

Telework Employees

Introduction to Telework

Telework may be an attractive work-style option for you. Eliminating a long commute; adding flexibility to help you balance work and personal life; and, reducing workplace distractions may all be part of this attraction. And you may be convinced that you'll be able to perform certain job functions more effectively from a home office.

But before you approach your supervisor with a work-at-home proposal, do some self-assessment. Ask yourself some hard questions - and make sure your answers are honest. Keep in mind that with teleworking, as with everything else in life, there can be advantages and disadvantages. Being aware of the potential downsides makes you more prepared to deal with problems if they arise. Your success as a teleworker depends on being realistic and being prepared for the good and the bad.

Ask yourself the following questions:

- Do I have the experience and skill to work on my own, without close supervision?
- Am I self-disciplined, with good work habits?
- Do I need to interact face-to-face with others in the office to get my work done?
- Would I miss seeing people during the day?
- Which of my job functions could be done from home? Can these functions be scheduled on a telework day?
- How would my customers and co-workers be affected?
- Do I have a strong motivation to telework? A desire to avoid stressful commute; a need for a flexible work arrangement in order to better balance the demands of work and family?
- Is my home conducive to work? Not too noisy, not too many distractions?
- Is there a place at home I can set up as a dedicated work area?

Employee Benefits

To many individuals, telework may be an appealing employment option. Certainly, telework has a lot of benefits to offer a hard-working employee: saving time usually spent commuting, workplace and time-management flexibility, eliminating distractions from colleagues, and an increase in empowerment and morale.

However, telework is not advantageous for all employees. If you are seriously considering telework, you should begin with an evaluation of your telework potential. If telework is not harmonious with your job or job tasks, the potential disadvantages may become overwhelming and unproductive. A productive teleworker must be educated about the pros and cons of telework and also aware of their personal strengths and weaknesses.

Consider the following:

Are my job functions suitable to teleworking?

Am I able to use my time productively, without constant supervision?

Am I motivated? Self-confident? Independent?

Are my communication skills adequate?

Can I adjust to new conditions easily?

Am I capable of solving problems as they arise without guidance?

Do I have the necessary IT competence to use the necessary technology?

Is there room for a suitable workplace in the home?

Am I capable of being objective about my effectiveness teleworking?

Employee Tips

In telework, you will experience less structure and more freedom in your work. Telework requires a substantial amount of self-discipline. Here are some suggestions for making telework successful:

Organization:

- Create an efficient and effective work location.
- Establish a routine and follow it.
- Set objectives and track your progress.

Self-Management:

- Schedule your tasks.
- Establish a plan for your work day.
- Contact your office regularly.
- Set deadlines.
- Inform supervisors of your work status.
- Attend meetings at the office.

Home:

- Keep family and friends aware of your responsibility as an employee.
- Minimize distractions.
- Set guidelines for acceptable interruptions.
- Do not attempt to combine telework and childcare.

Good Habits:

- Work at a reasonable pace.
- Avoid temptations.
- Work at increasing your level of performance.