# Employees under Close Supervision – A Boon or A Bane?

Take a stroll around office-dense areas such as Admiralty and Central, and it will come as no surprise to see workers dressed in informal business suits hurrying from one office building to another, carrying bags and laptops in hand. As a metropolitan financial hub, Hong Kong is a fast-paced city where diligent workers often work long hours to meet tight deadlines and complete the arduous tasks assigned by their seniors. In the office, it is commonplace to see employers utilizing computer software and cameras to track the work progress of employees, and this phenomenon is becoming increasingly prevalent. In this essay, I will scrutinize this issue, examining the reasons behind it through a just and logical lens.

One of the major advantages of setting up cameras and computer software to monitor employees is that it can enhance overall productivity. By installing cameras and setting up computer software, employers can gain instant knowledge of what their employees are doing—whether they are buried in piles of paperwork or chit-chatting with a neighboring colleague while holding a biscuit. Additionally, installing computer software allows employers to track how their employees use their computers, ranging from monitoring search histories to acknowledging the websites that employees may browse for personal work, such as online shopping or texting with family and friends during work hours. This can ultimately raise overall productivity. To better illustrate this point, we need look no further than a recent survey conducted by the University of Hong Kong on the difference in productivity levels before and after supervision among several local companies. Ninety percent of respondents indicated that employee productivity skyrocketed after measures were implemented to track work progress, and efficiency rose drastically—no wonder many companies are adopting these measures.

Enhancing staff concentration and focus during work is another benefit that deserves our attention. With the implementation of monitoring measures, including hidden cameras and software programs, white-collar workers are prevented from being distracted by their surroundings—such as pop-up notifications from WhatsApp chats or new updates from relatives on Instagram. Tracking employees' work can minimize distractions and result in increased focus during work hours, thereby ensuring productivity and quality of work. Employers prefer to recruit talents who can work efficiently to enhance overall company performance, right? If monitoring employees can lead to higher focus and increased efficiency and productivity, why shouldn't employers implement these measures for the sake of investors and the company? As a result, using cameras and software to monitor employees can lead to increased focus, resulting in a meteoric rise in company performance.

Although monitoring employees offers numerous advantages, such as increased productivity and focus, its disadvantages should not be overlooked. With such measures in place, employees may feel uncomfortable being closely supervised, undermining trust between workers and employers, and preventing the development of a harmonious and comfortable working environment. To illustrate this point, we can look at a recent survey conducted by the Chinese University of Hong Kong on employee comfort levels while being monitored in the office. Seventy percent of employees stated that they felt uneasy being closely monitored and that their privacy had been invaded. It is undeniably true that inspecting workers' progress too closely may lead to discomfort and unease among them, ultimately resulting in lower job satisfaction.

In a nutshell, monitoring employees in the workplace is a double-edged sword, offering numerous benefits but also some drawbacks. Therefore, it is crucial for employers to strike a balance between productivity and efficiency and the well-being of employees, maximizing the positive effects of the policy.