Your boldest productivity goals

Our technology with a human touch

The future is exciting.
Ready?

vodafone business

Foreword

by Mick Wayman – Head of Major Business at Vodafone UK Enterprise

The UK has a productivity problem across both private and public sectors. We are sixth out of the G7 nations, behind the US, France and Germany, according to the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

To give you an idea of what this will cost the country, according to government figures, if we raised our productivity by 1% point every year, **within a decade it would add £240 billion to the size of the economy**[1] – and this is what we'll lose if we fail to address the problem. As a nation, it's therefore critical to close our productivity gap and find smarter ways to use our resources so that the UK can continue to grow and prosper in an increasingly competitive global economy.

Poor productivity in the public sector has a direct cost to government – and by association the taxpayer – meaning it has less revenue to invest elsewhere. It can also reduce the quality of public services, which are vital to the smooth running of the country from both a business and social perspective. So improving performance levels in the public sector is just as important as it is in the private sector.

Despite living in an increasingly digital world, simply throwing technology at the problem is unlikely to solve it. The human factor can never be neglected because even the most technologically advanced businesses rely on their workforce to guide them forward. This is particularly the case in the public sector, within which social interaction both internally and externally, from education to health, is critical.

[1] UK Government figures

In order to uncover the key factors influencing productivity across UK organisations and find solutions, we commissioned two studies. The first, the Power of Productivity, was conducted by the London School of Economics (LSE) and draws on 20,000 interviews with managers in 35 countries over more than 10 years in association with partners, including Stanford University and consulting firm McKinsey and Co. In contrast to this top-down approach, the second by Bryter explores the trends at the grassroots level. We surveyed public sector employees who understand the productivity struggle on a day-to-day basis. In doing so we sought to reveal specific areas in which organisations can empower their staff to be more productive.

This report looks at both studies to identify the keys to unlocking productivity from a business perspective, how this can be best applied to the specific challenges faced by employees in the public sector and how technology can support the process.

We can help

To support public sector organisations, Vodafone offers guidance and advice on how to unleash productivity across the workforce and build a connected workplace. We can help determine the support you'll need and how technology can help you achieve your goals.

Expert view – time to put the human at the heart of connected workplaces

by Ria Ingleby and Danielle Marchant

Ria and Danielle are directors at Just Pause, and take teams off site into nature to switch off and reconnect in a particular way. Ria fuses an extensive career in HR with a background in health, while Danielle is an accomplished executive coach and author.

"Since dawn of the industrial age, tighter has been the goal; but many things in our lives need to be looser. More room for innovation. More slack for peace of mind. More spaces for surprise."

Seth Godin

Over the past two decades, technology has woven an intricate web into our lives, altering our existence in ways we would never have dreamed possible 20 years ago. At first this ability to be constantly connected was a novel and exciting one. We binged on data, revelled excitedly in apps and connected with long lost friends around the globe. Over time, we have begun to meet some unexpected challenges, and as technology expands our world it simultaneously makes it smaller, with users become confined to the dimensions of the screen in front of them.

In truth this level of technology was new to us all, and no one was taught how to handle this fascinating new world. As our understanding of the reality of life with a computer in our pocket, social media, apps and instant global communication matures, there is now a personal and business productivity challenge to be worked through. As we grow with technology and it continues to advance we must now consider how we live and work in a world that is 'always on'.

Although technology allows us to move faster and exchange ideas quicker, many people are experiencing information overload and decision fatigue, finding themselves being less productive as they lose hours each week aimlessly scrolling through screens. According to our research "Working in the UK", **23% of respondents viewed themselves as unproductive[2]**, this nets out at around **7 million workers[3]** and £194.8 billion worth of lost revenue.

According to the Health and Safety Executive, in 2015/2016, the overall cost of **work-related illness[4]** and injuries was **£14.9 billion[4]**. Most of this (£8.6m) was borne by the individual, but it also cost employers £2.9 billion and Government of £3.4 billion. Meanwhile, the most recent Labour Force Survey (2016/17) revealed that organisations lost **12.5 million days[5]** from their employees due to **work-related stress, depression or anxiety[5]**. Furthermore, these conditions were shown to be most prevalent in **public service industries, including education, human health and social care work activities, and public administration and defence.**

[2] Research by Bryter, commissioned by Vodafone, completed May 17, based on the findings from 3,019 UK employees for the Work In The UK report.
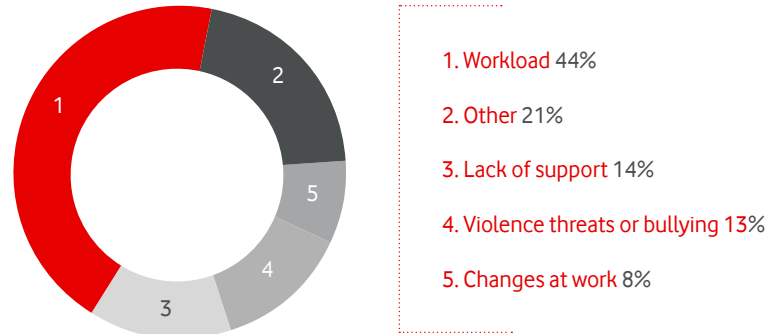[3] Office for National Statistics. January 2017.
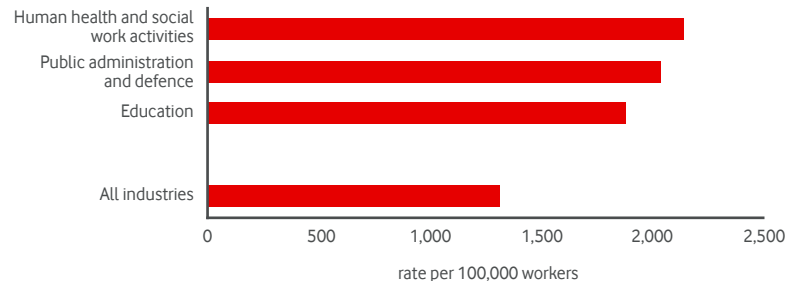[4] UK Government Health and Safety Executive figures
[5] Office of National Statistics Labour Force Survey 2016/17

Summary

Stress, depression or anxiety by cause averaged (2008/10 – 2011/12)

1. Workload 44%

2. Other 21%

3. Lack of support 14%

4. Violence threats or bullying 13%

5. Changes at work 8%

Industries with high than average rates of stress, depression or anxiety (2014/15 – 2016/17)

rate per 100,000 workers

This means that it's more important to address these problems in the public sector than any other, and find ways to solve them for the benefit of both people and government organisations, most of which perform functions critical to society as a whole.

As we grow with technology as an integral part of our lives, becoming more and more connected to the world around us, we must also learn how to reconnect to ourselves. **Technology is a powerful tool as long as we are not being governed and controlled by it**. It is time to put the human at the heart of all we do, discovering what it takes for us to have all of the benefits that technology affords us, without burning out.

Creating a change in culture to combat the "always on" mentality does not need to be costly or time consuming, but the rewards as people rebalance could be seen very quickly. To create a tipping point in a culture requires a critical mass.

Enough people following a new way of being and relating to technology will shift the culture of an organisation. There is an opportunity for those in leadership positions to model the new behaviours.

The measure of productivity is more complex than simply doing more for less. **The more we allow for 'nothing', space in the day which may be seemingly unproductive, the more creativity and innovation can emerge.** Taking time out from technology can expand our capacity, giving us space to think and make smart decisions, time to trust our gut and the ability to use our energy wisely and creativity.

Most importantly, life becomes less about how hard we have to work, but more about how we choose to contribute. This in itself will create a more healthy, sustainable and productive workforce.

Thriving by combining technology and humanity

Technology holds the key to increasing productivity in the public sector only if approached in the right way. As thrive global CEO and Huffington Post founder Arianna Huffington commented recently at the Technology and Humanity event in New York, it should **make us more human not less. We should not be defined by technology, but rather use it to make us healthier and happier, which in turn will enable us make a greater contribution both in and out of work.** Huffington's Thrive app helps people redefine their relationship with technology by allowing them to take a break from their smartphones, driving the human recharge process. If we burn out, no amount of technology will improve our productivity. But used in the right way technology can energise and invigorate.

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Solving the productivity puzzle

We've identified that there's a productivity puzzle that the public sector must solve. But where and how do we start? We believe the first stage comes from understanding UK productivity trends across the nation, and so we commissioned the Power of Productivity report by the LSE. It identifies three keys that give organisations of all sizes, across all industries, the potential to unlock growth regardless of where they are based.

Evaluate and improve management practices
Better run organisations perform better

Embrace technology
Focus on connectivity, collaboration and communication

Create an agile, flexible workforce
Enable employees to do their best work from anywhere

Investing in technology, when combined with best management practices, can **raise productivity by as much as 20%**, according to the LSE's research. And managing employees well, giving them the option of working away from the office and equipping them with the technology they need to succeed, promotes job satisfaction and thereby raises productivity. So, **for the best results, you need to take advantage of all three**, rather than focusing on just one.

For these to be applied effectively in the public sector, we need an understanding of what's happening on the ground — and in particular, what public sector employees think about their own productivity. Working with Bryter, we asked 3,019 UK employees to rate their productivity out of 10, and 23% admitted to feeling 'unproductive' at work. This equates to 7 million workers nationwide, when using the latest Office for National Statistics figures.

Looking specifically at the public sector, the situation is generally worse, with **27% of central government employees and 35% oflocal government staff feeling unproductive.**

Health workers came in slightly better than the combined percentage at 17%, but this remains a significant proportion of the workforce believing they are unproductive. Health and social workers are also the groups that consider themselves the most productive, with 36% of each segment giving themselves a nine to ten productivity rating. But this is still only just over a third of the workforce.

What makes people more productive

The big question is, what actually makes people feel productive? And does this complement the three key levers in the LSE report outline above? Well, the answer is yes...

In terms of improving management practices, **72% of central government workers believe processes at work reduced their productivity**, compared to 67% in local government and 64% in health. Between 50-60% of each group cited **meetings and catch-ups** as a key cause. Meanwhile, 40-50% laid the blame on stress due to deadlines, contracts and/or commitments.

A significant proportion of public sector workers surveyed (29% in central government and health, and 24% in local government) said a lack of flexible working was making them less productive, with 70-80% believing implementing such practices had boosted their performance levels, underlining another key LSE finding.

In terms of technology, over half of local government and health workers felt it boosted their productivity when high enough quality, compared to a third of central government staff. Interestingly around half of each group cited technology as the reason they were unproductive, highlighting the fact that it can be more harm than good if not carefully planned.

You'll find more about how you can start boosting productivity using these three key drivers in our Power of Productivity report, but here's a brief summary...

Adopting management best practices and technology

Start by assessing your current management practices and identify areas where additional expertise may be needed. Review the practices described in the LSE's Power of Productivity paper and use them as a guide to assess where your organisation is positioned. Then take a look at the 'World Management Survey', which allows you to benchmark your managerial practices against those of more than 10,000 senior managers. You'll find the survey here: **http://worldmanagementsurvey.org/**

The Power of Productivity report recommends reviewing management practices across four main areas:

Operations management

Performance monitoring

Target setting

Talent management

Approached in the right way, adopting ICT can result in a productivity increase of up to 20%[6], compared with only 2% when technology is deployed but managerial practices remain poor, according to the Power of Productivity report. Follow these four guiding principles to ensure your ICT adoption is a success.

1. Make digital a priority

Mobile and cloud innovation, social media and advanced fixed and mobile connectivity are driving large-scale changes across organisations, from faster and better working practices to more responsive customer services. This is just as important in the public sector as the private sector.

2. Choose ICT that supports your goals

The Power of Productivity report revealed that organisations that embrace change and introduce technology display a higher frequency of productivity improvement and greater rates of innovation. To maximise these benefits, ICT investments should be made in line with clear business goals.

3. Help your workforce embrace new technology

The ability of managers and employees in general to adapt to new technology, engage in innovation and address process issues also improves productivity. Otherwise people will carry on doing what they were doing and the tech will be left gathering dust. This makes thorough education and training programmes essential.

4. Get ready for a more agile workforce

Smart organisations are 'empowering' their employees by providing access to applications and systems regardless of location. The 'always on' organisation is meeting the 'always available' digital generation, with clear benefits to both parties if the newly mobile workforce and the associated technology is managed appropriately. It also drives flexible working practices. But it can have its downsides as well.

[6] Source: LSE, Power of Productivity (2016)/Dorgan, S. J., and Dowdy, J. J. (2004). When IT Lifts Productivity. McKinsey Quarterly

Introduce agile, flexible working

Adopting the right technology enables you to create a mobile workforce, ensuring that they are productive wherever they are, while allowing you to offer flexible working, which in turn can generate major benefits, according to the Power of Productivity study. And thanks to the latest communications applications, greater operational flexibility is a real possibility.

More productive and motivated staff

Flexible working practices supporting different employees' working patterns and preferences can foster a workplace culture in which employees feel empowered to do their best work at the place and time that best meets their needs. **Over two-thirds of workers who make use of smart working practices say that it enables them to work more intently, and exercise greater effort**[7], according to a study cited by the LSE. In addition, employees say that less time spent commuting, fewer distractions and higher productivity are just some of the benefits of having access to key business applications outside of the office.

[7] LSE, Power of Productivity (2016)/ Kelliher, C., and Anderson, D. (2010). Doing more with less? Flexible working practices and the intensification of work. Human Relations. Vol 63(1); pp 83-106
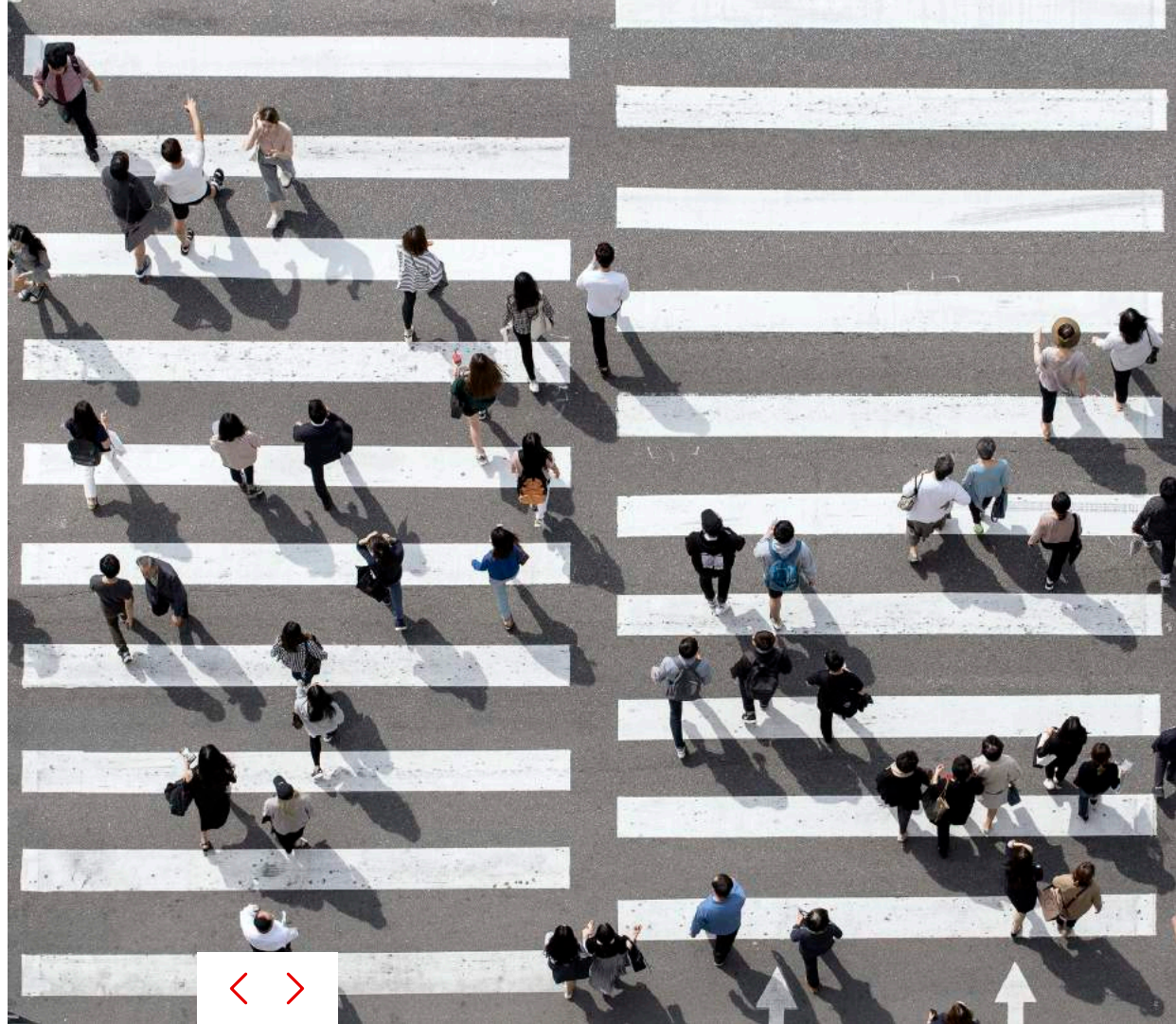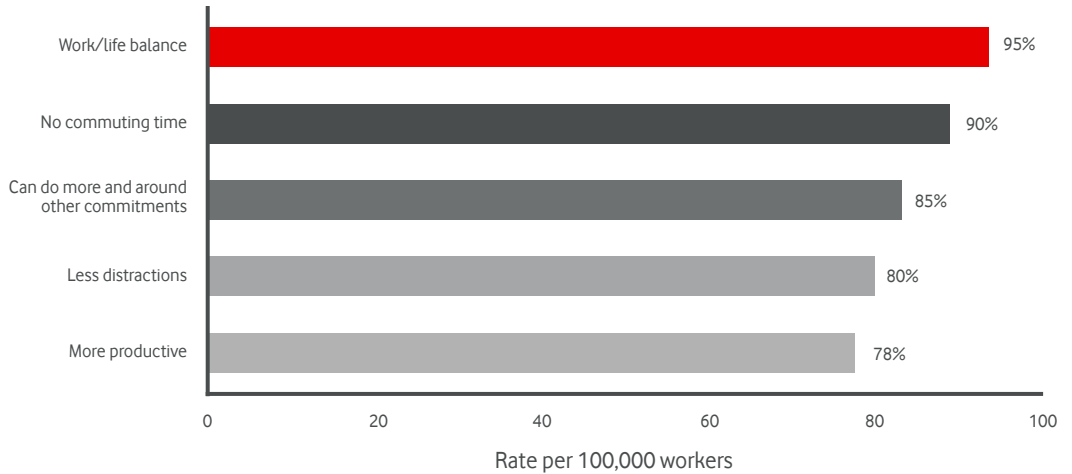
Greater collaboration

Despite encouraging more remote working, technology can bring workers, partners and suppliers together if they can't be in the same physical space, improving overall communications and connectivity between staff and stakeholders. This makes for more efficient and effective working.

Better overall performance

Flexible working brings clear benefits in terms of operational performance, as revealed in a survey of 8,000 organisations in 10 countries, according to Vodafone research. The study found that 61% of respondents said flexible practices profits grew, 83% said their productivity increased and 58% said their organisation's reputation improved.

Top five benefits of flexible working flagged by employers

Benefit	Rate
Work/life balance	95%
No commuting time	90%
Can do more and around other commitments	85%
Less distractions	80%
More productive	78%

Rate per 100,000 workers

A coordinated strategy

Improving management practices, embracing ICT and implementing flexible working independently can bring about minor improvements in productivity, but it is only when implementing all three as part of a coordinated strategy that the maximum benefit of up to a 20% boost in employee performance can be achieved.

Whatever your management structure, working practices or technology platform, creating a sense of team and belonging is key, wherever people work. **In fact, 64% of employees say the team around them matters to their productivity**.

All public sector organisations need to have all the tools in place to allow people to plug into the central team from wherever or whenever they need to. It's vital to establish smarter ways of working that best suit how the organisation functions and in a way that will empower employees to perform to the max.

'...creating a sense of team and belonging is key, wherever people work.'

Promote wellbeing through technology

When we are able to work more effectively as part of a well-managed, connected, collaborative operation with the right technological support and the opportunity to work flexibly, our stress levels and anxiety will naturally fall. This means that carefully coordinating the three key drivers mentioned previously will also increase productivity by reducing the amount of time employees take off work due to stress and anxiety, which, as outlined in the introduction, is more prevalent and has a bigger impact in the public sector than any other.

However, public sector organisations can do more to reduce days off due to illness, and thus boost productivity even further, by trying to improve the overall staff wellbeing – and technology can help. The rise of the internet, mobile devices and social media mean we're increasingly living in an 'always on' world, which itself creates its own problems in terms of wellbeing as people are finding it increasingly difficult to 'switch off' and relax.

Sleep and productivity

This directly affects our performance levels, according to Bryter, because the **biggest barrier to productivity is lack of sleep[8].** "The effects from a lack of sleep are massive. Sleep deprivation not only influences an individual's health and wellbeing but has a significant impact on a nation's economy," said Marco Hafner, a research leader at Rand Europe and the author of a 2016 report that estimated there is a £40 billion cost to the economy from people not sleeping properly through reduced productivity and illness.

[8] Rand Europe 'Why Sleep Matters' study, 2016

Our study reveals that **57%** of central government workers and **55%** of local government workers believe they don't get enough sleep, and cited this as a barrier to their productivity. This rose to a worrying **67% among health workers, perhaps due to the prevalence of shift work**. So helping your workforce to get a better night's sleep should improve performance, but how can you go about it?

How technology can help

Although technology must take some responsibility for our sleep problems – which are particularly prevalent among 18 to 24-year-olds, 68% of whom say they have sleep issues – it can also be a solution. Hypnosis and mindfulness can be enhanced by listening on a phone with headphones on, alarm clocks are available that simulate night fall and sun rise in line with the bodies natural circadian rhythms. So it's a good idea to make employees aware of these and other innovations that aid sleep.

There's also technology and connectivity that is productive whilst you sleep, such as Dream-Lab from Vodafone Foundation. Simply downloaded the app, charge your phone overnight and DreamLab shares its spare computing power with other systems. Currently the app is donating people's phone power to a virtual supercomputer capable of processing billions of calculations that helps research into fighting cancer. Each calculation helps researchers match patients' genetic profiles to cancer treatments, helping find new combinations of existing drugs and – ultimately – enabling tailored treatments for patients.

'There's also technology and connectivity that is productive whilst you sleep, such as Dream-Lab from Vodafone Foundation.'

DreamLab
Help solve cancer while you sleep

Charge. Sleep. Fight cancer.
#sleeplikeahero

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Managing for better health

Making simple changes to management practice can also improve employees' sleep patterns
and wellbeing in general. In Germany, for example, which is 38% more productive than the UK, a number of companies shut down their email servers after 6pm to allow the their staff to have 'switch off' time. Similarly, you could place restrictions on people sending work emails out of office hours unless they are urgent or critical. Or if people do want to send the email as it fits their working pattern, use the 'delay send' function so it hits other people's desks at a time which is more reasonable. You could also discourage staff from reading work emails first thing in the morning, which many people, do. For some people, something as simple as having a work phone and personal phone allows them to distinguish between the two and relax more outside work.

The Internet of Things has inspired some useful gadgets that can be introduced into the workplace to improve employee health.

The iGlucose meter, for example, wirelessly sends blood glucose readings and other information to a personal web portal where diabetes sufferers and their designated Circle

> The good news is that, in the not too distant future, we should be able to have one device with two numbers on it, so that we no longer have to carry around two devices in order to be able to switch one off.

of Care can access customised trend reports and digital logbooks that are automatically updated every time they take a diabetes test.

This helps keep people in work, boosting wellbeing and productivity. Meanwhile, designed to provide quick help coping with stress and anxiety, Big White Wall (bigwhitewall,com) is an online mental health and wellbeing service. Running 24/7, it offers self-help programmes, creative outlets and a caring support community, ideal for talking through any work-related stress issues.

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Attract and retain the best talent

Although it may sound obvious, **the most talented and skilled people are the most productive**[9]. This is why in your mission to maximise productivity you need to attract the best people you can and then hold on to them for as long as possible. In case you need proof, a recent study by McKinsey of more than 600,000 researchers, entertainers, politicians and athletes found that high performers are 400% more productive than average ones.
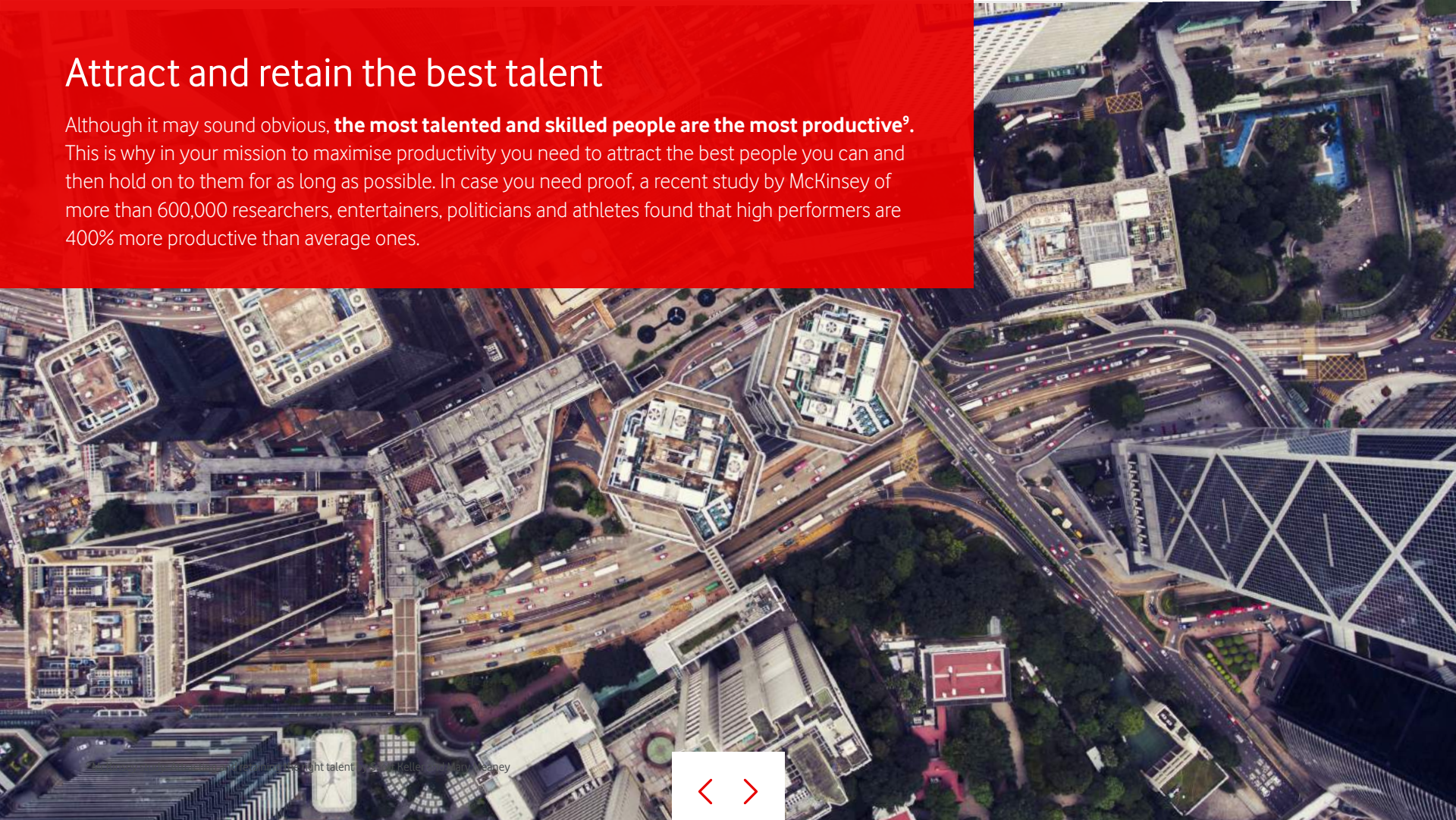
Productivity can also be hit by the **recruitment gap created when someone leaves.** It not only costs money to recruit, but unless it's done immediately it can also result in one less person in the team, affecting their ability to perform. And the longer it takes to replace someone, the more productivity is lost, not to mention the demotivational affects on the rest of the team who are put under extra pressure through having to do the same work with one less member. Then, of course, it will also take time for the new recruit once you find them to get up to speed.

Attracting and retaining talent can be a real challenge in the public sector, because in government-funded non-profit organisations salaries naturally aren't the highest. So taking remuneration out of the equation, you need to make sure every other element of your organisation is working towards keeping your best people. And here are two other initiatives that can help.

Training and development programmes

Having a well-structured training and development strategy in place enables employees to continually improve. It shows you are prepared to invest in them, which drives commitment and loyalty. It also goes without saying that better trained and skilled staff will be more productive.

Automating repetitive, manual processes

By using technology to remove as many of the repetitive, manual or less pleasant elements of employees' jobs, you will not only make people more productive, but also make their roles more interesting, rewarding and enjoyable, boosting motivation and loyalty. Stripping away these elements means you're using people to their full potential and bring out their human qualities more, rather than underutilising and dehumanising them.

Look around your organisation for the tasks that can be automated, such as using AI and bots to deal with transactional queries. The Internet of Things and big data means that the right information can be at doctors' fingertips when they need it so that they can dedicate more time talking to patients rather that carrying out unnecessary vital measurements that may have already been taken.

Technology can also be used to inform you of tasks that need doing, rather than people having to carry out regular unnecessary checks.

A great example is **Kinseed, which is enabling Great Ormond Street Hospital to remotely monitor patients in transit, allowing consultants to analyse data in real-time.** Working with the London children's Hospital, Kinseed identified that the monitoring of patients during transit to the hospital was predominantly manual and high-effort. Using a standard bedside monitor to track patients' vital signs, Kinseed created an application to access and analyse this data in real-time, which consultants could access from their phones and tablets at the hospital or from wherever they resided when providing care. Kinseed uses the Vodafone Managed IoT Connectivity Platform to meet the connectivity challenge, enabling its MediConnect devices to output data in near real-time, so consultants can monitor every journey and proactively intervene should they spot an issue. Kinseed is also in talks to deploy the solution across 24 hospitals, with Vodafone providing the scale to expand quickly.

Moocall: Helping farmers sleep during calving

One of the most stressful aspects of being a dairy farmer is calving. Almost one in 14 calves dies during birth. Until now, the only way to improve these odds was to keep watch over the expectant cow around the clock – a real disruption to the running of the farm. Animal welfare company Moocall has developed a remote monitoring solution for pregnant cows based on the principle that they move their tails more often and in a different direction the closer they get to delivery. The Moocall service senses this motion via a battery-powered monitor clipped to the cow's tail. The device sends SMS alerts when it detects enough motion to show a cow is about to go into labour. As a result, farmers can carry on with their daily work – or get a good night's sleep – safe in the knowledge that they'll get plenty of warning that the cow will soon give birth.

Moocall relies on Vodafone's managed connectivity to ensure coverage in even the most remote farming areas and to help the company expand internationally. "We're planning to introduce similar devices for horses and have other ideas for new developments, such as flock protection," says Emmet Savage, CEO of Moocall. "Our aim is to become the Fitbit for animals."

This is one example of how technology can transform a time-consuming, laborious yet critical process, freeing the human element for more rewarding and productive work.w

Conclusion

Instigate the initiatives outlined in this report and we think you'll have a great platform to build on. Flexible working, sympathetic and supportive management with clear objectives, access to great technology and a strong wellbeing strategy are all up there on workers' wish lists, particularly Millennials. The key is coordinated, connected implementation of all initiatives, and communicating your strategy well to your staff, clearly setting out how their roles will change and how it will benefit both them and the organisation, and of course asking for their feedback. Getting their buy in at an early stage and implementing a thorough training programme will make sure you increase productivity to the max.

Vision for a Brilliant Civil Service

To help adapt to a changing world, the Civil Service launched an initiative among its employees that committed to positive change across the organisation. **"The world is changing and it's changing in ways that, as a Civil Service, we can't afford to ignore,"** the organisation said in its Vision for a Brilliant Civil Service.

"Technology is revolutionising how the public buy goods and services and manage other aspects of their lives. They rightly expect to be able to deal with government in the same way – online, on demand, often through a smartphone or tablet."

The blueprint for the Civil Service's future has four main elements:

Improved outcomes – a much stronger focus on the difference we can make for citizens, not just on processes and procedures

Effective leadership – with confident leaders who inspire and empower colleagues to be the best they can be

Skilled people – our commitment to building a broader "set of skills in the Civil Service, to make us more effective and offer more varied careers that will help us retain and attract the best talent

A great place to work – creating a truly inclusive environment, in open, modern workplaces, with the technology to get the job done

"Pretending change isn't happening is not an option," said the report. "Keeping pace with it is a necessity. But our vision goes further than this; it is about embracing change, and grasping the opportunities it presents to become brilliant in everything we do."

Final thoughts

The public sector is all about its people. They enter the service to help UK citizens and support government and business. Their commitment and dedication is vital to maintaining the very fabric of UK society.

Technology holds the key to a better, more efficient public sector, not by replacing people, but by freeing them up to use their skills to the full, and to help them work more flexibly, boosting both productivity and morale. Or as Arianna Huffington said: **"Making us more human, not less."** Which is essential for a sector which thrives on its humanity.

The good news is that, overwhelmingly, workers are positive about their own ability to navigate change, according to a new report by the trade union Community and the Fabian Society. Out of 1,000 people surveyed, 73% are confident they will be able to change and update their skills if new technology affects their job. After learning about how technological changes will affect the workplace, over half (53%) are optimistic about their future working
life and job prospects. The bad news is that few

workers think the government, employers or trade unions are taking action to support workers as technologies change.

This underlines the key message in this report that to **get the maximum from technology in the public sector, its planning and implementation must
be backed by effective and efficient
management practices, incorporating strong
employee communications**, first to identify the key challenges, second to formulate the required strategy and third to get full buy-in from employees.

The examples given across this report scratch the surface of what is being and can be achieved to take our public sector to the next level and deliver the best possible service to citizens, government and business.

Contact us

If you would like to know more about what you can achieve through innovation and collaboration, the Vodafone Customer Experience Centre can help start you on your journey. To book an interactive session tailored to your own needs, contact Clare Leighton at: **betterbusiness@vodafone.com**
Or visit Vodafone CEC at: **experiencecentre.vodafone.co.uk**

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