

Benefits

For Employees:

- ❖ Reduced stress
- ❖ More control over work environment
- ❖ Higher job satisfaction
- ❖ Higher level of productivity
- ❖ Better work/family balance for employees
- ❖ Savings on gasoline and other commuting costs
- ❖ Savings on time lost to commuting
- ❖ Accommodates emergency child-care situations
- ❖ Increased flexibility in residential location, often reducing the cost of living
- ❖ Allows employees to work when they are more productive; some employees are more productive during unconventional hours

For Employers:

- ❖ Additional recruitment tools
- ❖ Increased employee retention
- ❖ Staffing flexibility
- ❖ Reduced absenteeism
- ❖ Reduced overhead and occupancy costs
- ❖ Increased productivity
- ❖ Increased job satisfaction and morale
- ❖ Increased competitiveness
- ❖ Environmental benefits
- ❖ Improved accuracy in employee performance evaluations—because work is solely based on net productivity rather than on amount of hours worked
- ❖ Expanded labor pool as companies can recruit from a larger area

Telework also allows people with temporary or permanent disabilities the ability to work from home, greatly expanding the options and opportunities for employees with special needs or injuries.

Security

Companies put a great deal of resources toward network security by installing such products as firewalls and virus protection. Teleworkers can be a security risk if their equipment is not fully protected. However, it is possible for teleworking equipment to be completely secured. Each company should rely on IT support staff to tailor the security package for their particular needs.

Listed below are basic software and hardware security products available to teleworkers...

- ❖ Anti-virus Software
- ❖ Spyware Removal Tools
- ❖ Hardware/Software Firewall
- ❖ Encryption Software
- ❖ Online Security Assessment
- ❖ Secure the Operating System
- ❖ Secure the Wireless Network
- ❖ Secure the Web Browser

For more information about telework go to...

www.telecommute.org
www.gilgordon.org
www.ivc.ca

These companies are a few of the employers that offer the telework option in RTP:

Cisco Systems
GlaxoSmithKline
IBM
NIEHS
Research Triangle Foundation
RTI International
US-EPA-RTP

SmartCommute@RTP

2 Hanes Drive
P.O. Box 12255
RTP, NC 27709
TEL: 919-549-8181
FAX: 919-549-8246

SMARTCOMMUTE@RTP

THE SMART WAY TO WORK



The Basics of Telecommuting

Telework/Telecommute: a work agreement between an employee and a supervisor that allows an employee to perform assigned duties at an alternative site during some or all of his/her regularly scheduled work hours.

www.smartcommute.org
Email: smartcommute@rtp.or
Tel: 919.549.8181

The Facts

The number of employed Americans who telework, with a frequency of as few as one day a year to full time, grew from 41.3 million in 2003 to 44.4 million in 2004, a **7.5% growth rate**.

The Dieringer Research Group

Between 2003 and 2004, the amount of employers who offered compressed workweeks rose 10%, job sharing rose by 26%, and **telecommuting increased by 22% in the U.S.**

CTA (Canadian Telework Association)

An Oct. 2000 survey by The Gallop Organization and Opinion Research Corporation found that U.S. **teleworkers have 22-45% higher productivity levels** than at-office counterparts.

CTA

The 2004 Flexible Working Survey, by Netilla Networks, questioned U.S. commuters about telecommuting and found...

- ❖ 80% claim it would make their life **less stressful**,
- ❖ 74% claim it would **enhance their relationship** with their partner,
- ❖ 70% felt if they were trusted to work in a flexible environment their **productivity would improve**, and
- ❖ 67% said telework would make them **more loyal to their employer**.

CTA

The Fishwrap Telecommuting Index reported that the 19.6 million U.S. telecommuters in Jan. 2001 would **reduce greenhouse gas** emissions by 39,000 tons of hydrocarbons; 590,000 tons of carbon monoxide; and 31,000 tons of nitrogen oxide each day they did not drive to work.

CTA

Eligibility

Who Should Telework?

Tasks that are most appropriate to teleworking are jobs where an employee often works alone, processes information, handles such products as proposals and reports, or conducts research. Some examples of positions that are often compatible with telework include programmers, graphic artists, researchers, engineers, public relations professionals, accountants, etc.

Cautions

Teleworking is not for everyone...

- ❖ Some employees miss the social atmosphere of working in a traditional office setting.
- ❖ There is a potential to bring additional work related stress into the home environment.
- ❖ Employees may feel afraid that opportunities for advancement will be lost due to telecommuting.
- ❖ There is a potential for interruptions by neighbors and family who do not understand or may not respect the home office environment.
- ❖ Initial expenses in setting up the home office may be large.
- ❖ Equipment and technology problems may be harder to solve at home than in an office that has an IT support staff.
- ❖ There is a potential for working more hours per week than are contracted because work-life is intertwined with home-life.
- ❖ Other employees at the office may become resentful of telecommuters if they do not understand the conditions of telework.

How to get started

Keep in mind that managers of teleworkers as well as employees that plan to telework will each benefit from telework training. One way to ensure that managers feel comfortable with allowing staff to telecommute is to have a formal written agreement. Unstructured telework programs can be up to five times more expensive than formal programs.

Before initiating a telework program, administrators should review and evaluate each position to determine if it is compatible with telecommuting. Once eligibility is decided, the terms of telecommuting should be written into the job description of each position. Also, it should be stated clearly in the employment policies that the arrangement could be terminated if it no longer meets the company's needs or if the employee's performance suffers.

Keep in mind that teleworking does not have to be full time. Many telecommuters continue to spend two to three days a week in the central office. Each teleworking employee will need to establish a system of separating the workload into work that can be done at home and work that should be carried out in the office. Also, meetings should be scheduled on the days that telecommuting employees are expected to be at the office.

Managers that are most suited to supervise telecommuters are usually good communicators who value results over appearances and trust their employees. If necessary, start small. Establish a pilot telework program that is limited to one department. After a trial period, evaluate the program to determine if it is applicable on a larger scale.