Internet Use in the Workplace

Think about a situation in your experience that you had to do something in the past. You can choose two options that one is to do it by being forced; the other one is being done in a way that you were inspired or motivated. Which one made it better effect and result? Probably you would say the second one. These days in workplace, sort of this idea has been evolved into a controversial issue that whether employees should be monitored what they are doing in use of the computer at the workplace. As a matter of fact, internet use at the workplace should be considered beneficial to employees for many reasons rather than wasteful.

When an employee is stuck in front of his or her computer for hours on end trying to complete their work, it is very possible for them to burn out and go into a slump. Allowing them a bit of free time to relieve stress would allow them to stay in peak mental condition and allow for optimal work performance. In the article “Why Wasting Time Is a Good Thing” by David H. Freedman (2006), the author says that “Simply put, workers, especially knowledge workers, may need a certain amount of distraction during the day to keep from burning out, and web surfing fills the bill”. Employees are often under stress from different sources, and they like to relieve their stress in their own ways. Sometimes they want to surf facebook, and sometimes they want to shop. Whatever it is they are doing, allowing a bit of free time for them to relieve stress helps tremendously. To allow their workers stay at their peak, employers should allow their employees an allotted time for personal use while at work.

Workers who spend time doing leisurely things online at work may be using company hours for their own amusement, but when they arrive home they make up for their lost work. Workers nowadays are taking their work home with them, allowing them to have more time to complete the same task, giving them more freedom and less compacted stress. “Indeed, employees spend an average of 3.7 hours a week on the web for personal activities at work and 5.9 hours a week online at home doing work related tasks, according to a study by the University of Maryland’s smith school of business and Rockbridge associates, a market research firm based in great falls, Virginia”. This quote shows how even though employees are spending company time doing leisure surfing, the employee more than makes up for that time on their own hours.

According to David H. Freeman in his article *Why Wasting Time Is a Good Thing* (2006), “A 2005 survey by America Online and Salary.com concluded that employers spend nearly $760 billion a year paying employees to goof off on the Web”. Many people say that allowing workers to surf the internet while they are working is goofing off, and in many ways they are correct. However, allowing them to goof off is what allows these employees to be more productive in the long run, and the end point is much more important than the route taken to get there when it comes to getting work done. According to Freedman, “Perhaps more important, recreational web surfing has become a kind of mental floss for workers who spend their days sucking in a stream of work-related data that now comes in at a fire hose pace—it’s the information age equivalent of a walk around the block”. The brain is a muscle, if you work it too much at one time it will get very tired, but if you allow it to have short rests, it will work better for longer.

There are many things that go on in the employee’s life including personal problems at home that they may bring to work, and when you add the stress of work, employees can get very tired, very quickly. Companies who recognize the value of a happy employee will often see a more loyal workforce who is more willing to do more for the company than an employee who is angry because his or her time is closely monitored. The happy employee will often try to work their absolute hardest to ensure that their job position is kept. This is why it is very beneficial to companies to allow their employees a little bit of free time for web surfing because the web surfing is more beneficial than it is a wasteful thing.

Reference

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