

DIGITAL DISTRACTION - CIO Survey: Tech Gadgets Contributing to Decline in Workplace Etiquette

TORONTO, May 14, 2013 /CNW/ - Technology is one of the most effective ways to bring people together at work, but it may also be causing a digital divide, a new [Robert Half Technology](#) survey of chief information officers (CIOs) suggests. **Fifty-two percent** of CIOs said higher use of mobile gadgets such as cellphones and tablets have led to more breaches in workplace etiquette over the last three years. That's up from **42 percent** who said the same thing in a similar survey three years ago.

The survey is based on telephone interviews with more than 270 CIOs from companies across Canada with 100 or more employees. Robert Half Technology is a leading provider of IT professionals on a project and full-time basis.

CIOs were asked, "In your opinion, what effect has the increased use of mobile electronic gadgets -- such as cellphones, smartphones, handheld devices and laptops -- had on workplace etiquette in the past three years? Have the number of breaches in workplace etiquette increased, decreased or remained the same?" Their responses*:

	2013	2010
Increased significantly	19%	18%
Increased somewhat	33%	24%
Remained the same	43%	49%
Decreased somewhat	4%	4%
Decreased significantly	0%	2%
Don't know	1%	3%
	101%	100%

* Numbers may not total 100 percent due to rounding.

"There is no question that mobile devices have helped employees become more productive in the workplace, but they can also be disruptive," said Megan Slabinski, president of Robert Half Technology's Canadian operations. "Maintaining your focus during meetings, conference calls and other conversations with colleagues is key to maintaining proper digital etiquette."

"Savvy communicators also know to select the most suitable tool," added Slabinski. "When an immediate response is required, instant messaging is a great option, but there are times when a phone conversation is more appropriate."

Robert Half Technology suggests avoiding these four things to remain in the good graces of your colleagues and manager:

- **Surfing while talking.** Checking your email while someone is trying to have a one-on-one conversation with you is impolite. You'll come off looking distracted and disrespectful.
- **Leaving a long voice mail.** For most communications, you should get to the point quickly. Aim for a voice mail that's no longer than 30 seconds unless it's a delicate or complicated issue.
- **Using the wrong form of communication.** Can you send a text or IM instead of calling? Along the same lines, email is better than instant message when an immediate response isn't required. Of course, if you need to have a difficult conversation with someone, picking up the phone or talking in person is best.
- **Taking multitasking to the extreme.** While it is generally acceptable to bring laptops and smartphones to meetings, you

still must be an active and attentive participant. Reign in the urge to surf the Web, update your Facebook status or check your email every minute. Also set your smartphone to vibrate or turn it off completely.

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