

6 Must-Have Apps to Help You Be More Productive at Work

COURSERA PROMO

I want to tell you about something exciting happening in the Central Region right now! The Central Region Job Centers have joined forces with The Missouri Department of Higher Education & Workforce Development and Coursera, to offer over 4,000 cutting-edge courses free to Missourians.

Coursera, the world's learning platform, is providing Missourians with a transformative learning experience that empowers citizens to gain skills and help them with career development.

Coursera can help you: learn in-demand skills in subjects like technology and business that prepare you for today's job opportunities; enjoy interactive learning experiences and be a part of Coursera's global learning community. Course videos, readings, and assignments are multi-language; work at your own pace with Coursera's bite-sized sessions and self-paced learning model. You can download the Coursera mobile app to learn new skills anytime, anywhere; and earn university-accredited certifications from leading global institutions that can help boost your resume.

The application process is pretty simple. You'll fill out a short inquiry form and a Central Region Job Center team member will then contact you to determine eligibility and begin enrollment. Once enrolled, Coursera will send you an email within 2 business days, then you can register for free online courses and complete courses at your own pace.

To learn more and apply today, visit cwdregion.com/coursera.

INTRO

Welcome to *The Workforce Link*, where we're offering forward thinking conversations for the workforce, linking employers and job seekers to a brighter tomorrow. I'm your host Sundi Jo Graham and I'm glad to be back with you for another episode today.

The world is connected via technology now more than ever. Some would even argue that we're more disconnected because of technology than ever before. I think both are true, really. But just like anything, we can use it for the good or the bad.

Because it's so easy to get distracted now more than ever, it's important to put things in place that's going to help us be more productive.

On today's episode of The Workforce Link Podcast, we're going to talk about some apps that you might find helpful to keep you on track to being the productive version of yourself in the workplace, whether on your computer or your phone, and even at home. We're going to cover the 6 Must-Have Apps to Help You Be More Productive at Work.

LINKEDIN INVITE

Before we dive in though, if you haven't already, I want to invite you to join us over at [LinkedIn](#). Stop by for a quick hello and give us a like. We'd appreciate it. I'll share the link in the show notes or you can just search the Central Workforce Development Board and you'll easily find us.

And if you haven't already, we'd love for you to head on over to iTunes and leave us a review if you enjoy the show, and don't forget to share with a friend. Thanks in advance.

DISCUSSION

Okay.. now let's dive into today's episode on the 6 Must-Have Apps to Help You Be More Productive at Work. I'm going to be referencing a lot of links in today's episode, so just to let you know ahead of time, all the links can be found in the show notes, so if you're driving in morning traffic headed to work, don't try to write them down. You can get them all later.

1) EVERNOTE

This is my favorite app. I use it multiple times/day. I call it my digital brain. Whether it's recording a note for later, an email template I use consistently, files I want to save, or maybe even the occasional recipe I find perusing on Facebook, I literally use it for everything.

Evernote is a great tool for note taking during a meeting, making a to-do list, and even storing digital files. Think of it as a digital filing cabinet, because that's literally what it is.

When you use a filing cabinet, you have folders labeled so you know exactly where to find that file. That's exactly what you can do with Evernote.

You can create notebooks to save specific information. You can create shortcuts to your favorite notes. And one of my favorite things.. Tags.. These are seriously the best.

Let me give you a professional example, then I'll give you a personal one of how I use Evernote. Say I want to save a specific online resource for our Capital City Job Center. I can create a tag specifically for the Capital City Job Center. Anytime I need to go in and do a search, I can either find that tag or type in the name and everything I've saved there will show up.

Personally, I record my goals in here. So, every year I set some specific goals. I have a notebook called 2022 goals. Inside that notebook I have 7 different notes titled with each specific goal. And I've tagged them with the label "2022 goals". When I want to look through them, all I have to do is find that label or type it in and right there in front of me are all my goals.

I'm a total nerd, I know, but I love it. Seriously though, for those of us who struggle to keep our attention for longer than 30 seconds, this is a gift. It's literally your digital brain and will save you from a lot of disorganization.

There's a free version of Evernote to get you started, or you can sign up for the personal plan for \$7.99/month, which is what I use and highly recommend. You have unlimited access on devices, 10 GB of monthly uploads, you can connect your Google calendar to your account, add due dates, reminders, and notifications, and a lot of other benefits. You can even get offline access on your mobile and desktop.

2) GOOGLE (GOOGLE WORKSPACE)

Not only can you get business emails with your own domains through Google Workspace, but there are a ton of other things you can do.

Google Drive, for starters, is the greatest thing since Betty White or sliced bread, whichever you prefer, but really.. Betty White came first. Google Drive allows not only you, but your whole team to share documents, spreadsheets, etc. online. So, whether you need to access it from your desktop or your phone, or your laptop while traveling, you can do so. Think of it as Microsoft Office, just all in one place.

You never know when you're going to need access to something remotely, and this is the perfect way to avoid having something saved on your computer that you can't get access to later.

Then there's the Google calendar, where again, you can sync your calendar with your team's calendar. You can invite others to meetings, put your to-do list in your calendar, reminders, etc.

Whether you are a small team or a large team, it really does provide a seamless process for staying organized and synched with others.

If I had to pick between Microsoft Office and Google Workspace, I would choose Google over and over again.

You can get started for \$6/month, depending on your needs. Prices range from \$6-\$18/month. They also have discounted plans for larger enterprises.

3) DROPBOX

Dropbox is a great tool if you're storing a lot of files and you don't want to weigh down your hard drive. And again, you can access those files anytime, anywhere.

It's secure and there are a lot of options available, whether you're using it personally, for a small team, or even a larger enterprise. You can even e-sign documents.

And what I love most about it is that it links to your hard drive, so when I automatically save things to my computer, it goes to Dropbox instead of my hard drive.

The plus plan is \$11.99/month and you get 2,000 gb of storage. Plans increase according to your needs.

PROMO - EMPLOYER SERVICES

Quick question....

Are you a business owner or manager who needs assistance increasing your profit margin and building a strong workforce? Well.. now is the time to take advantage of our employer services. The Central Region Missouri Job Centers are ready to help!

Available at NO cost to you, we offer a variety of employer services, including job matching, consulting, work opportunity tax credits, on-the-job training, incumbent worker training, transition assistance, and more.

Get all the details at cwdregion.com/employerservices.

We look forward to assisting you with all your employer needs today!

And now... back to the show.

DISCUSSION CONTINUED

4) PANDORA OR SPOTIFY

There's nothing like having some music in your ear while you're trying to focus on a project at work, right? I was jamming out to a Pandora playlist while preparing for this episode as a matter-of-fact.

Again, you can get on your desktop, phone, and even just open it on your internet browser.

Maybe you're having a rough day at work and just need to crank up the music for a minute and host a dance party with your co-workers. No judgment here. Or if your boss says no way to the dance party, you can put your earbuds in and take a quick walk around the parking lot while listening to some refreshing music.

I don't know about you, but music makes me so much more productive. Sometimes we need caffeine to get our day started and sometimes we need music to keep our day going in the right direction.

I actually have several different playlists created. I have a workout radio list, and I even have an instrumental playlist which helps me get into super focus mode.

Spotify is also a great app for music. What I love about it vs. Pandora is that you can actually listen to a whole album from your favorite artist at once. And.. did you know that you can even listen to The Workforce Link Podcast on Spotify?

They have free and paid versions of both to match your musical preferences. Don't like ads? You can pay to get rid of them.

5) FREEDOM APP

This is an app I'd argue to say that we ALL need! It allows you to block websites and apps while focusing on a specific project.

Do you have a proposal you need to get out by the end of business day today but you have a thousand distractions, like emails, Slack messages, etc? You can easily get rid of them with the Freedom App.

You literally get to decide how long you want those apps blocked. So, say you want to commit 2 hours to focusing on nothing but that project. You can use Freedom to block Gmail and Slack for those exact two hours. And the only way to get access to them is to go through several steps to open them back up.

You will literally be distraction free for those two hours so you can focus on the task at hand. No more Facebook every 10 minutes. You're super focused. It really is the best app. Again, you can get it on your desktop or your phone.

You can get a free trial for 7 distraction-free sessions and then it's only \$3.33/month afterwards. It's worth every penny if you struggle to get distracted.

6) SLACK OR TRELLO

Both of these project management platforms are good, so I couldn't just pick one. Both of them allow you to create specific projects, assign team members, discuss with your co-workers what next steps need to happen on the projects, and more.

One of my favorite things about it is that it eliminates the need to have a bunch of different emails about one project or topic. Say you're working on an expansion for a particular service you're offering. You can create a project focused solely on that topic and every conversation you have takes place in the project, not in email. It saves so much time and energy, really.

And you can also add progress goals to each project. Finished a task you were responsible for? Check it off and your teammates will know you've done it.

Both [Slack](#) and [Trello](#) can be accessed from anywhere.

You can get started on both today for free.

RECAP

We've barely scratched the surface today on the must-have apps to help you be more productive at work, but this is a great start. Perhaps we can do a second episode later on down the road.

Here's a quick recap of what we covered today:

1. Evernote
2. Google Workspace
3. Dropbox

4. Pandora or Spotify
5. Freedom
6. Slack or Trello

If you use any of these apps, I'd love to know what you love about them. Feel free to shoot me an email and let me know. Again, I'll share the link in the show notes for you. Have an app you recommend? We'd love to hear about it.

CLOSING

That's it for us this week. If you enjoyed this episode, don't forget to share it with a friend.

Have a great week and we'll meet again in the next episode. Until then.. Remember this... There's always a brighter tomorrow if you're willing to find it.

Links:

[Coursera Courses](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

[Evernote](#)

[Dropbox](#)

[Google Workspace](#)

[Pandora](#)

[Freedom](#)

[Slack](#)

[Trello](#)

[Email Sundi Jo](#)