

FACTS ABOUT TELECOMMUTING OR FLEXIBLE LOCATIONS

Telecommuting: Telecommuting includes working from a remote location at least some of the time.

What are the costs and challenges of telecommuting?

Six out of ten employers identify cost savings for implementing telecommuting (Global Workplace Analytics). Telecommuting is a promising practice for organizations, but there are a few caveats.

- It seems to work best with core employees, or full time, long-term employees.
- Like other flexible work arrangements, management must support it, but there is evidence to suggest telecommuting increases employee and organizational performance (Martinez-Sanchez, et al, 2008).
- Studies show that it has a positive impact on productivity, performance, job satisfaction and depression (Lautsch, B., et al, 2009; Martinez-Sanchez, et al, 2008).
- Perceptions of psychological control over flexibility also relate to lower work-family conflict, turnover, and depression (Kossek, E.E., et al 2006). It shows increased satisfaction with work-family balance only if clear boundaries are set.
- Although some studies show telecommuting to have positive impacts on turnover intentions, other studies find it to have no impact (Kossek, E.E., et al 2006).

What are the benefits of telecommuting?

The Remote Collaborative Worker Survey in 2015 found that teleworkers are more productive and less likely to take time off work – even when sick (Wright, A. 2015). Flexible work arrangements are increasing and can increase employee satisfaction and performance when implemented with thought and clear guidelines. Telework seems to have more positive impacts than other flexible work arrangements. In addition to some of the benefits of other flexible work arrangements, telecommuting is correlated with increased flexibility, increased performance, employee/employer satisfaction and economic savings (Martinez-Sanchez, et al. 2008). Despite the positive findings, fewer than 9% of workers say they telecommute up to half of the time in a typical month (Jones, J. 2015).

According to Global Workplace Analytics:

- 95% of employers say telework has a high impact on employee retention;
- 46% of organizations that permit telework say it reduces attrition;
- Teleworkers typically return to work faster following medical issues or surgery; and
- Several global companies said that telecommuting employees are more productive than their in-office counterparts (i.e. Compaq, American Express).

According to the 2015 Remote Collaborative Worker Survey:

- Telecommuters reported saving \$5,240 per year in expenses such as day care, transportations, lunch and dry cleaning;

- 50% said being able to work remotely at least some of the time makes them much more likely to stay with the company;
- Other benefits include personal satisfaction and better work/life balance; and
- Telecommuters also deploy more tech tools to help them better collaborate remotely, which could help the company as a whole.

Telework may be embraced more fully once Millennials make up the majority of the workplace. “They will want work/life balance,” and the Brookings Institution predicts they will comprise 75% of the workforce by 2025.

Sample Telecommuting Policies

Society for Human Resource Management:

https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/tools-and-samples/policies/pages/cms_000573.aspx

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