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the Tech Chronicle
The Official Newsletter of NorthStar Technology Services

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The Official Company Newsletter of NorthStar Technology Services

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Work Smarter, Not Harder Harness The Power Of Technology To Improve Productivity

Keeping focused and productive can be difficult in our fast-paced world, where social media, email notifications, and other online temptations are constant distractions. Many people find it challenging to achieve their goals. However, technology can be a useful asset in helping you stay on task, whether you're working or pursuing personal objectives. By employing effective tools and strategies, you can leverage the power of technology to increase productivity and maintain focus on critical tasks.

Utilizing the right apps and software is among the most effective methods to enhance productivity. Numerous productivity tools are accessible, each with distinct features and advantages. Toggl and RescueTime are time-tracking apps that let you monitor how long you spend on particular tasks. This way, you can swiftly recognize time-wasting activities and make adjustments to reclaim it. Asana and Trello are productivity apps that can aid in creating to-do lists and monitoring progress on crucial business tasks and projects.

Focus apps like Freedom and SelfControl can help you stay on task and avoid distractions. These allow you to block access to specific websites for a predetermined amount of time, helping you concentrate on your work or other tasks. While some productivity apps and tools are free, others require a subscription or a one-time fee. Therefore, before selecting the best apps for your situation, it's important to consider various factors, including your work style, goals, and budget. By taking the time to research and identify the best productivity tools and apps, you can streamline your work process and maximize productivity, helping you achieve your goals faster and more efficiently.

In addition to the many apps that are available, another key strategy involves cleaning up and managing your digital environment. If you use a computer for work, it's not uncommon for it to become cluttered over time. Clear out applications and documents from your home screen that are no longer needed, and disable those pesky pop-up notifications. Doing so will often boost your computer's processing power.

Organizing your digital workspace is crucial to improving productivity. Cloud-based platforms like Google Drive or Microsoft OneDrive can help you keep your files organized and easily accessible. It's important to regularly go through your documents, creating subfolders and labeling them with dates for maximum efficiency. Additionally, these platforms make document sharing effortless and prevent distractions while searching for specific files.

If you work remotely, it's important to stay connected with your colleagues to ensure efficient collaboration. While communication apps like Zoom and Slack can facilitate real-time communication, it's crucial to establish boundaries to avoid getting sidetracked by non-work-related conversations. Another helpful tip is to use task management software like Trello or Asana to stay organized and on top of your priorities. These tools can help you track your progress, set deadlines, and collaborate with your team more effectively. Ultimately, finding the right balance between staying connected and staying focused can be challenging, but by using the right tools and strategies, you can achieve optimal productivity while working remotely.

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CLIENT SPOTLIGHT **Contact** Helping You Find Your Way

CONTACT OF BURLINGTON COUNTY

Contact of Burlington County is a community based non-profit organization that provides access to emotional support, community resources, crisis intervention, training, and presentations by way of their three programs. They are the designated Sexual Violence Provider for Burlington County, the designated center to answer for the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline in Burlington, Ocean and Salem Counties and provides a confidential Emotional Support Helpline for Burlington County. Contact has been in existence for over 50 years and is committed to supporting anyone at any time. NorthStar has been proudly supporting Contact's technology since 2011. By protecting their data, NorthStar helps protect Contact's clients and callers. This partnership has allowed Contact to continue providing vital services to the community with confidence and security.

If you're interested in making a difference and volunteering for Contact, simply scan the QR code with your phone or visit their website at: www.contactburlco.org/support-our-cause/



This monthly publication is provided courtesy of **Eric Williams**, the CEO, Owner, & Founder of NorthStar Technology Services located in Moorestown, NJ.



Our Mission:

To build a community of successful-minded entrepreneurs that inspires excellence, encourages collaboration and expands the capacity of all members to achieve great things.

We are proud to have served the greater Philadelphia Metro Area since 2008.

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As a final tip, if you need additional support when it comes to staying productive and focused, utilize a digital assistant like Amazon's Alexa or Apple's Siri. These assistants can be programmed to remind you about important tasks and deadlines before they get too close. They can schedule tasks, help you plan your day and even answer questions quickly.

We don't have to think about technology only as a distraction. Once you find the right apps and technological tools that fit your work style, you'll notice an immediate improvement in your productivity.

Tech Tip Recap

iPhone User Experience Tips:

Use Siri to dictate punctuation:

When speaking to Siri, you can say the name of the punctuation mark you want to add... such as "comma," "period," "question mark," etc.

Customize phone vibrations:

Assign different vibration patterns to specific contacts to tell who's calling or texting you without looking at your phone.

Share your location temporarily:

If you need to share your location with someone for a limited time, go to the "Find My" app, tap on "People," choose the person you want to share your location with, and select "Share My Location."

Use AirPods as a hearing aid:

If you have AirPods, you can use them as a hearing aid by going to "Settings," then "Control Center," and adding "Hearing" to your control center. From there, select "Live Listen."

Customize your iPhone's charging sound:

Go to "Settings," then "Sounds & Haptics," and scroll down to "Charging Sound" to choose different sounds for when your iPhone is charging.

Use your iPhone as a level:

Go to the "Measure" app and swipe left to access the level feature.

Delete digits quickly in Calculator:

If you make a mistake in the Calculator app, swipe left or right on the numbers to delete them one at a time.

Follow Our Socials For Weekly Tech Tips!

How Reflective Listening Can Help You Accomplish Your Goals

By Dr. Geoff Smart

How would you like to be 20% better at persuasion, improve your chances of landing your dream job and become more popular in social settings? All of this is possible by refining one simple conversation tactic: reflective listening. Reflective listening occurs when you show an understanding of what someone else is saying, feeling, aspiring to or worrying about.

For example, when your lunch partner says, "The energy stocks got hammered again today; my firm insists on staying the course, but I feel it's time to go in another direction," you could reflect by saying, "It sounds like you had a hard day, and you feel trapped on a boat that's going in the wrong direction." Your lunch partner will say, "EXACTLY!" and appreciate that you cared enough and were confident enough to explain their emotions.

Reflective listening is better than lecturing your friend by offering a premature solution off the cuff like, "Well, you should leave then." It's better than saying something competitive like, "Well, I have been predicting further declines in energy this past year, and I've been right." And it's way better than ignoring your lunch partner's turmoil and talking about something else on your mind, like "Cheer up – hey, did you catch the football game last night?"

Reflecting what you hear someone saying makes the other person feel like you are respectful, attentive, empathetic and willing to put yourself in their shoes.

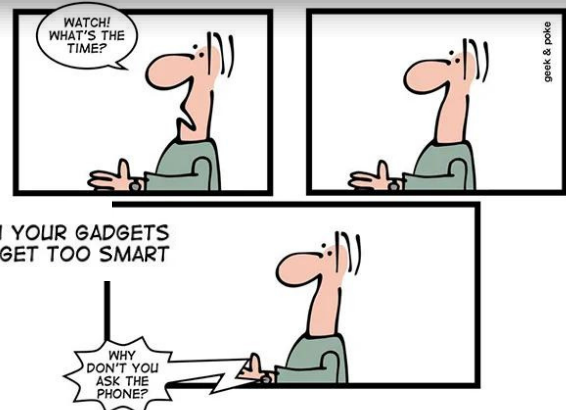
People who feel that you understand them and are an ally in helping them get what they want (in work and in life) are much more likely to listen to your persuasive idea, hire you for the job of your dreams or want to spend time with you socially.

Reflecting is not asking new probing questions (which many strategy consultants, lawyers, accountants and other professionals do all too often). Probing questions are not at all related to what the person just said and are all about getting you the data you seek to advance your agenda. In contrast, reflecting is meeting the person where they are. It's furthering the conversation on a topic that is important to them. Reflecting is easier to do, extremely powerful and more about building trust and mutual understanding than collecting details.

I encourage you to dial up the reflective listening in your professional and personal conversations. You'll see how capable you feel when persuading someone to take action and notice how more people seem to gravitate toward you socially. They will love your skills of reflection.

Dr. Geoff Smart is the chairman and founder of ghSMART, a leadership consulting firm that exists to help leaders amplify their positive impact on the world. Dr. Smart and his firm have published multiple New York Times bestsellers. He stays active in his community and has advised many government officials.

Comic Corner



Virtual Appointments In Microsoft Teams

In today's fast-paced world, the need for efficient and effective communication has never been more critical. With the rise of remote work and the increasing reliance on technology, virtual appointments have become an essential tool for businesses and organizations worldwide. Microsoft Teams, a powerful collaboration platform, has emerged as a game-changer in this arena, offering seamless virtual appointments that redefine the way we connect, collaborate, and communicate.

The global pandemic has accelerated the adoption of remote work, with businesses and organizations scrambling to find ways to maintain productivity and communication while keeping their employees safe.

Virtual appointments have become the go-to solution, allowing teams to connect and collaborate without the need for physical presence. Microsoft Teams, a platform designed to facilitate teamwork and communication, has risen to the challenge, offering a comprehensive suite of tools that make virtual appointments a breeze.

From video conferencing to file sharing, Teams has everything you need to conduct successful virtual appointments, in one place.

There are several benefits of using virtual appointments in Microsoft Teams:

- **Enhanced Collaboration:** Microsoft Teams allows users to collaborate in real-time, making it easier than ever to work together on projects, share ideas, and make decisions.

No matter where they are located, virtual appointments in Microsoft Teams enable teams to work together seamlessly with features like screen sharing and file sharing.

- **Increased Flexibility:** Virtual appointments in Microsoft Teams offer unparalleled flexibility, allowing team members to join meetings from any device, anywhere. This means that employees can participate in important discussions and decision-making processes even if they're on the go or working from home.
- **Cost Savings:** By eliminating the need for physical meeting spaces and reducing travel expenses, virtual appointments in Teams can result in significant cost savings for businesses and organizations.

Additionally, the platform's robust features and integrations eliminate the need for multiple software subscriptions.

- **Improved Communication:** Microsoft Teams' virtual appointments facilitate clear and effective communication, thanks to high-quality video and audio capabilities. The platform also offers features like live captions and translations, ensuring that language barriers and accessibility issues are no longer a hindrance to effective communication.
- **Enhanced Security:** Teams is built on the secure and reliable Microsoft 365 platform, ensuring your virtual appointments are protected by enterprise-grade security measures... You can confidently conduct meetings, knowing your data and conversations are safe.

ITS TIME FOR...

Tech Trivia



It's time for Tech Trivia where we ask our readers a question! The answer is posted under the month's newsletter PDF on our website newsletter page, found under the "Resources" tab.

The question this month is:

What material was the first computer mouse made of?

HOW TO TURN YOUR EMPLOYEES INTO LEADERS

When a manager or leader leaves their role, finding a replacement can be challenging. Hiring externally may seem like the best option, but promoting from within can have numerous benefits. It demonstrates to employees that advancement opportunities exist, motivating them to work harder.

Additionally, internal promotions eliminate the need for extensive training on company processes. Developing your team member for a leadership role requires strategic planning. Building a strong company culture, rewarding success, and implementing a leadership training program are essential steps for ensuring the success of every leader.

By promoting from within and investing in the development of your existing employees, you not only foster loyalty and commitment, but also cultivate a pool of talented leaders who understand your organization deeply.

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