

# Softworks Guide to The Bradford Factor

---



## What is it?

The Bradford Factor is a formula that can be used to measure employee absenteeism. It measures the number of absence incidents and the duration of each incident to compute an absence score for each employee. Evidence from industry suggests, that the higher the score, the more disruption the employee's absence is causing an organisation.

## How is the score calculated?

The Bradford Factor Score is calculated using the following formula: **S x S x D** where

- ❖ **S** is the number of spells of absence of an individual over a given period; and
- ❖ **D** is the total number of days of absence of the individual over the same period.

So for employees with 10 days' absence in one year, differently distributed, the score can vary enormously:

- ❖ 1 absence of 10 days is 10 points (1 x 1 x 10)
- ❖ 5 absences of two days each is 250 points (5 x 5 x 10)
- ❖ 10 days of one day each is 1000 points (10 x 10 x 10)

Whereas using the traditional percentage method, all would result in the same percentage.

Using this formula, Managers can see at a glance, the effects of employee absence on the organisation as a whole as well as a comparison between departments.



## How is it used?

The Bradford Factor is generally used by organisations to identify employees with frequent short-term absences. Short term absences are often considered more disruptive than long term absences, due to the fact that, it's often easier to make arrangements to cover an employee who is going to be off for long periods. Employees taking odd days off here and there are considered more disruptive to the business and a lot harder to plan for. They can have an immediate effect, and if recurrent, they are likely to arouse suspicions over the genuineness of the absences. The more frequent the absences the higher the score.

**Softworks Ireland**  
T: +353 (0)1 286 6126  
E: sales@softworks-workforce.ie  
W: www.softworks-workforce.ie

**Softworks UK**  
T: +44 (0)1527 888060  
E: sales@softworks-workforce.co.uk  
W: www.softworks-workforce.co.uk

**Softworks USA**  
T: +1 415 432 4400  
E: sales@softworks-workforce.com  
W: www.softworks-workforce.com

**Softworks Canada**  
T: +1 905 361 9821  
E: sales@softworks-workforce.com  
W: www.softworks-workforce.ca

Managers therefore monitor scores so that if an employee hits a certain score/trigger point, further investigation or action can be taken. This in itself can act as a deterrent to employees who do take absence for non-genuine reasons. A number of organisations have reported that absence is reduced when Bradford scores are first introduced, which may be due to the use of this system, as a visible warning and deterrent to employees

### Things to consider if using

Bradford scores should not form the only basis for important decisions such as disciplinary action due to persistent absenteeism. Additional analysis and consideration of each individual case is an essential companion to the use of The Bradford Factor. Bradford scores focus purely on short-term absence and can therefore easily distract attention from the problems of long-term absence. The safest approach to using this measure is to ensure that important decisions; are not based around Bradford scores alone. These scores act best as a trigger to prompt managers to examine further.

The Bradford Factor also concentrates on the number of instances and length of time absent, but doesn't pick up on other trends such as days of the week, particular shifts, sporting events, etc. Therefore, the analysis is limited in terms of tracking absenteeism trends.

Furthermore, the Bradford Factor calculation is worked out for each individual employee so it can be reasonably complicated to work out on a departmental/company-wide level.

This problem can however be surmounted, with the use of a good time & attendance system, which can automatically calculate the Bradford Factor points score, rank employees and trigger alerts when issues arise.

### Other Guides you may be interested in from Softworks

- ❖ Top tips on how to reduce absenteeism in your organisation.
- ❖ How to ensure your absence policies deliver every time - Softworks PAMs
- ❖ How efficiencies & consolidation could shave up to 5% off a company's payroll

If you would like to receive any of the above papers simply email [resources@softworks-workforce.com](mailto:resources@softworks-workforce.com)

#### ABOUT SOFTWORKS

Softworks helps companies streamline processes, increase productivity and reduce costs through improved management, scheduling and utilisation of labour resources. Softworks offer reliable, proven easy to use, intuitive solutions for Time & Attendance, Labour Scheduling and Absence Management allowing both private and public organisations to better ensure compliance, reduce errors, eliminate redundancies and improve reporting – while promoting a safe, positive working environment for all employees. For further information visit us at [www.softworks-workforce.com](http://www.softworks-workforce.com)

**Softworks Ireland**  
T: +353 (0)1 286 6126  
E: [sales@softworks-workforce.ie](mailto:sales@softworks-workforce.ie)  
W: [www.softworks-workforce.ie](http://www.softworks-workforce.ie)

**Softworks UK**  
T: +44 (0)1527 888060  
E: [sales@softworks-workforce.co.uk](mailto:sales@softworks-workforce.co.uk)  
W: [www.softworks-workforce.co.uk](http://www.softworks-workforce.co.uk)

**Softworks USA**  
T: +1 415 432 4400  
E: [sales@softworks-workforce.com](mailto:sales@softworks-workforce.com)  
W: [www.softworks-workforce.com](http://www.softworks-workforce.com)

**Softworks Canada**  
T: +1 905 361 9821  
E: [sales@softworks-workforce.com](mailto:sales@softworks-workforce.com)  
W: [www.softworks-workforce.ca](http://www.softworks-workforce.ca)