



# Instant Messaging in the Office, Friend or Foe?

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Instant messaging has in recent years become a standard medium for workplace and office communication. In its inception IM was a tool for communicating in real time across a global network. It was a social invention that instantly connected a worldwide audience and plugged them into a worldwide network. IM surpassed other forms of internet communication with its instant accessibility and real time capabilities. IM is the new medium for communication and it has infiltrated workplaces on a global scale. So is instant messaging in the workplace friend or foe?

Instant messaging in the work place can vastly increase productivity and make communicating more effective. It can potentially speed up the processes of collaboration and collective project management within the workplace. IM is a great for firing questions, bouncing ideas and sending files across the office. If used in this way IM can greatly enhance communication within work environments however like all technology it does have its drawbacks. It is simple to use and effective in an instant therefore subject to abuse. The simplicity of it and its instant feedback makes it very tempting for employees to indulge in non-work related chatting. This becomes a concern when it creates an avenue for distraction.

While there are relevant drawbacks to this technology the fact is IM is making office communications a whole lot easier. It is indeed here to stay and will continue to increase the productivity of workplaces adopting the practice.