



Unblocking Teamwork

Four tools and strategies to improve
collaboration



For [General Electric](#), small improvements in the efficiency and performance of its products have provided massive value to its customers. The company aims to achieve similar efficiencies with its 300,000-person workforce by making their daily activities frictionless.

“Our workers used to find digital productivity tools on their own, but those tools didn’t work together, they weren’t secure and they were expensive to support,” says Jeff Monaco, Chief Technology Officer, Digital Workplace at GE.

Like GE, many companies are looking for technology that solves their employees’ growing communication and collaboration needs while being interoperable, secure and easy to use.

An evolving business landscape

Time spent on teamwork has increased by at least 50% for managers and employees over the last two decades. And up to 80% of workers’ time is spent on collaborative activities like meetings, calls and responding to email.¹

An environment that doesn’t encourage teamwork is one of the top five reasons people quit their jobs. Another employee attrition factor is a work environment that doesn’t accommodate working remotely.²

A new culture of work is emerging. For the first time in human history, there are five generations in the workforce, each with different approaches to getting things done. They are increasingly diverse and mobile, working across multiple locations – often spanning time zones – and multiple devices throughout the workday. Employees expect a workspace that’s open and inclusive of individual work styles, while businesses want to empower their creativity and harness their ingenuity.

But even with a rapidly evolving business landscape, many modern workplaces lack the tools to communicate and collaborate seamlessly and securely. Decision-makers are under pressure to find a solution that’s secure, reliable, scalable and cost-effective – and that meets the unique work styles of every employee, anywhere they are.

The solution lies in strategically breaking down teamwork blockers so that teams can work together with ease. To accomplish that, enterprises are looking towards having one shared hub for teamwork that will allow employees to communicate and collaborate through a single platform.

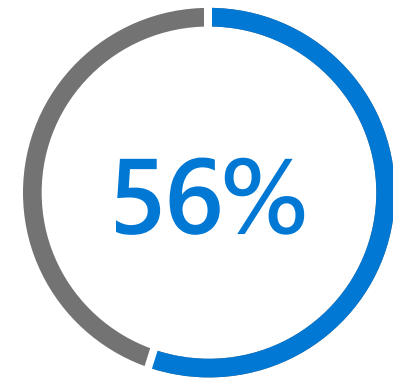
¹ ‘Collaborative Overload’, Harvard Business Review, 2016.

² [Global Generations: A Global Study on Work-Life Challenges Across Generations](#), Ernst & Young, 2015.

To support its transformation into a digital industry leader, GE decided to migrate its 300,000 employees to Microsoft 365. After rolling out cloud email to employees, it deployed Microsoft Office 365 ProPlus, giving employees access to the same up-to-date, safeguarded Office applications on their work and personal devices. Everyone can work using the familiar tools anytime, anywhere and on any device.

“We have multiple generations at GE, from baby boomers to millennials, and they all have preferred ways of working,” says Monaco. “With Office 365, each can use their favourite mode of communication to collaborate more effectively and make decisions faster.”

To understand how teamwork tools can help you, let’s take a look at how they can resolve the four most common teamwork blockers.



56%
of enterprises and
66% of small and
medium-sized business
(SMB) organisations
plan to implement or
upgrade to unified
communications and
collaboration solutions.³

³ Unified Communications & Collaboration Study, IDG Enterprise Marketing, 2015.



TEAMWORK BLOCKER 1

One team, too many disparate tools

Projects require ramp-up time both for teams and managers, who must quickly figure out how and where the team will communicate and share files, how they'll plan and track progress, and who will grant and manage access to shared assets over the project's lifespan. When one person holds the keys to a disparate set of tools that everyone needs to get work done, team members can get left out of the loop.

It can be especially frustrating when team members need quick feedback to move a project forward. Waiting on stakeholder availability to schedule meetings, and then waiting some more for edits and input, can create productivity bottlenecks.

One team, too many disparate tools





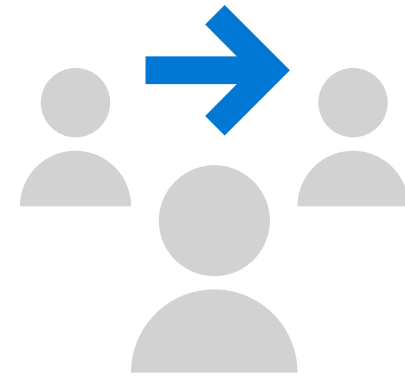
THE SOLUTION

A shared hub for teamwork

With [Microsoft Teams](#), team members have access to a shared hub where they can find everything they need to be more productive – in one secure location. They can also connect with teammates inside and outside the organisation to work on core projects.

Microsoft Teams offers a collaboration and communication solution for today's teams. They can locate files using intelligent, integrated search capabilities, and get access to built-in Office apps, including SharePoint, Word, PowerPoint, Excel and Stream, from any location or device. Because every document shared in Teams is saved to the cloud, team members always work with the latest version. And chat history keeps track of team decisions, with no searching necessary.

Group or private chat helps team members to quickly connect with decision-makers, and they can set up an online meeting where they can co-author and share files to secure immediate approval. In-document integrated notifications and side-by-side chat enable real-time collaboration, editing and finalisation of materials. And with IM, plus voice and video calling, team members are just a few clicks away.



Employees are 5× more likely to be high-performing when a company promotes and enables teamwork.⁴

⁴ Purposeful Collaboration: The Essential Components of Collaborative Cultures, i4cp, 2017.



With mobile access to Teams and needed documents, [groups that need to move rapidly] can attain a velocity that would be impossible with conventional workplace tools.

James Fowler

Chief Information Officer,
GE

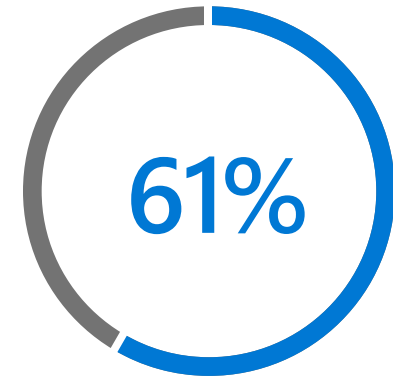


TEAMWORK BLOCKER 2

Inefficient virtual meetings

Certain technology mishaps – such as struggling to participate in virtual meetings – should be a thing of the past. All too often, call connection is poor, someone gets stuck trying to log in or another team member can't access a shared screen or see a key piece of content. Meetings are routinely interrupted and delayed by these disruptions.

Meeting inefficiencies not only discourage team members from working together, but also present an unacceptable barrier for a workforce that's increasingly remote and on the go.



61%
of workers report working outside the office at least part of the time.⁵

⁵ ['7 Enterprise Mobility Statistics You Should Know'](#), Citrix, 2015.



THE SOLUTION

Reliable online meetings with screen sharing on any device

Empower employees to have better meetings with a complete voice and online meeting solution designed for all their needs. Microsoft Teams offers an integrated collaboration and communication solution, so chat, calling and meeting experiences are more connected and insightful – whether working from home, on the go or in a meeting room.

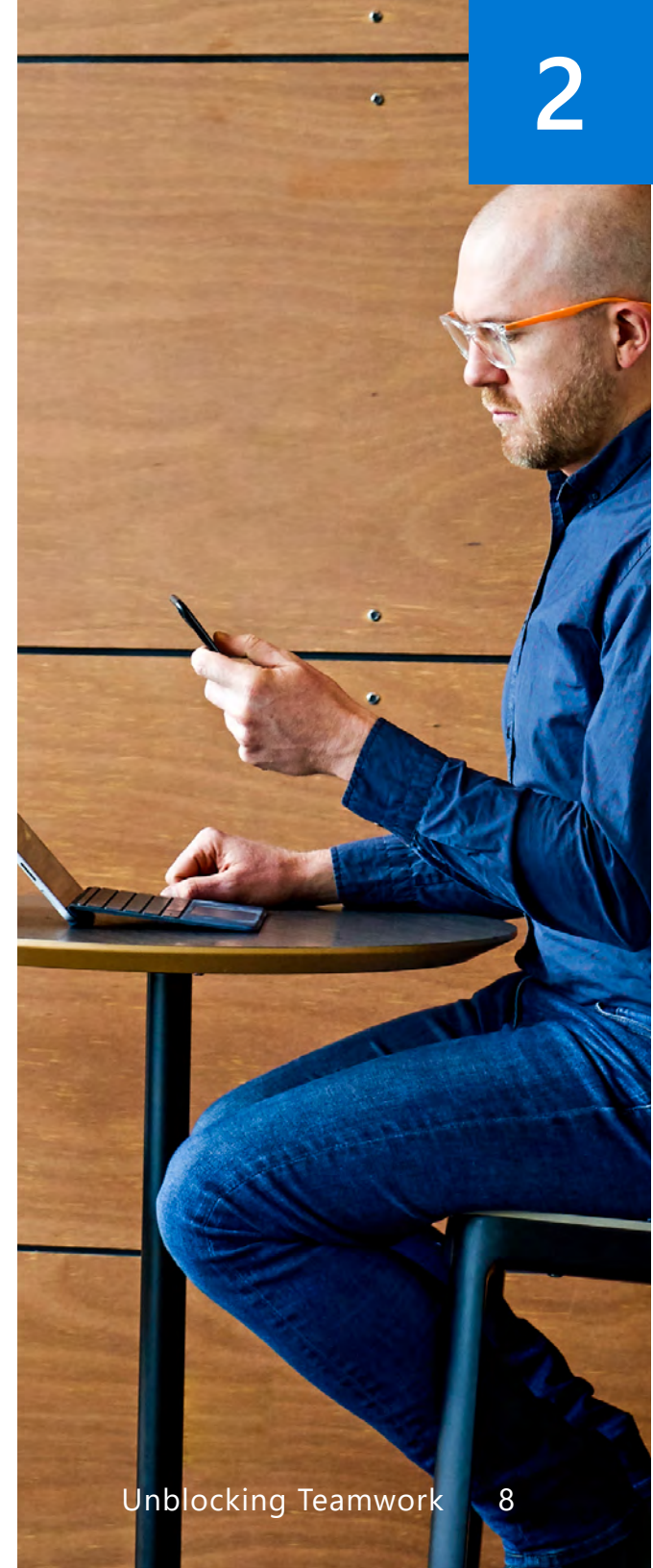
With Teams in Microsoft 365, your employees can communicate via shared screens, messaging, voice calling and video. They're free to work from anywhere – on their desktops or mobile devices. With everything on one platform, workers can worry less about technology complications and focus more on getting things done.

With Microsoft Teams, your employees can:

- Chat, meet virtually and call across devices with VoIP and PSTN.
- Reduce travel by using audio, HD video and web conferencing.
- Engage your customers by using Teams in your web pages and apps.

Meetings are more efficient with Microsoft 365. With Teams, employees can hold rich video calls, share content, collaborate in real time on files and record meetings.

Inefficient virtual meetings





With Teams, we can have a quick conversation without traversing the building. It's trackable, too – we can see who said what without parsing a long email thread. Everyone is on the same page instantly.

Andi Kubacki

Co-founder,
The Detroit Wallpaper Co.



TEAMWORK BLOCKER 3

Lack of version control

You've captured your big idea in a draft presentation and you're ready to get feedback from the rest of the team. The hard part – bringing the idea to life – should be over, right?

More often than not, it's the feedback and revision process that proves the most painful. Using email to share files for the team to review is inefficient. It wastes time, and you end up with multiple edited versions of the same document that may have conflicting feedback and changes. And, after several revision rounds, it might not even be clear which document is the final version.

Without real-time file sharing, employees' workflows are compromised.

- Sharing attachments via email wastes time.
- Multiple revision rounds lead to endless versioning of a document.
- Files are easily misplaced, lost or overwritten.





THE SOLUTION

Secure, cloud-based file collaboration

It's time to take teamwork to the cloud. Cloud-based tools from Microsoft 365 empower workers to collaborate efficiently across mobile devices, the web or desktops. Working with Word, PowerPoint or Excel, you can easily co-author in real time with the rest of the team – all from a single version of the file saved to the cloud.

You can easily store and share your files in [OneDrive for Business](#), included in Microsoft 365, so you and your team can always work from one central file that's accessible to everyone and up to date. Team members can confidently add comments and revisions to a single file, since, if needed, you can always access or revert to earlier versions that are automatically saved in the cloud. Say goodbye to version control headaches and the need to compare and merge edits.

With Microsoft 365, you and your employees can:

- Access documents anywhere, online or offline.
- Collaborate in a single document that's always up to date.
- Seamlessly share large files.
- Use built-in chat functionality to discuss edits within a document.
- Control permissions of contacts inside and outside the company.

Lack of version control





Our firstline workers co-author and share documents in OneDrive, and they can collaborate on the same file at the same time, knowing that their changes will sync and they'll always be working on the latest version.

Justin Litherland

Vice President of IT, Stores,
Lowe's



TEAMWORK BLOCKER 4

A disorganised, inconsistent set of apps

People are accustomed to downloading apps on their phones, and many take the same approach in the office, resulting in a hodgepodge of applications that all do different things, have different sign-ins and may not deliver the security and compliance that the organisation requires.



Organisations use an average of 730 cloud-based applications.

An estimated 90.8% of these apps aren't enterprise-ready.⁶

⁶ April 2015 Cloud Report, Netskope, 2015.



THE SOLUTION

A universal toolkit for teamwork

Microsoft 365 delivers a holistic collaboration solution that puts the right tools at team members' fingertips, so they can collaborate in the different ways they choose throughout the day. Whether workers need an answer to a quick question over Microsoft Teams or to collaborate in real time on document revisions, Microsoft 365 has the tools to complete the task at hand.

With Microsoft 365, you and your colleagues can:

- Bring the team together for real-time collaboration with Microsoft Teams through chat, meetings and calls.
- Create, share and find content with SharePoint and OneDrive.
- Plug in your favourite enterprise apps and services. Microsoft Teams is customisable and extensible, enabling quick, seamless access to Trello, Hootsuite and many more apps.
- Know your assets are backed by Microsoft 365 security and compliance standards (regardless of which application you use).
- Run applications with ease with the 99.9% uptime guarantee of Microsoft 365.
- Easily move across applications with a single sign-on approach.

When it comes to collaboration, one size doesn't fit all. Only Microsoft 365 delivers an integrated collaboration solution that includes the full range of applications – from email to files to chat to voice to social – all backed by Microsoft's enterprise-grade security and reliability.

A disorganised, inconsistent set of apps





Millennials – who make up 57% of our workforce – expect to collaborate in real time, with video calls, texting and co-authoring.

Sherry Aaholm

Vice President and Chief Information Officer,
Cummins

Create higher-performing teams with Microsoft 365

In today's modern workplace, employees need to connect with teammates inside and outside the organisation to work on core projects. Having one shared hub for teamwork can help them work better together, in turn driving better business outcomes.

From chat, voice and social tools to cloud-based co-authoring capabilities, [Microsoft 365](#) with Teams delivers a powerful collaboration and communication solution designed to meet the diverse work styles and needs of every group. It's an all-in-one, integrated toolkit for teamwork – and it's backed by Microsoft's enterprise-grade security and reliability.

"When you give a minute a day back to each worker – and you have 300,000 employees – you see tremendous productivity gains," says GE CTO Jeff Monaco. "The more friction we can take out of their daily activities, the more they can focus on customers, revenue and making a difference in the world."



It's time to act against teamwork blockers

Microsoft 365 delivers the right collaboration tools your team needs – at any time, in any place and on any device. Start by trying out Microsoft Teams for free now.



© 2020 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. This document is provided 'as-is'. Information and views expressed in this document, including URL and other internet website references, may change without notice. You bear the risk of using it. This document does not provide you with any legal rights to any intellectual property in any Microsoft product. You may copy and use this document for your internal, reference purposes.