the following questions:

1. **Do you effectively manage people who use computers?**
2. **Do you measure their productivity?**
3. **Do you know how much work they do on their computer?**
4. **Do you know how many mistakes they make and what it's costing your business?**
5. **Do you know when and how much they use their computer at work?**
6. **Do you know who is at risk for an ergonomic injury?**
7. **Do you know how any ergonomic interventions have impacted productivity?**
8. **Do you know how any training has impacted their productivity?**
9. **Do you know what software they use, and which is most cost-effective?**
10. **Do you know how much your business is paying them to earn money for Google?**

If you answered “NO” to any of the above questions then Prodyx can help.

Now you can be armed with data on how much work your employees are doing on the computer, when they are doing this work, how accurately they are doing this work, what software they are using for this work and much more.

ⁱ You can't manage what you don't measure. (F.J. Reth, 2007, <http://management.about.com/od/metrics/a/Measure2Manage.htm>)