INTELLIGENT WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS : USING TIME MANAGEMENT TO CONTROL YOUR BUDGETS AND COMBAT FRAUD

David Walton, CEO of Bestoutcome, discusses a smart way of using timesheet data to improve business performance.

David Walton

Introduction

Most organisations invest significant effort in producing good plans for their projects and programmes. Many also monitor progress, cost and quality as the plans are delivered. But how many use timesheets to drive this progress reporting ?

Timesheets might seem overly bureaucratic, old-fashioned and boring. But they can offer significant benefits when used intelligently.

Workforce solutions – timesheets

Users of timesheet systems include :

1.Staff and contractors (team members), entering timesheets

2.Managers, approving timesheets

3.Administrators, configuring the system

4.Senior Management, exploiting the data

Benefits of professional time management systems

Greater visibility and accuracy of progress

It seems obvious, but if you know what people are spending their time on then you can easily see if you are achieving your plans or not.

Manual timesheets are prone to error because people can book time to the wrong job - professional solutions avoid these problems because of centrally controlled codes.

Stronger cost control

We know that "time is money" so tracking time against the correct jobs and at the correct rates is critical. This also affects savings because if costs are 'out of control' then the financial justification for the project can become invalid.

Increased utilisation of staff and contractors

Consultants and chargeable staff usually have utilisation targets. Increased utilisation can lead to increased profitability and performance. In particular, adjusting the target utilisation of contractors can bring significant financial and time benefits.

Caution - timesheet data is probably Personal Data

Is your timesheet data held in the UK ? If not, you might be in breach of the Data Protection Act (DPA) 1998 which prohibits the transfer of Personal Data to countries outside the European Economic Area (EEA).

Case Study : NHS Transformation Unit

The Transformation Unit is an innovative and fundamentally different organisation to many other NHS services. Specialising in large scale clinical service transformation, the Unit is an internal NHS consultancy with a strong track record of achievement.

In the current climate, major transformation is a priority for many public sector providers and commissioners. Radical change to the way that services are commissioned and provided is necessary to improve health, social and economic outcomes as budgets diminish and demand increases.

The Transformation Unit offers support and leadership in a wide range of areas to ensure transformation programmes are clinically led and programme managed efficiently.

The Transformation Unit decided to implement a professional time management solution to keep track of staff time while working on programmes and therefore the cost, which may be charged back to clients. After defining their requirements and evaluating potential partners they selected Bestoutcome's PM3time tool which is being rolled-out across the Unit.

Conclusion

Using a timesheeting system may appear quite dull. However, the benefits that can be realised from intelligent harvesting of the time data are significant and can have a direct impact on your business performance.

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T: 01753 885 864
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