

# PRODUCTIVITY HANDBOOK FOR BUSY FACILITIES MANAGERS



Get your workforce on the fast track to success with a blueprint for the future.

Presented By:

**i**office®

# Productivity in the workplace is a constant uphill battle that companies spanning every demographic share.

Every one of us, at some time or another, has struggled with their ability to concentrate and stay focused, allowing even the slightest distraction to get the best of them.

**As the workspace manager, however, there is no room for distractions. Your best options are to start streamlining workflow and eliminating costly distractions.**

As the lead FM, your Executives are looking to you to **deliver organizational results**, regardless of what is going on around you. With no room for error, what can you do to ensure your customers, as well as yourself, stay on track, delivering the numbers those at the top are striving for?

While it may seem impossible at times, there are a number of things you can do to make sure you and your team **meet or exceed productivity goals**.


Being able to organize, adjust, and commit to the plan is key in moving your workforce into the 21st century and ensuring your organization is at maximum productivity levels.



## Written by Elizabeth Dukes

### Co-Author of Wide Open Workspace

Elizabeth Dukes has helped grow iOffice from its first customer to over 1,800 clients. Her Texas heritage has driven that success. From a family of ranchers and oil people who wore cowboy hats and boots both on the ranch and in the conference room, **Elizabeth embodies her forebears' ethic for hard work and their formula for authentic living.**

A blue-tinted background image showing several hands reaching up towards the center, where a camera is visible. The hands are of various skin tones, suggesting a diverse group of people. The overall composition is centered and conveys a sense of teamwork and shared focus.

FM Leaders must recognize that their organization's success hinges on **interdepartmental connectivity**, including human resources, information technology, finance, accounting, and legal.

# Get to Know Your People and What it Takes to Keep Them Engaged

“Communication is the key to any relationship.” You have probably heard it throughout your entire life. Marriage is typically the relationship one is referring to, when using this quote, but the truth is it’s true of every relationship. And, since most of us spend more time with colleagues than our friends and family, this statement rings even more true for the workplace “family”.

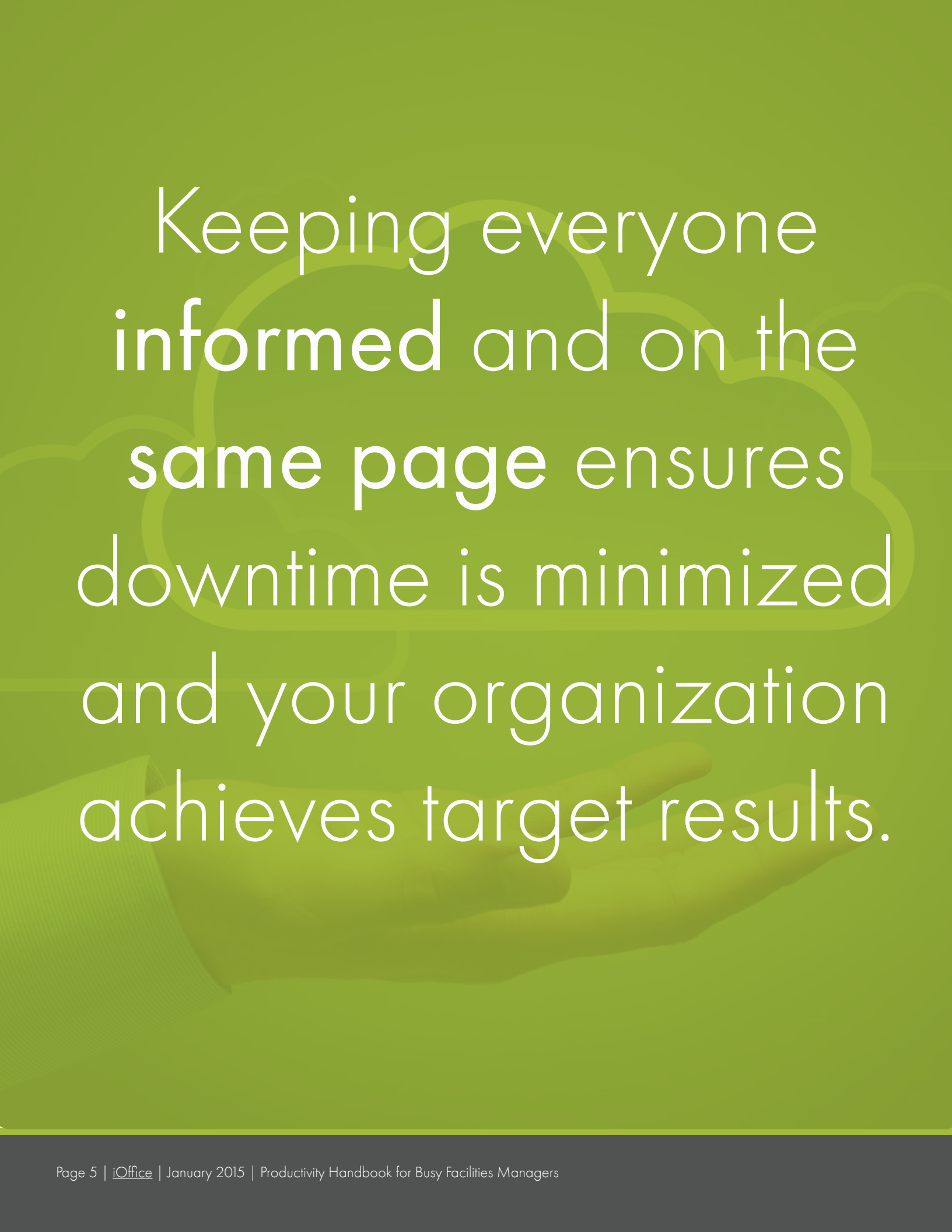
**As the Facilities Manager, you do not always have a choice of who you surround yourself with in the workplace.**

Sure, you might have a hand in hiring those who comprise your team, but what about the other departments, vendors, technicians, and administrators? It is highly unlikely that, spanning your career, you will agree with every new hire; the trick is to listen, observe, and identify the multitude of personality types which comprise your organization. Your primary goal is to keep them engaged and productive for eight hours a day, not just present. And the answer begins with your willingness and ability to communicate on every level.



**FM Leaders must recognize that their organization’s success hinges on interdepartmental connectivity, including human resources, information technology, finance, accounting, and legal.** Such connection must also be established with outside vendors and technicians, ensuring added value across the entire company.

Budgetary cutbacks have made it necessary for fewer people to complete the work of many. With more responsibilities on their plates, it is critical that all workers be on the same page, regarding workplace projects and initiatives. **Communication should be clear and concise**, when detailing work expectations. Meet with your team weekly to get an update on progress, but allow for self-direction. Scott Kennedy, Director of Operations, Central Bucks School District suggests that allowing employees to self-direct suggests a level of trust and offers “more accountability, a little more responsibility, and a little more freedom... which leads to productivity.” **{1}** Allowing for such freedom is dually beneficial. Not only does it build confidence amongst your workforce, it allows you increased freedom from constant micro-managing, giving you more time to focus on your work.



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# Make Sure Data is Easily Accessible to Both You and Your Team

Data comes in many forms, each with its own relevance in today's marketplace. As the Facilities Manager, part of your job is to identify and analyze key metrics. A 2013 TowersWatson report revealed that over 60% of employees are disengaged, detached and unsupported, directly linking the quality of the workspace environment with overall productivity.

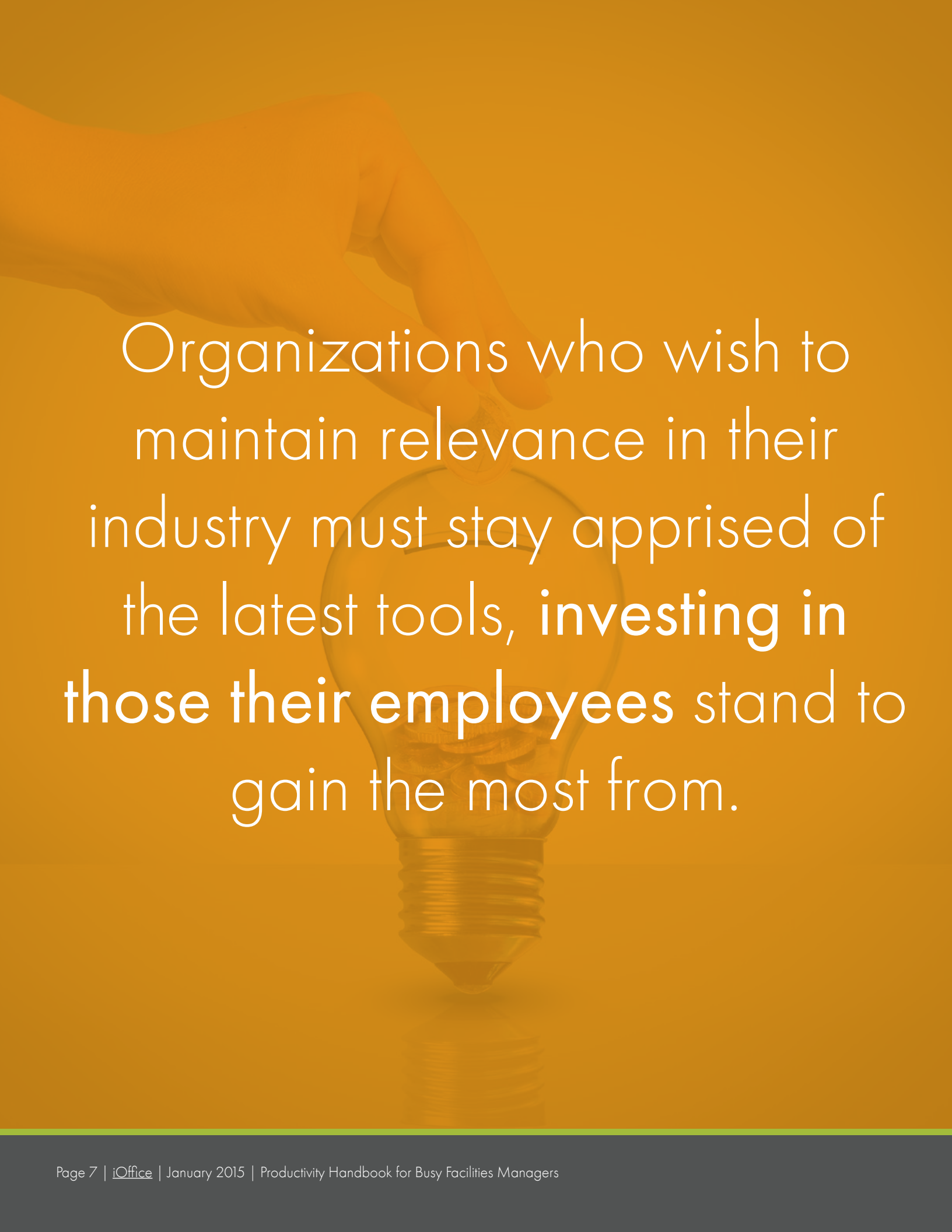
**Further discussion on this subject at a 2013 IFMA World Workplace session stated "four key ways real estate can influence business productivity include the alignment of supply and demand, the effective channeling of information flow, the enablement of individual productivity and the strengthening of internal and external relationships." {2}**

Knowing this, it stands to reason that you, as the FM, **must identify, access, and understand key metrics that reveal issues in processes.** Careful analysis of said data, in a sense, tells a story. It assists management in identifying which best practices most appropriately align with organizational needs, affording greater opportunities for communication and departmental collaboration, as well as anticipation of any future needs.

Such demands range anywhere from new project management software to workspace redesign, and everything in between. Say, for instance, the conference room space is being misused and could be reallocated into two conference rooms. Or perhaps the conference space is not equipped with the technological tools needed to properly conduct a meeting. Such information is critical to be realized and acted upon, before the meeting takes place, to continue to guide the work flow process in a positive direction.

Along with data collection and analysis, **every employee needs quick access to real-time data**, such as the location of assets or people, and details regarding service requests. You do not want your workforce wasting valuable time searching for AV equipment missing from Conference Room A. They must be able to access such information in an instant, so they can focus on more important details. Keeping everyone informed and on the same page ensures downtime is minimized and your organization achieves target results.



A hand is shown holding a lightbulb. Inside the lightbulb, several coins are visible, suggesting investment or financial growth. The background is a solid orange color.

Organizations who wish to maintain relevance in their industry must stay apprised of the latest tools, **investing in those their employees** stand to gain the most from.

# Keep Apprised of the Latest Technology

We have established the importance of value driven data and keeping your workforce happy and able to communicate, but how is such a feat achieved? The answer, for many, lies in "Gartner Group's ongoing research concept, the Nexus of Forces: 'The convergence and mutual reinforcement of four interdependent trends: social interaction, mobility, cloud and information.'

**These forces integrate and empower individuals as they interact with each other and their information through well-designed ubiquitous technology."**


We are fortunate enough to live and work in a time where technology is highly advanced and serves as a tool for virtually every aspect of our personal and professional lives. **Organizations who wish to maintain relevance in their industry must stay apprised of the latest tools, investing in those their employees stand to gain the most from.** It is not enough to simply invest in such tools; we must supply our workforce with tools that interface with each other so as to ensure any redundancy is eliminated and disparate data collected and shared. Ease of use is also a critical aspect, as the only way for these tools to work is to have the entire organization on board.



For many, Facilities Management software is the most well-rounded investment for their needs. Employees have the ability to generate work order tickets to IT, as well as outside vendors, executives, and the Facility team can analyze space utilization to ensure real estate usage is maximized, while HR, IT and FMs are able to plan future moves accordingly. Since IT and HR likely have their own software systems that work well for their needs, it will be important to invest in a software package that integrates with existing software and automates manual processes, offering the transparency and fluency needed to keep everyone involved in working towards company objectives.

While your workforce will realize many benefits with such a tool, so too will the management team. Your software offers you valuable data, regarding organizational processes and budget, providing the key dashboard metrics previously discussed. Such data offers return on investment through operational savings, such as reduced labor and maintenance costs. **The only way to accomplish such a task is through custom reporting and analytics.**





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# Realize the Value of Mobility

Ours is a fast-paced society, always on the move. Those who slow down will inevitably fall behind. Along with our mobility, we have come to expect immediate access to the information we need. This is true, not only in our personal lives, but in our professional as well. As technology progresses, so, too, have our mobility needs.

**As Facilities teams realize the need for proper space management, many are turning to workspace options, such as flex spacing, telecommuting, and hot-desking.**

Companies are realizing the multiple benefits to such initiatives— their workforce thrives on **collaborative spaces, drawing inspiration from each other**, while executives can rest assured their spatial investments are maximized. Such benefits dually affect the budget; employee productivity rises and money is not wasted on underutilized real estate.

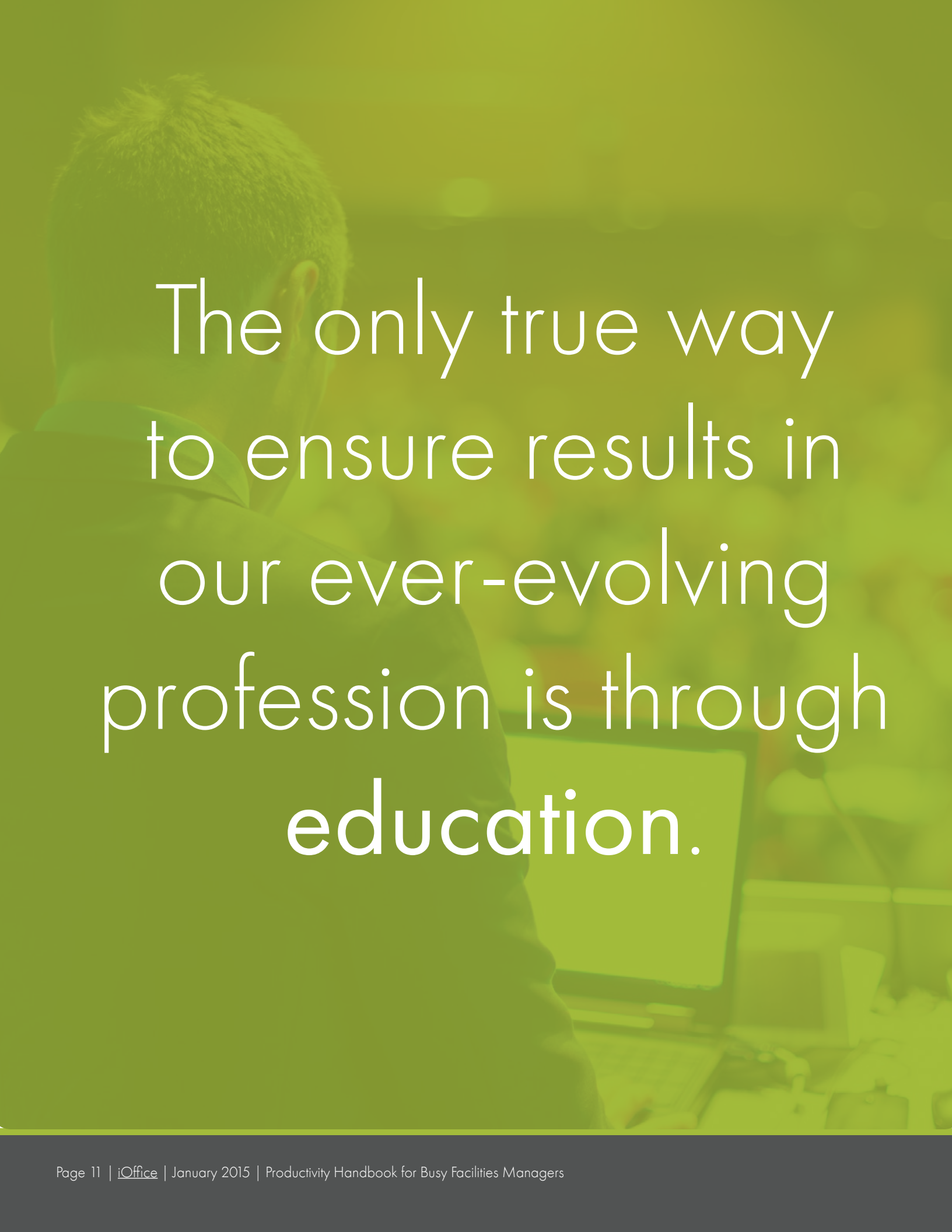
With these technological and spatial changes, Facilities teams face new mobility possibilities, learning that such versatility enhances their own job performance. For many, cloud-based

Facilities Management software is the solution to their evolving mobility needs. If a Facilities Manager is in a meeting with HR regarding the six new hires coming onboard next week, a cloud-based software system eliminates the need to bring layout printouts or spend hours tracking down the equipment the new hires will need for their workspace. The asset management system allows your workforce to **quickly and easily track down the location of the needed equipment with the click of a button**. If IT is needed for set-up, a work order can be created on the spot, eliminating the need for a to-do list for when you return to your desk.

It is important to remember, however, that meeting all of your mobility needs is not just limited to the software being utilized. The workplace must be viewed as more than just a space, but rather, a tool. FMs must consider generational and gender differences, ensuring the environment is conducive to productivity spanning all groups. For many, this means investment in tablets, smart phones, and mobile apps. For others, this means flexible furniture solutions, such as movable desks and folding walls.

Whatever your workplace needs include, FMs must be sure to consider the future direction of the company, and its workforce, before making investments. Tools must serve current needs, yet remain conducive to productivity for the future workspace, to maximize ROI.



A person is seen from the back, sitting at a desk and working on a computer. The image is heavily overlaid with a semi-transparent green filter. The text is centered over the image in a white, sans-serif font.

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## Proper Training & Continuing Education Should Be a Priority

The only true way to ensure results in our ever-evolving profession is through education. Your workforce is hopefully comprised of solid employees; it is your job to retain that talent.

**Any interruption in workflow due to employee turnover is costly for the organization in both time and money. Along with the other “tools” we’ve described, support through education is key to employee retention.**

**Education comes in many forms-workshops, conventions, online courses, and blogs, to name a few.**

By investing in yourself and your workforce's continued education, you show both your employees and executives that **you're investing in the future and support long-term goals.**

Part of your role as the FM is to ensure your organization invests in the proper tools. Identification and implementation of such tools is only the start. **Proper training is essential** in ensuring your people understand the “why” and “how” surrounding new processes and it is up to you to make sure they receive such knowledge.





The background of the page is a solid orange color. Overlaid on this is a faint, chalk-like illustration of a person in a business suit standing next to a chalkboard. The person is pointing their right hand towards a bar chart on the board. The chart has several vertical bars of varying heights, and a large arrow points upwards from the left side of the chart. The text 'Quick Tips for Increasing Productivity' is written in a large, white, sans-serif font across the center of the image.

# Quick Tips for Increasing Productivity

# Now that we have the essentials for constructing a productive workspace, let's discuss some little known tips that you may not have considered.

- As the Facilities Manager, you are used to juggling many tasks at once and are expected to have all the answers. It is important to realize that **the world is changing around us at a rapid rate**, thus making it impossible to “have” it all. Self-evaluate and determine your strengths and weaknesses. Develop a strategy to fortify areas that need work and take the time to evolve with the world around us, both professionally and personally.
- **Surround yourself with the right people.** This goes back to none of us having all the answers. By surrounding yourself with a team that complements both your strengths and weaknesses, you always have others to collaborate with and delegate to; both of which are essential for a successful FM.
- Studies have actually revealed that “workers are most happy when doing busywork.” {3} So, the next time you feel your concentration waning, switch gears and do a little filing or answer an email. The work has to get done sometime anyway, right? If you're still feeling a little brain-dead once the busywork is complete, take a break and get some fresh air. You'll be more focused and productive when you return.
- Each of us is wired differently than the next, but the one thing we have in common is that we all have an optimal time of day for productivity. **Identify what time is right for you and leave that time open for top priorities.**





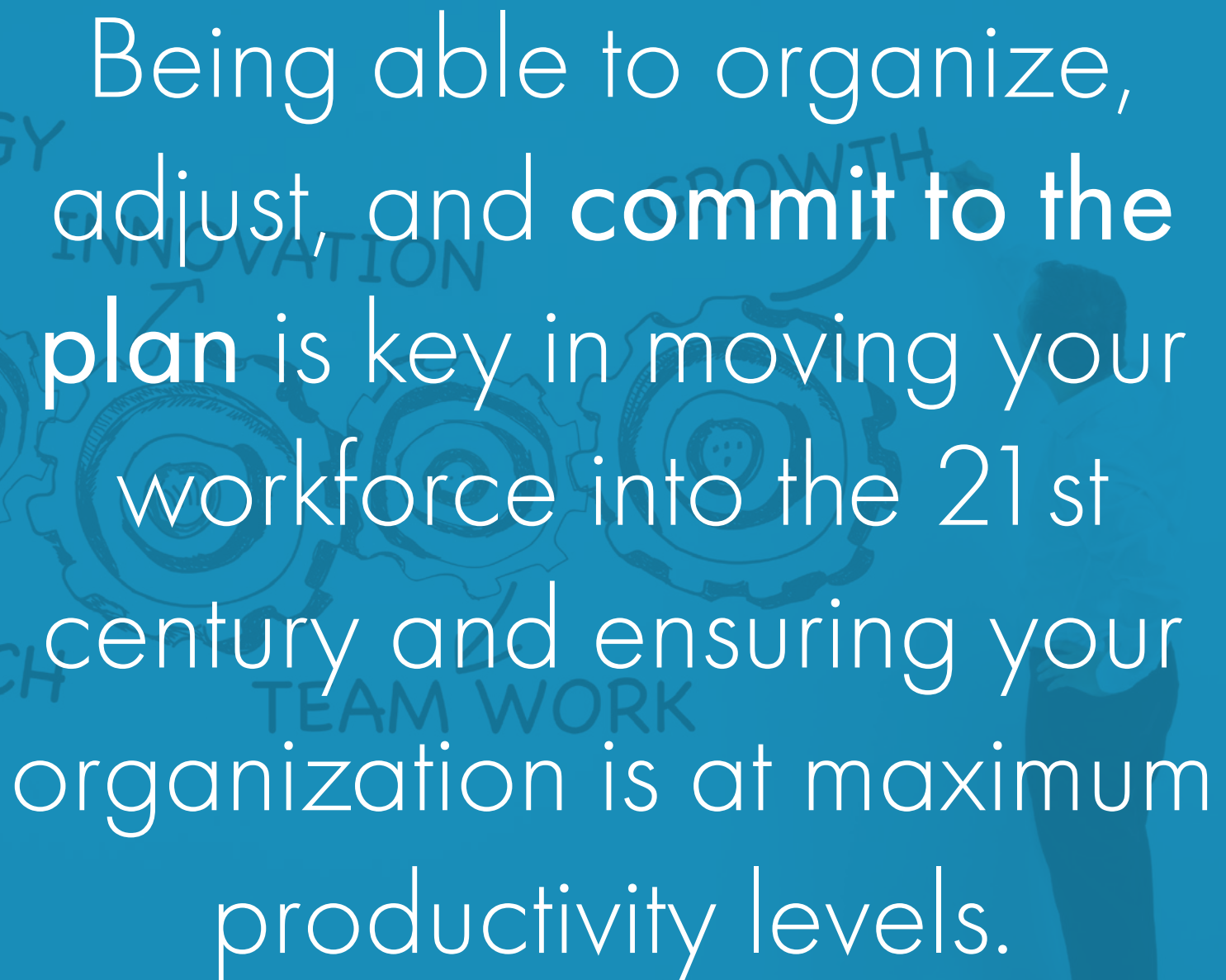
- **Invest in mobile apps that help keep you organized.** There are literally hundreds of thousands of apps available today that can help you gather information, communicate quickly, and prioritize tasks. Our blog [9 Apps Facilities Manager Should Utilize for Increased Productivity](#) offers a detailed analysis of which mobile apps might add value to your ever-growing needs.
- Focus on one task at a time. Recent studies revealed that not only do multi-taskers experience a 40% drop in productivity, they take 50% longer to accomplish a single task and comprise up to 50% more errors than those focusing on one task at a time. {3}
- Reward yourself and your team for goals accomplished. **This may simply be in the form of a “thank you,” but you would be surprised at how effective this simple gesture is.**
- Maintain proper temperature in the office. It may sound basic, but “according to a study performed by Captive Network, workplace productivity drops a whole 20% during the summer months.” {4} Experts suggest between 65 and 70 degrees Fahrenheit is the sweet spot for maximized productivity. For more advice on those summer distractions, check out our blog [5 Ways To Keep Your Facilities Management Team Motivated This Summer](#).
- **Love what you do.** The most basic way to stay on task and produce solid results for your employer is to truly enjoy your job. You spend just as much, if not more, time at work than anywhere else, so it only makes sense to enjoy your time there.

## 9 Apps Facilities Manager Should Utilize for Increased Productivity

As a facilities manager, your mind is always working to find more streamlined processes and tools that allow both you and your team to be as productive as possible.

Read Article



The background is a solid blue color. Overlaid on this are several faint, light-blue line drawings of interlocking gears. Scattered around the gears are various business-related terms in a sans-serif font, including 'STRATEGY', 'INNOVATION', 'GROWTH', 'RESEARCH', and 'TEAM WORK'. On the right side of the image, there is a faint silhouette of a person standing with their hands on their hips, looking towards the left. The main text is centered and written in a large, white, sans-serif font.

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# Conclusion

It may seem redundant or simplistic to say, but the importance of a comprehensive plan of action cannot be emphasized enough.

**Being able to organize, adjust, and commit to the plan is key in moving your workforce into the 21st century and ensuring your organization is at maximum productivity levels.**

It is not always the fastest process to implement, but a well thought out and constructed plan will undoubtedly assist in streamlining your operations and boosting productivity. And the end results will outweigh the time spent in the planning stages tenfold.

**Get your workforce on the fast track to success with a blueprint for the future.**



**Workforce management tools** that give you the information you **want, when...how...and where** you want it. If you are ready to derive more value from your facility data, we are ready to show you how.

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## References:

{1} <http://www.facilitiesnet.com/maintenanceoperations/article/Managers-Discuss-Strategies-That-Boost-Productivity--13416#>

{2} [http://www.fm-house.com/file/EJ.08.2014\\_IFMA\\_CBRE\\_Trend\\_Report.pdf](http://www.fm-house.com/file/EJ.08.2014_IFMA_CBRE_Trend_Report.pdf)

{3} <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-1205669/Is-multi-tasking-bad-brain-Experts-reveal-hidden-perils-juggling-jobs.html>

{4} <http://www.forbes.com/sites/ilyapozin/2014/04/17/4-surprising-truths-about-workplace-productivity/>



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