

## EFFECTIVE WORKPLACE SERIES

## WORK-FAMILY INFORMATION ON: TELEWORK

SUPPORTED BY:  
THE ALFRED P. SLOAN FOUNDATIONCOMPILED BY:  
JUDI CASEY, MSW AND SARAH MORRISONSLOAN WORK AND FAMILY  
RESEARCH NETWORK  
BOSTON COLLEGE

WWW.BC.EDU/WFNETWORK

## WHY IS TELEWORK AN IMPORTANT ISSUE?

"Sun's Open Work program enables a mobile, agile and distributed workforce and has had a very positive effect on our employee satisfaction scores. Employees tell us that being able to focus on work and family responsibilities at the same time reduces worry and increases their productivity. Open Work also helps our bottom line by reducing the amount of real estate needed to house our employees and is a catalyst for continuous improvement of our IT infrastructure." **Cathy Guilbeault; Sr. Director, Americas; Workplace Resources, Sun Microsystems, Inc.**



## WHAT IS TELEWORK?

Telework is one type of alternative work arrangement in which an employee works outside of the office (often at home), part or all of the time. Typically, employees use telecommunications technology to communicate with their coworkers, customers, and clients. Although some teleworkers have flexible schedules, others are expected to adhere to a fixed schedule in which, for example, they may work Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

## Want more related DEFINITIONS?

[http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic\\_extended.php?id=4&type=6&area=business](http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic_extended.php?id=4&type=6&area=business)

## WHAT ARE THE BUSINESS BENEFITS OF TELEWORK?

- Increase productivity and job satisfaction
- Expand workforce participation to include, for example, workers with disabilities
- Save money on expensive office space and real estate costs
- Improve worker morale and well-being
- Lower turnover
- Reduce absenteeism costs
- Heighten loyalty and commitment
- Earn tax credits for reducing pollution and traffic congestion



## DID YOU KNOW?

- According to the Bureau of Labor, "29.8% of managers and professionals reported performing telework" (Employment Policy Foundation, 2004, p. 2).
- "If the 40% of employees who could work from home did so half of the time (approximately the national average) it would reduce Gulf Oil dependence by almost 60% and save Americans \$40 billion at the pumps" (Harnish, 2009, p. 237).
- "In 2005, people identified as 'employed teleworkers' were 4.1 times as likely to say that they conducted work while on vacation as all Americans in general" (WorldatWork, 2007, p. 5).
- "The number of Americans whose employer allows them to work from home at least one day per month increased to 12.4 million in 2006, up from approximately 9.9 million in 2005... The rise represents a 25-percent one-year increase, and a 63-percent two-year increase" (WorldatWork, 2007, p. 2).
- "Three quarters of teleworkers say they could continue to work in the event of a disaster compared with just 28% of non-teleworkers" (CDW, 2007, p. 37).

## Want more STATISTICS or the full references for above statistics?

[http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic\\_extended.php?id=4&type=1&area=business](http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic_extended.php?id=4&type=1&area=business)

## HOW CAN TELEWORK BENEFIT EMPLOYEES?

- Less likely to feel physically and emotionally drained at the end of the day
- Better able to take care of their children and elderly relatives or to tend to other family-related issues
- More productive due to fewer distractions
- Able to eliminate commuting time



## REPORTS WITH MORE INFORMATION

- Employment Policy Foundation. (2004, March 11). Telework: Part of the work-life balance equation. *The Balancing Act Newsletter*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved May 25, 2009, from [http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/downloads/EPF/EPF\\_Telework.pdf](http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/downloads/EPF/EPF_Telework.pdf)
- Halamka, J. (2008, March 18). *How I learned to stop worrying and love telecommuting*. Framingham, MA: CIO. Retrieved April 8, 2008, from <http://www.cio.com/article/print/197800>
- Kolman, J. (2008, March). It's time to telework [Online exclusive]. *State Legislatures: The National Magazine of Policy and Politics*. Washington, DC: National Conference of State Legislatures. Retrieved April 8, 2008, from [http://www.ncsl.org/magazine/articles/2008/08SLMaro8\\_Telework.htm](http://www.ncsl.org/magazine/articles/2008/08SLMaro8_Telework.htm)
- WorldatWork. (2007). *Telework trendlines for 2006: 2007 survey brief*. Retrieved February 12, 2008, from [http://www.workingfromanywhere.org/news/Trendlines\\_2006.pdf](http://www.workingfromanywhere.org/news/Trendlines_2006.pdf)

## Want more OVERVIEWS AND BRIEFS or the full references for these reports?

[http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic\\_extended.php?id=4&type=7&area=business](http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic_extended.php?id=4&type=7&area=business)



## SUGGESTED READINGS

- Buttazzoni, M., Rossi, A., Pamlin, D., & Pahlma, S. (2009). From workplace to anyplace: Assessing the global opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions with virtual meetings and telecommuting. Washington, DC: World Wildlife Fund. Retrieved May 25, 2009, from <http://www.worldwildlife.org/who/media/press/2009/WWFBinaryitem11939.pdf>
- Gajendren, R. S., & Harrison, D. A. (2007). The good, the bad, and the unknown about telecommuting: Meta-analysis of psychological mediators and individual consequences. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 92, 1524-1541.
- Golden, T. (2007). Co-workers who telework and the impact on those in the office: Understanding the implications of virtual work for co-worker satisfaction and turnover intentions. *Human Relations*, 60, 1641-1667
- Kossek, E. E., Lautsch, B. A. & Eaton, S. C. (2006). Telecommuting, control, and boundary management: Correlates of policy use and practice, job control, and work-family effectiveness. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 68, 347-367.
- Robert, M., & Borjesson, M. (2006). Company incentives and tools for promoting telecommunication. *Environment and Behavior*, 38, 521-549.

## Want more READINGS?

[http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic\\_extended.php?id=4&type=2&linktype=suggested&area=business](http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic_extended.php?id=4&type=2&linktype=suggested&area=business)

The Effective Workplace Series provides a summary of the Telework Topic Page.

To visit the Telework Topic Page, go to <http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic.php?id=4&area=business>