

GUIDE

# The Ultimate Guide to Workforce Productivity Analytics

How to use workforce data as a strategic advantage

Let's face it: Today's business leaders face unprecedented workforce productivity challenges. On the one hand, efficiency is a critical lever for growth – and every minute counts. On the other hand, high-distraction, digital-first work environments make it increasingly difficult to understand who's doing what.

As a result, many leaders struggle to connect day-to-day work with outcomes that fuel growth. They lack the concrete data and insights needed to make informed decisions around utilization, workload distribution and operational efficiency.

The answer? **Workforce productivity analytics**. This solution provides the visibility you need to optimize resources, prevent burnout and drive measurable results across your organization. **This guide explains how to harness the power of workforce productivity analytics, transforming operational blind spots into a powerful competitive advantage.**

## Table of Contents

1. What Is Workforce Productivity Analytics? .....	2
2. Why Focus on Productivity Analytics? .....	2
3. Key Benefits of Workforce Productivity Analytics .....	4
4. How to Leverage Workforce Productivity Data .....	5
5. How to Engage Employees in Your Workforce Productivity Program .....	8
6. Getting Started With Workforce Productivity Analytics .....	9



# What is workforce productivity analytics?

Workforce productivity analytics collect, analyze and use employee activity data to improve performance, giving business leaders the visibility to optimize resources and drive better outcomes.

Unlike the broader category of workforce analytics, workforce productivity analytics drill into the day-to-day realities of work — everything from technology usage and time spent on high-value tasks to untapped capacity and hidden inefficiencies. They help leaders across the organization answer questions such as:

- **Are we using time and talent effectively?**
- **Where are our productivity bottlenecks?**
- **Where are we losing productivity, and what's the financial cost?**
- **How can we improve results without burning out teams?**
- **Which tools are worth the investment?**
- **How do we help teams focus on high-impact work?**

Whether you're a COO looking to optimize operations, a CIO evaluating technology or a CHRO wanting to prevent burnout, workforce productivity analytics help you spot important trends and patterns.

## Why focus on productivity analytics?

Labor is one of the biggest investments for businesses — and also one of the least understood. While revenue and expenses are easily tracked, most managers lack true insights into how work actually gets done. Without real-time visibility into work hours, employee locations, technology use and team capacity, workforce efficiency is a costly blind spot.

Workforce productivity analytics remove the guesswork from allocating resources, scaling teams and improving performance. Here are several key areas where productivity analytics make a big difference.



### Remote & Hybrid Work

**Remote work has exploded. [Gallup](#) reports that nearly 80% of employees whose jobs can be done remotely work from home at least some of the time. But are they getting the support they need? Do they work efficiently? Could they work better?**

Workforce productivity analytics help leaders see when and where work happens, how effectively hybrid employees use their time and where remote teams may struggle with collaboration. They also shows how productivity patterns differ between office, remote and hybrid workers. Remote team members may get more [focus time](#) during certain hours, or hybrid workers may struggle with [context-switching](#) on office days. This location-based data helps leaders craft data-driven policies based on where people are most productive, instead of relying on inaccurate or unfounded assumptions.



## Operational Efficiency

**Remote and hybrid work play a critical role in operational efficiency. But without visibility into daily workflows, they're hard to improve. Do teams spend time on the right tasks? Where are resources wasted? Which processes slow things down?**

Workforce productivity analytics answer these questions. Turning activity data into operational insights allows leaders to spot inefficiencies, uncover process bottlenecks and identify when teams are stretched too thin – or not stretched enough. They also shows how work is distributed across locations, roles and departments, which tools support productivity, and where performance gaps exist. These insights make it easier to inform policies, standardize best practices, rebalance workloads and eliminate waste.



## Technology Usage

**Technology is at the heart of digital teamwork and collaboration, but do those investments pay off? Do employees use the right tools, in the right ways, to drive the right results?**

Using workforce productivity analytics to track real-time usage across apps and websites helps leaders see which tools support productivity – and which ones cause friction. Maybe a team spends hours toggling between platforms, or critical systems go unused while employees rely on workarounds. These insights help executives eliminate waste, right-size licenses and align tech stacks with real needs. It's a smarter way to improve digital ROI and ensure technology fuels productivity – not frustration.



## Capacity Planning

**When it comes to maximizing productivity, hiring decisions are critical. Add too many people and you waste budget. But hire too few and you risk burnout. And without clear data, it's hard to know when teams are truly at capacity or simply misaligned.**

Workforce productivity analytics reveal important metrics such as workload distribution and time spent on meaningful work. These insights make it easy to spot signs of [overwork](#), [underutilization](#) or uneven staffing across departments. Armed with this information, leaders can make smarter headcount decisions, reallocate resources and scale in ways that support sustainable productivity levels.

**ActivTrak Productivity Lab Utilization Benchmark data found nearly 60% of workers underperform, costing \$11.2M in lost productivity per 1,000 employees.**

*Based on annual mean wage per employee of \$85,864 for analyzed industries (U.S. Bureau of Labor)*



# Benefits of Workforce Productivity Analytics

For many organizations, understanding how work happens — and how to optimize workforce investments — is a challenge. Many business leaders still fly blind, with traditional metrics that fall short of business needs. But this approach is no longer sustainable, and today's digital-first environments demand a new approach to workforce optimization.

**Workforce productivity analytics solutions provide accurate and unbiased insights, helping organizations achieve the following benefits:**



**Data-driven views of employee efficiency** provide consistent, continuous measurement over time versus point-in-time surveys or potentially subjective manager assessments.



**Consistent measurement of productivity** across teams and departments facilitates workforce planning discussions and departmental hiring plans.



**Flexible work models** supported by data-driven policies benefit both the company and employees, and make it easier to maintain a competitive advantage through hybrid or remote work.



**Visibility into unbalanced workloads** with objective data equips managers to properly redistribute tasks, advocate for more resources or take other corrective measures to prevent burnout and disengagement.



**Personalized coaching** supported by detailed activity logs guides fact-based discussions and addresses performance concerns or opportunities for professional development.



**Technology license optimization** is backed by reports on which apps teams actually use, which subscriptions to cancel and where opportunities exist to consolidate tools or offer additional training.



**Strategic capacity planning** with real-time visibility into workload distribution and patterns enables leaders to make informed decisions about when to hire, where to reallocate resources and how to prevent burnout.



**Quantified financial impact** of productivity gaps and optimization opportunities transforms hidden costs — like inefficient work patterns and misaligned talent — into concrete dollars that justify strategic investments and budget allocation decisions.



**More objective performance assessments** make it easy to provide the critical recognition employees deserve for consistent effort or going above and beyond.

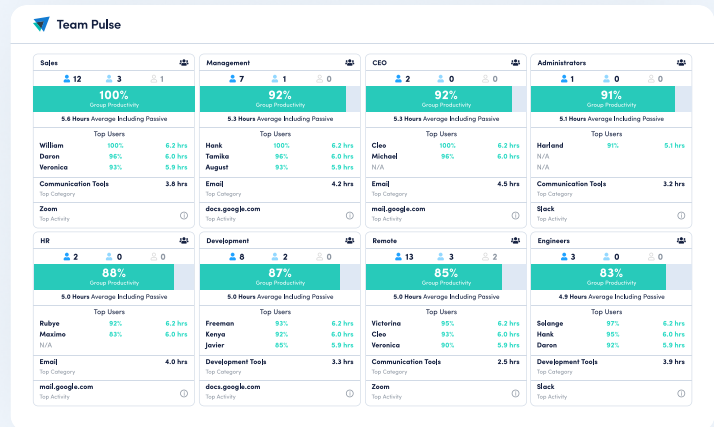


# How to Use Workforce Productivity Data

Workforce productivity analytics tools collect and analyze employee activity data, transforming it into valuable insights across people, processes and technology. These insights make it easy to answer critical questions in six essential areas.

## Productivity

Workforce productivity analytics give leaders a clear, objective view of how teams spend time and where opportunities for improvement exist. By making work patterns visible, they empower managers to spot bottlenecks, recognize top performers and understand the habits that drive results to foster a more productive, engaged workforce.



### Productivity reports answer questions such as:

- What does workforce productivity and engagement look like, and how can we improve it?
- When are employees most productive throughout the day or week?
- How much time is spent on focused work?
- Are employees consistently engaged over time or distracted frequently?
- Are employees more productive working remotely versus in an office?
- Which employees are at risk of burnout?

## Activity Alignment

One of the biggest drains on organizational efficiency is when talented people spend time on work that doesn't drive results. Workforce productivity analytics reveal exactly how time is allocated across different activities, showing when high-performers are pulled into low-value tasks and when workflows need restructuring to better support strategic priorities.



### Activity Alignment insights answer questions such as:

- Are employees working on activities aligned with their roles and skills?
- Which activities drive results and where is focus misaligned?
- Which team members spend too much time on distractions or low-impact work?
- What specific coaching guidance is needed to help employees reallocate time toward higher-impact work?
- What effective work habits do top performers demonstrate, and how do we emulate those across team members?

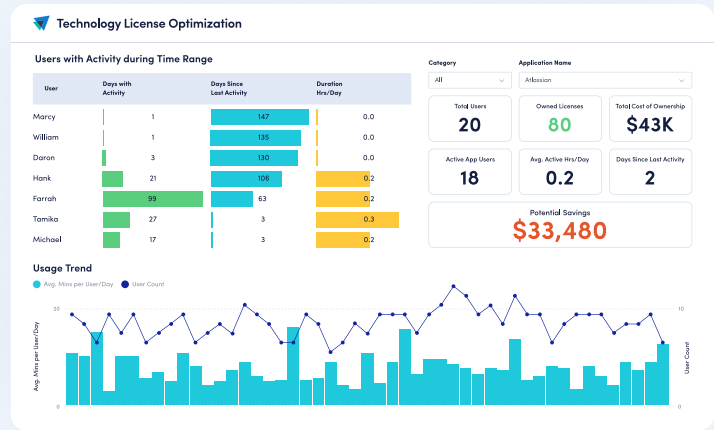


## Application & Website Usage

Today's digital workplaces run on a complex mix of apps and websites, making it challenging to understand which ones enable productivity. Workforce productivity analytics surface tool usage patterns to help leaders eliminate waste, reduce costs and align technology investments with team needs.

Technology license optimization reports help answer questions such as:

- Can we consolidate tools to save on licensing costs or simplify workflows?
- How does app usage vary between more and less experienced team members?
- Do people need more training to increase adoption of new or existing software?



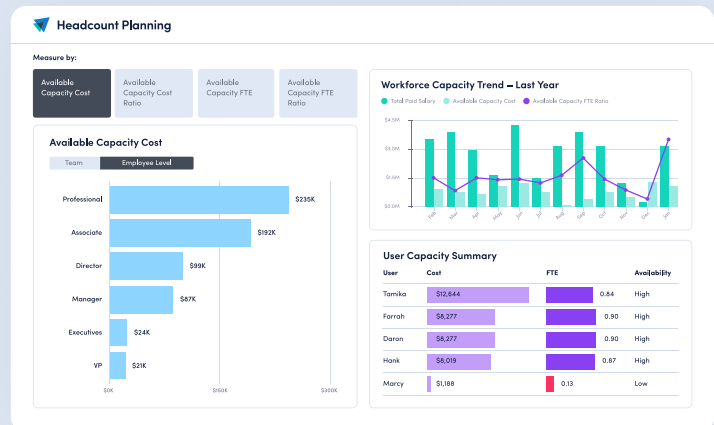
- What software licenses and tools are used consistently and which can we discontinue?
- Do employees introduce security risks by using unapproved applications?

## Capacity & Utilization

Workforce productivity analytics shine a real-time light on team capacity, making it easier to match people to priorities. Identifying under- or over-utilized team members equips leaders to balance workloads, optimize staffing levels and build a sustainable rhythm that supports both productivity and well-being.

Headcount and capacity planning reports help answer questions such as:

- Are we maximizing talent before adding headcount?
- How much revenue potential is lost to unused or misaligned capacity?
- Which teams have untapped labor capacity that could absorb additional responsibilities?

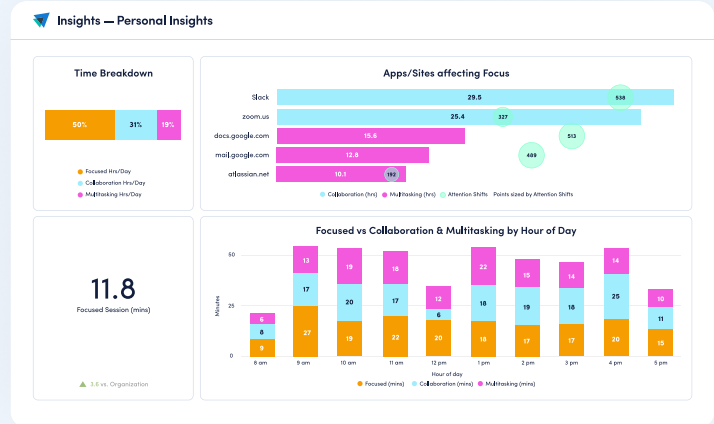


- How have organizational changes like attrition or restructuring affected workload distribution?
- Where do we need to rebalance workloads to maintain efficiency?
- Are we rightsizing teams effectively, or are some departments consistently over- or under-resourced?



## Focus, Collaboration & Multi-Tasking

The modern workplace demands both deep work and seamless collaboration, but finding the right balance is challenging. With workforce productivity analytics, managers understand how teams naturally work – when they need uninterrupted focus time, how collaboration tools impact concentration and where multitasking helps or hurts performance. These insights enable the design of better ways of working.



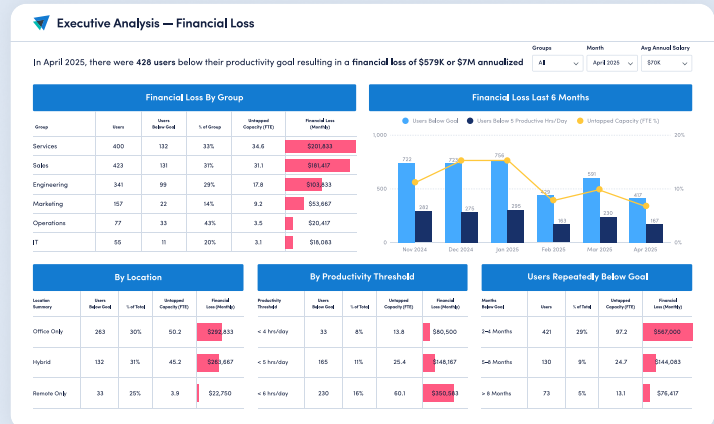
### Performance reports help answer questions such as:

- How much time is spent on focused work vs. collaboration and multi-tasking?
- Do messaging apps increase context switching and distraction?
- How much time is spent in meetings?
- Should we carve out certain times of day for focused work?
- How do these trends differ between newer and more experienced team members?



## Forecasting & Budgeting

The true cost of productivity gaps often remains hidden until it's too late. While most leaders can quickly identify expenses like software licenses or office rent, the financial impact of inefficient work patterns, underutilized talent and misaligned resources typically flies under the radar. Workforce productivity analytics quantify the real dollar value of productivity losses, giving you concrete data to justify investments, reallocate resources and make budget decisions that move the needle.



### Financial Loss reports help answer questions such as:

- How much revenue potential is lost to underutilized or misaligned staff?
- What's the true financial cost of current productivity gaps, and where should we prioritize improvement efforts?
- Which productivity investments would deliver the highest ROI based on our current loss patterns?
- How do different work locations and workload fluctuations impact financial performance, and how should this influence budgeting cycles?
- What is the financial impact of adding headcount versus optimizing existing workforce capacity?



# Engaging Employees in Workforce Productivity Programs

The above insights are a great starting point, but they only work to your advantage when everyone is on board. It's important to approach productivity monitoring in a transparent, collaborative way that promotes trust with employees. Workforce productivity analytics are not about surveillance or tracking. Instead, they provide an opportunity to share insights and collaborate on solutions to improve productivity organization-wide.

**To ensure a successful workforce productivity program rollout, follow these three best practices:**

1. **Be transparent.** Openly share your intent and discuss how you'll use the data throughout the process.
2. **Communicate often.** Communication is critical prior to implementation, throughout onboarding and on an ongoing basis.
3. **Encourage ownership.** Emphasize a culture of continuous learning and performance improvement.

## Be transparent.

**Build trust and get buy-in.** Most experts recommend being upfront about your workforce productivity analytics program, including what data you plan to collect and how you intend to use it. The software is meant to provide insights to improve your business, not to spy on employees. When choosing a workforce productivity analytics solution, consider how it protects employee privacy while gathering the data and insights you need. Trust and transparency are essential in building a healthy workplace culture, and your workforce productivity solution should support those goals.

## Communicate often.

**Inform employees and managers.** Take a phased approach when introducing a workforce productivity program to your organization. Share plans with managers, since they will use the software and field questions from their teams. After you have managers on board, invite employees to a town hall meeting to learn more and ask questions.

**Pro tip:** Use ActivTrak's [prebuilt templates](#) to answer common questions and communicate with teams.

## Encourage ownership.

**Share data to drive continuous improvement.** Workforce productivity analytics data is meant to be shared organization-wide, allowing employees and managers to collaborate on goals and solutions.



This promotes trust and empowers employees to self-manage and make adjustments as needed. Roles vary — and so do the ways each team member works. What defines a successful, productive salesperson is much different than what defines a successful, productive engineer.

Avoid comparing apples to oranges and instead analyze metrics for similar roles and teams. If you're concerned about the data you see, don't make assumptions. Rather, speak with the employee to clear up misunderstandings before taking action.

**Remember, culture always comes first.** Reinforce the message that transparency, improvement and collaboration are vital to the culture of your organization. Your use of workforce productivity analytics will be an ongoing process. Use it to identify and unlock key areas for productivity improvements.

## Getting Started With Workforce Productivity Analytics

**Your workforce is your most valuable asset — it's time to maximize it.**

The modern workplace has fundamentally changed. Remote and hybrid teams, digital-first environments and increasing performance pressures make traditional management approaches obsolete. Leaders who continue to rely on assumptions and outdated metrics leave productivity gains on the table — and risk employee burnout in the process.

Workforce productivity analytics change this equation. By providing clear visibility into how work actually happens, you can make informed decisions to drive results while supporting your team's well-being. Identify bottlenecks before they become problems, recognize high performers with objective data and balance workloads to prevent costly turnover.

### Ready to put your employee data to work?

With ActivTrak, it's easy. Easy-to-use reports and dashboards help managers and teams:

- Measure productivity trends across teams and individuals.
- Assess workload balance and burnout risk.
- Identify how and where to build more focus time into daily schedules.
- Understand which applications are used most (and least).
- See when high-performers are pulled into low-value tasks.
- Quantify the financial cost of productivity gaps.
- Spot untapped capacity before hiring or reallocating resources.
- Identify which tools drive results and what to eliminate or consolidate.



# Checklist: Getting Started for FREE With ActivTrak

Ready to build a workforce productivity program? Follow these steps to get started with ActivTrak today.

## Read the *Ultimate Guide to Workforce Productivity Analytics*.

Congratulations! You've already completed the first step.

## Develop your goals and KPIs.

As with any new program, it's critical to understand your goals before getting started. Just as important is outlining what success looks like. How will you measure progress?

## Plan on transparency.

How will you communicate your workforce productivity program to team members? Download free templates to help communicate your workforce productivity program [here](#).

## Sign up for a Free ActivTrak account.

Measure productivity with ActivTrak for up to three users for free. To see the productivity of additional users and unlock advanced features, you can always upgrade to a paid plans. Create your free account [here](#).

## Install the agent.

For every device you want to collect productivity data from, simply hit the blue Download Agent button within the ActivTrak app. You can also remotely install agents on devices. To learn more about agent installation, [click here](#).

## Customize your account.

After the agent is installed, customize your instance to best meet your needs. This includes naming devices and users, creating groups, assigning productivity labels and categories to websites, setting custom schedules and more. To get detailed instructions on setting up customizations, [click here](#).

## Review dashboards and reports.

Use the executive dashboards for quick, easy-to-understand snapshots on everything from app usage to activity alignment. You can also use the [ActivConnect API](#) to embed your workforce productivity data into BI tools like Power BI, Tableau and Looker Studio.

### Pro Tip: Unlock Cost Savings & Growth Faster with ActivTrak.

Organizations using workforce optimization software see:

- Up to **20% reduction in untapped capacity**
- Up to **10% in payroll savings**
- **122X ROI** in transformation scenarios

Discover the  
ActivTrak Difference

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