

Winter blues? Or Spring fever? Which is better for business?

Written by Julie Desmond
Thursday, 06 February 2014 13:46

Anyone who has had to sit in an office or classroom on an afternoon in May might know the answer to this. If that classroom or office has a big window overlooking, well, anything, that person will probably feel pretty certain that a pleasant, sunny afternoon is no time to be productive. Spring is a daydreaming, let's take (another) walk time of year.

Recent research by Professor Francesca Gino at Harvard Business School proves what the rest of us already suspected. Productivity goes up as the rain (or in our case, snow) comes down.

According to Gino, in a recent blogpost, "We found that an increase in rain correlated with a decrease in the time it took for workers to complete their tasks. To be precise, a one-inch increase in rain was related to a 1.3 percent decrease in worker completion time for each transaction."

A quick Google search on "Workplace Productivity" will expose you to the 7 drivers of workplace productivity, the 5 workplace innovations that increase productivity, 5 tricks to increase productivity in an open office, 11 steps to increasing workplace productivity (with pictures!) and even a list of 5 workplace irritations that can boost productivity in the office.

Highlights include: Stand-up desks, yoga ball chairs, task lists, employee rewards, turning off your email (if I can't see it, it isn't there?), encouraging people to talk to one another rather than emailing (this actually works), and under the irritations column, sarcasm, gossip, a messy office, and removing the employee incentive you put into place a few sentences back are all advised.

Clearly, productivity is a personal thing. You know those days when you just feel in your gut that you're a rock star? Those days when people ask, How do you do it all? Pay attention to what's going on around you. Who are you working with? Where are you working? What is unique about your setup that day? When you can position yourself to have more of those days, your productivity will soar.

With all that in mind, if you're in charge of increasing other people's productivity, you might want to invest in some heavy shades or curtains, because, according to the official studies, no one makes as much hay when the sun shines.

Julie Desmond is Manager of IT and Software Engineering recruiting for George Konik Associates, Inc. Send your career planning questions to Julie at jdesmond@georgekonik.com .