

WCITechnology Insider

Insider Tech Tips - Written for Humans, Not Geeks

Virtual Freedom

By Chris Ducker

Are you ready to take back your day? If yes, you need to read *Virtual Freedom: How to Work with Virtual Staff to Buy More Time, Become More Productive, and Build Your Dream Business*, by Chris Ducker. This "guidebook" shows you how to effectively build a virtual team so you can outsource tasks that are getting in the way of what you really want to do. *Virtual Freedom* offers insights for very small businesses, the self-employed or businesses that want to grow (but don't want to grow their footprint). It may seem hard to delegate, especially to a virtual team, but Ducker shows how easy it can be.



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Bill Wright
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Our Mission:

Technology systems that anchor your business and protect what you have built, from a company inspired to make the world better.



Cybercriminals Confess: The top 3 tricks and sneaky schemes they use to hack your computer network

Cybercriminals and hackers are rarely shy about the methods they use to attack their victims. Many of them are more than happy to share how they broke into a business's network, or how they walked away with thousands of dollars after successfully extorting a business owner whose company is now destroyed.

There are new stories out there to get your blood boiling as cybercriminals work to ruin people's lives, and livelihoods. These criminals don't care what kind of damage they do; they only care about one thing, and that's money. If they can get away with it, they'll keep on doing it.

It's up to the rest of us as business owners (and employees) to stay at least one step ahead of

these "cyberthugs". The single best way to do that is to **stay educated on the latest trends**. The second best way is to **stay up to date with the latest technology designed to combat cyberattacks**.

Here are three tricks-of-the-trade cybercriminals are using right now in an attempt to get their hands on others' hard-earned money:

Ransomware. This is very common. It's a form of malware, and it can sneak onto your network and into your computers in a number of different ways:

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- **Ad Networks:** These ads can appear on social media sites and on familiar sites. Someone clicks a compromised ad or pop-up, and it initiates a file download. It's quick and it can be confusing. This is where anti-malware and anti-ransomware come in very handy.
- **Malicious Links:** The cybercriminal sends you a legitimate-looking e-mail, supposedly from your bank or a familiar online store. It may even be disguised as an e-mail from a colleague. The e-mail contains a link or file, and if you click on it, it installs the ransomware.
- **Hidden Files on Thumb-Drives:** This happens way too often where someone brings a thumb-drive from home. While the user doesn't know it, the drive has a malicious file on it. When the thumb-drive is inserted into a networked machine, the file is installed.

"You can put the cybercriminals in their place and have a digital defense wall between your business and those who want to do your business harm."

No matter how the ransomware gets onto your devices, the result is basically the same; the ransomware goes to work and begins encrypting your files. Or, it may completely block you from accessing your computer altogether. You'll get a full-screen message: *Pay up or never access your files again.* Some ransomware programs threaten to delete all of your files. Others say they will never restore access.

DDoS Extortion. Short for distributed denial of service, DDoS attacks are a relatively easy way for hackers to take down your business's online presence and wreak havoc on your network. These attacks mimic online users and essentially "flood your network with access requests. Basically, it's as if millions of people were trying to access your website at once.

Your network simply can't handle that kind of traffic and, as a result, it goes down. The hackers can continue the attacks until you take action. That is to say, until you pay up. If you

don't pay up, the hackers will do everything they can to keep you offline in an attempt to destroy your business. If you rely on Internet traffic, this can be devastating, which is why many businesses end up paying.

Direct Attacks. Some hackers like to do the dirty work themselves. While many cybercriminals rely on bots or malware to do the work for them, some hackers will see if they can break through your network security in a more direct way. If successful, they can target specific files on your network, such as critical business or customer data.

Once they have the valuable data, they may let you know they have it. Sometimes they'll ask for money in return for the information, and sometimes they won't say anything, and instead will simply sell the data on the black market. Either way, you're in a bad position. A criminal has walked away with sensitive information, and there is nothing you can do about it.

Except, the last sentence isn't true. There are things you can do about it; take preventative measures. It all comes down to these two points:

- Stay educated on the latest trends
- Stay up to date with the latest technology designed to combat cyberattacks

If you do these two things and work with an experienced MSSP company, you can change the outcome. You can put the cybercriminals in their place, and have a digital defense wall between your business and those who want to do your business harm.

Help us out, and we'll give you a brand-new Amazon Kindle Fire HD* for your trouble



We love having you as a client, and, quite honestly, we wish we had more like you! So instead of just wishing, we've decided to hold a special "refer a friend" event during the month of December.

Simply refer any company with 10 or more computers to our office to receive a FREE computer network assessment (a \$397 value). Once we've completed our initial appointment with your referral, we'll rush YOU a free Kindle Fire as a thank-you (or, we'll donate \$100 to your favorite charity, your choice!)

Simply call us at 614-763-2911, or e-mail us at info@wcitech.net with your referral's name and contact information today!

You'll have your choice between the Fire HD 8 (pictured) or the Fire HD 10

Microsoft 365 Tip

Sharepoint's a great way to collaborate on documents. But how do you know when a colleague has made any changes?

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Your business could be more productive with *one simple change*

Most businesses simply wouldn't survive without technology. That's a fact.

When you have the right tools, devices, and networks in place, your work is made easier, plus your team is more productive, and that leads to a more profitable business.

But did you know that many US businesses are working with an IT infrastructure that simply doesn't meet their needs?

Sure, they have a network that they can access, and they're using tools that help get the job done. But, when you look at their plans for the future, or you speak to their team, you'll realize they could be doing so much more.

Does this apply to your business to any degree?

Ask yourself: When did you last create a formal business IT growth

strategy?

If your answer is more than a year or two ago - or worse, never - then you have some work to do. And, with a new year just a few weeks away, there is no better time than now.

You see, an IT strategy is the foundation to moving your business forward. Improving productivity and profit.

If you're just winging it, you're almost certainly wasting money and holding your business back.

This is why we're offering you an IT strategy review. My team of experts will assess several areas of your IT infrastructure and the way your people use it, to see what improvements you can make.

They'll also discuss your plans and goals for the next 12 months to 3 years, to make sure your system is up to the task.

Before we do this, we'll need to have a quick video call (no more than 15 minutes, we promise) to discuss your business, and to answer any questions you may have.



Visit
[//www.scheduleyou.in/53PTQqp](https://www.scheduleyou.in/53PTQqp)
to book your call

SHINY NEW GADGET OF THE MONTH SelfieSpin360 for GoPro

A GoPro camera is great for a crystal-clear, wide-angle video of yourself, or your subject, and you can attach it to the end of a selfie stick for some nice static shots, too. But, if you're ready to take things up a notch and capture even more truly awesome moments, then you need the SelfieSpin360.

It's all there in the name: the SelfieSpin360 gives you a way to get incredible 360 degree footage of yourself in any setting. You attach your GoPro or smartphone to the end of sleek and secure base, which is attached to a long cord with a handle for camera controls on the end. Hit record, then start swinging the device up and around your head lasso-style to capture a unique version of yourself in a special moment. The SelfieSpin360 kicks boring old selfies to the curb. Visit SelfieSpin360.com to purchase yours.



Bluetooth Vulnerabilities

Wireless technology such as WiFi is wonderful, but we know it comes with risks. What about wireless Bluetooth technology? Everything from laptops to smartphones uses Bluetooth to pair with other wireless devices (like mice or earbuds), but is Bluetooth safe to use?

According to researchers, no. In summer 2020, a new vulnerability called BLESAs (Bluetooth Low Energy Spoofing Attack) was found. Hackers target devices using Bluetooth Low Energy (BLE) protocol, a technology common in smartphones. Hackers can "trick" devices such as smartphones into thinking they're pairing with a secure device when they're really pairing with the hacker's device.

Bottom line: using Bluetooth has its risks. If you aren't actively paired with another device, **turn Bluetooth off**.

3 Steps to *successfully* convince a CEO

Here is your chance. You don't want to blow it.

You have a meeting scheduled with a CEO.

Your goal is to convince them ...

- To spend \$1 million on your product or service, or to make a large donation to your cause
- To hire you, promote you, or give you your dream job
- To invest in your idea



Ineffective Ways to Convince a CEO

Many people "show up and throw up" and push a lot of information at the CEO - either verbally, or by PowerPoint. I'm not sure why so many unpersuasive people follow this approach. Maybe it's to "show you know what you are talking about." But, it does not make a CEO say "yes."

Another bad approach is to phrase your request as a "we ought to." CEOs don't decide to do things just because other people say they ought to do something. Worse yet is when people only talk about why *they* want something to happen, fully ignoring the wishes, concerns and perspectives of the CEO.

Successfully Convince a CEO in 3 Steps

1. Seek to first understand the CEO's perspective - this is Stephen Covey's advice. It needs no further explanation. Your first step in discussing a topic with a CEO is to put all your energy into asking probing questions, listening and learning what the CEO thinks about a topic, and why.

Forget about your agenda or your needs, for just a moment.

2. Reflect the CEO's perspective to their satisfaction. This is a hard step; most people cannot objectively reflect or restate another person's perspective about a topic without putting their own personal slant on it. I first learned this step during my psychology PhD training in a class on conflict resolution. At this step, you must restate the CEO's perspective on the topic simply and without putting words in their mouth or trying to spin it in your favor. You know you have succeeded at this step once the CEO says the magic word - "exactly." This means that the CEO believes that you understand their perspective. Then, and only then, have you earned permission to move to the final step.

3. Propose your idea as a way to help the CEO achieve their goals. The mindset for this step is not that you are about to trick or fool a CEO into doing something that's not good for them. Your mindset is that you are about to convince a CEO to do something that *is* good for them. (And, by the way, if what you are about to propose is not in the CEO's best interest, then don't propose it!) A simple way to propose your idea is to say, "Your goals are X. Your concerns are Y. So, I propose you do Z."

And, contrary to popular belief, great ideas don't sell themselves. It takes a skillful leader to successfully convince a CEO.



Geoff Smart is chairman and founder of ghSMART. Geoff is co-author, with his colleague Randy Street, of the New York Times best-selling book *Who: A Method For Hiring* and the author of the #1 Wall Street Journal best seller *Leadocracy: Hiring More Great Leaders (Like You) Into Government*. Geoff co-created the Topgrading brand of talent management. He is the founder of two 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organizations. SMARTKids Leadership Program™ provides 10 years of leadership tutoring, and the Leaders Initiative™ seeks to deploy society's greatest leaders into government. Geoff earned a Bachelor of Arts in Economics with honors from Northwestern University and a Master's and Doctorate in Psychology from Claremont Graduate University.



Would your business survive the 4 beer test this holiday season?

So, it's unlikely that you'll be having a traditional office Christmas party this year. Thanks Covid, ya party-pooper.

But, I'm sure at least some of your team will find a way to celebrate together over a few beers after work one day.

And that's why it's worth asking if your business can pass the 4 beer test.

What's that? We think 4 beers is about the stage where people start to "relax" so much that they start to forget the important stuff (that is, unless you're Robin from our team - then it only takes 1 wine-cooler).

We mean forgetting the important stuff like picking up their laptop bag when they leave the bar. Or as they're jumping out of their Uber when they get home in a fluster.

Laptops and mobiles get left in bars and in cars all the time, especially on dark winter nights like these.

Thing is - depending on your IT setup, a lost laptop can either be a minor inconvenience, or a complete disaster.

How can you tell which? By asking these 3 questions:

- Is it encrypted?
- Is it password protected?
- Can the data be wiped remotely?

If it's a "yes" to all three, you can relax. It's annoying you've lost your device... but your business' data is safe. No one can access it.

And if you can't positively answer all three... yikes. These days, the loss of data is a much bigger deal than the loss of a device.

If you're not 100% sure you can answer all 3 questions with a big fat YES... then give us a call. We can check for you.

Come hang with us on social media!



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Pop this on your Christmas list

Here's the coolest Work-From-Home gadget this holiday season - the WonderWorker Newton laptop stand can be used all over the house.

Use it on a desk to create a standing desk. Or on your sofa or bed to make using your laptop more comfortable. A real steal for only about \$50 on Amazon.



New year, new devices?

With a new year just around the corner, it's time to get everything in place so that you can start the year as you mean to.

Does that mean that you could do with some new devices in the business?

- Perhaps you're working on something slow and uncooperative?
- Maybe your device is so old it can remember dial-up internet?
- Or possibly you just need something that has the right spec to allow you to do your job well?

Whatever it is you need, we can help you find the right device, at the right price for you.

Stocks of laptops and other devices have been up and down this year. Production's clearly been massively affected. So, this is one of those things that'll be easier with some advance planning... don't leave it to the last minute.

Get in touch, and we'll tell you what devices we're recommending right now.

Three questions for you:

1. Do you currently have an IT support company?
2. How happy are you with them?
3. If the answer isn't "they're amazing", let's jump on a Zoom

Covid has taught businesses round here just how important proactive, responsive IT support is.

We're now taking on new clients again.

If you'd like to set up a 15 minute Zoom, go to my live calendar at

<https://www.scheduleyou.in/53PTQqp>

QUESTION

Do you recommend Dropbox for sharing files?

ANSWER

Not with work colleagues, no. Security can be an issue when you're sharing files using all sorts of apps. Ask your IT partner to set up a safe and secure way for your team to collaborate.

QUESTION

What's the quickest way to speed up my computer?

ANSWER

This is the question we get asked the most! There are dozens and dozens of things that can slow a computer down. One easy thing you can try is just restarting it every couple of days.

QUESTION

How many tabs can I have open in Chrome?

ANSWER

It's believed that the maximum is around 9,000! However, your Chrome wouldn't be very easy to use at that stage. We recommend you have no more than 10 to 20 open at one time. The more tabs, sometimes the slower the Chrome and your computer can be.

Tech Fact#1

The very first computer mouse, in 1964, was made from wood

Tech Fact#2

Wonder why your eyes sometimes feel dry when using your computer? It's because we only blink 7 times a minute when we look at a screen. The normal rate is 20 times a minute.

Tech Fact#3

We also read slower on screens, too - up to 10% slower than from paper

Tech Fact#4

It's estimated that up to 92% of all emails sent are spam.

Happy Holidays

It's hard to believe we're this close to the holidays, isn't it?

This year has just shot by. I think losing all those weeks and months to lockdown made it seem like the time has gone faster... although, I remember the actual days at the time as moving very slowly!

How's your business been this year? And what are your plans for next year?

As tough as it's been for many businesses around here, it's also been wonderful for me to talk to business owners and managers who have great plans for next year.

I know it's a cliché to talk about adapting and pivoting. But, there are some very smart people around with some

incredibly ambitious plans. I feel privileged to be working with so many of them.

No wonder people are talking about 2020 having seen 5 years of change and progress.

I wonder what 2021's got in store for us all?

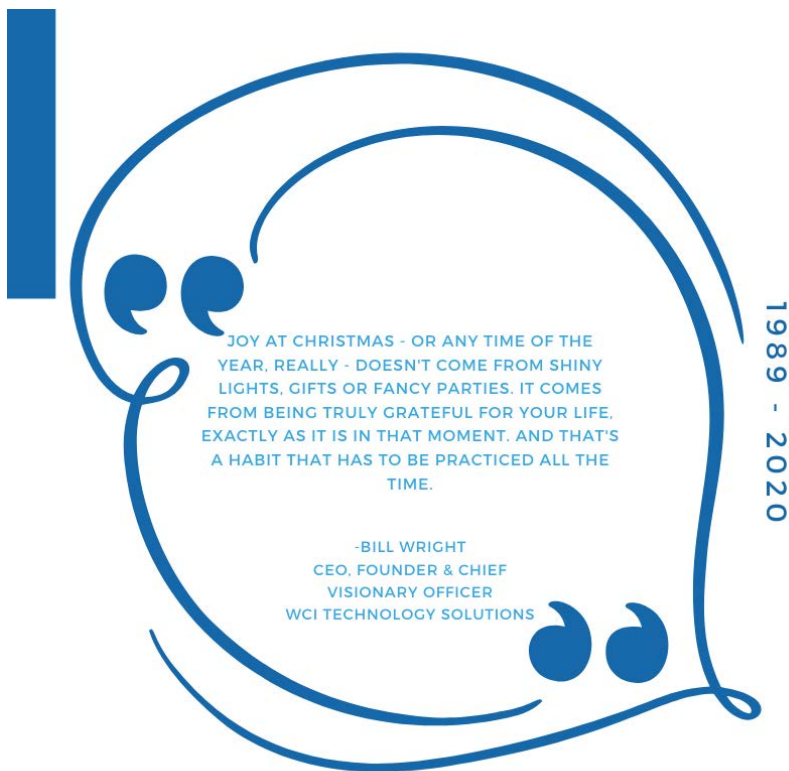
My team and I are all wishing you happy and safe holidays, full of laughter and cheer, and the brightest of new years!



Inspirational Quote of the Month:

"The Web as I envisaged it, we have not seen it yet. The future is still so much bigger than the past."

- Tim Berners-Lee, creator of the World Wide Web



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Get organized and back on track

Top Business Apps to Get You Organized

If you're struggling to stay on top of your work tasks, there are some great apps available to help you out.

- **Asana** helps your business improve communication and collaboration. You can view all tasks and projects and follow progress on a communal board so you can communicate without have to rely on e-mail.
- **Proven** helps organize your hiring process by posting listings to multiple job boards with one click. You can also review and sort applicants with ease.
- **Boxmeup** organizes and tracks your packages, containers and bulk storage items to make storing and shipping a breeze.
- **Evernote** keeps all your notes organized in one place and allows you to easily share notes and lists with co-workers.

- **Trello** tracks your team's workflow. Whenever you make a change to a project or task, the app notifies each team member involved so you don't have to.
- **KanbanFlow** helps managers visualize overall workflow. It gives overviews of work status, tracks progress and assigns tasks to team members. *Nerdwallet, Apr. 21, 2020.*
- **Microsoft Teams**, which is our personal favorite and go-to tool for everyday use, helps streamline communication between your team members to minimize the need for email. You can create individual chats for each department, as well as organize your calendar, share documents and even do calls, either audio or visual.

Top 5 Ways to Overcome Setbacks and Grow

After you encounter a setback, it can be hard to start again. But simply believing in yourself is the best way to get back on track.

1. Recognize when failure is your fault, and when it isn't. Some setbacks are entirely out of your control. Learn to recognize the difference in your faults and what you can't control, then move forward.

2. Learn from your mistakes and don't repeat them. Immediately letting go of the regret of making a mistake can be hard, so instead, focus on what caused the mistake, then learn from it.

3. Focus on your new goal. Failure often comes from going after something we don't truly want. Discover what you really want so you understand what you need to work on.

4. Celebrate small wins. You don't have to wait to celebrate, even if you haven't reached your end goal. Validate yourself for completing smaller tasks, and you'll empower yourself to keep going.

5. Find the right mentor. This is someone who believes in you, even when you don't believe in yourself, and who can support you in reaching your goals. Find someone with the right knowledge and experience to learn from. *Business Insider, Sept. 16, 2020.*