

Computer monitoring 3410

[Technology](#), [Computer](#)



Computer Monitoring is most often intended to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the workplace, but with good intentions comes the opportunity

for abuse by employers and employees alike. An example of both can be found in

an article taken from The Futurist. Kristen Bell De Tienne's composition "

Big Brother or Friendly Giant: Computer Monitoring in the 21st Century" is

an exceptional observation as to what the future may hold for those people

choosing to enter the technological field such as industry, commerce, medicine

and science. As Computer Monitoring increases there comes a concern for the

types of effects it may have in the workplace. According to DeTienne, " By

the end of the decade, as many as 30 million people may constantly be monitored

in their jobs" (462). As computer systems become more sophisticated this

number will drastically increase. As we enter this new age of technology we must

remember that with more power comes more responsibility by employers and

employees alike. Micheal J. Smith, a professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison explains that knowledge can be used as a weapon or as a tool (DeTienne 462). For instance monitoring abuse can be found in the in the situation of airline agents. The agents discovered that by keeping customers on hold while finishing their work they could gain an extra 5-minute break (De Tienne 462). In the future these evasions of work will be stopped and for this reason " employee's who are accustomed to evading the monitoring system may no longer be able to tolerate it" (De Tienne 463). These types of employees may find they can no longer survive the added pressure of not being able to evade the system (DeTienne 463). While monitoring can add pressure to some employees it can also be a relief to others. It is a relief to the employee because it provides information readily at hand. With the use of prompts, acting as reminders to workers of information needed is passed on efficiently allowing

employees to do a better job. However, if prompts are used to tell an employee

how much time has been wasted or how bad an employee is doing their job, it

could cause the opposite effect (DeTienne 463). Monitoring can have a positive

effect on workers by letting the employee access their own information. In a study by Christopher Early information about job performance given by a computer

is accepted better than a performance rating given by a boss. This can only have

positive results for both employers and employees (De Tienne 463). While at this

time monitoring is based on the output of an employee's performance. In the

future there will be more freedom for employees to use their own ideas,

therefore making monitoring more effective (DeTienne 464). While monitoring will

be used mostly as a tool. One example of monitoring as a weapon is seen when a

woman took an extra minute in the bathroom was threatened with losing her job.

With this added stress she suffered a nervous breakdown. The Company insisted

that they were not " spying" but were only trying to improve their

business (DeTienne 465). If monitoring is not used correctly businesses will

suffer with increases in operating costs because of " increased turnover,

absenteeism, medical costs, and worker's compensation" (DeTienne 465)

Employers who use positive reinforcement with monitoring will guarantee better

motivation. Employers therefore receive the benefits of better business (DeTienne

465). Although, most employers will use monitoring in a positive way,

legislation may be needed to protect employees from those who abuse the

monitoring system. The protection of employees should be the most important

issue now and in the future. Legislation has the potential to help employees

with issues of better treatment and the right to privacy (De Tienne 465). In the

New Century companies that succeed, according to John Scully who is chairman of

Apple Computers, will be the ones who learn from the past and from the "me

boss and you employee" mentality. Instead of possessing this mentality

employers should strive to make employees feel better about themselves and their

jobs (DeTienne 466). A good Blacksmith can take a hammer and forge a weapon into

a tool that can benefit the whole village. Employers are the Blacksmiths

employees are the hammers, monitoring is the tool. It takes both to make a tool

to benefit the future.

Bibliography

DeTienne, Kristen Bell. " Big Brother or Friendly Coach: Computer Monitoring in the 21st Century" Writing and Reading Across the Curriculum. Ed Laurence Behrens and Leonard J. Rosen New York. Addison Wesley Longhorn, Inc. 1997 461-466