

# Motivational Factors of Telework

Arlene J. Nicholas

Salve Regina University, USA

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses telework as a motivational option for workers and employers. Telework can be performed as a supplemental or a full-time employment opportunity for local, regional or global work. Teleworkers must be self-starters, able to work with minimal supervision, and, in some cases, rely on technological communications for professional interactions. Teleworkers can enjoy flexibility for work and personal responsibilities (Greer & Payne, 2014) while organizations can gain more satisfied productive employees (Bloom, 2014; Caillier, 2014). An overview of telework's motivational benefits, incentives, and organizational examples for both employees and management are identified.

## BACKGROUND

Telework is a growing method of employment with a variety of benefits. Telework enables work from anywhere, anytime through information commu-

nication technologies (ICT) (Garett & Danziger, 2006). A recent Gallup poll of 1011 adults in the U.S. shows a steady increase in telework, with a short term dip caused by the 2008 economic crash (see Figure 1) (Jones, 2015).

Forbes analyzed 40,000 jobs posted on Flexjobs 2015 to create the Top 100 Companies for Remote Jobs list (See Appendix A). The 36% increase of listings from the previous year included jobs in IT, medical and health, sales, administration, customer service, education and training, and marketing (Shin, 2016). The variation of jobs permitting telework include full time, part time, contract and seasonal workers. Unexpected were some positions, such as Director of Community Advancement - full time, Physiotherapist - part time, Expert Wellness Coach - part time, and Vice President of Communications and Development - full time (FlexJobs, 2016). Other recently posted positions are listed in Table 1.

Many jobs can be a fit for telework which is considered one of those best practices that allows employees flexible options for improved work/life balance. For organizations, telework is a savvy

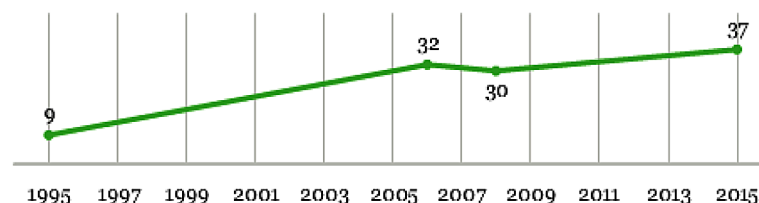
Figure 1. Increase of teleworking

Source: Gallup Education and Work poll August 5 - 9, 2015

*Have you ever telecommuted, that is, worked from your home using a computer to communicate for your job?*

Based on employed adults

■ % Yes



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Table 1. May 2016 Listings (partial list)

Position	Telecommute	Duties	Worker Location
Farm Food Safety Manager	Full Time	Develop criteria for assurance & assessment of farm practices to ensure food safety	Anywhere in US
Notary	Part Time	Reviewing, signing, & notarizing documents	Must work in City or State specified
Production Assistant Multicultural Marketing	Freelance for Contract	US Latin American culture & editing software knowledge	Must work in City or State specified
Assistant Architectural Historian	Seasonal	Supports projects through historical research	Must work in City or State specified
Managing Editor	Full Time	Manage city-level writers, perform researching, & edit articles & features	Anywhere in US

Source: FlexJobs, 2016

strategic management plan (Kowalski & Swanson, 2005). Telework brings increased benefits to both the employer and the employee (see Table 2).

## TELEWORKERS

The number of teleworkers is growing in most sectors every year. A breakdown of organizations using telework was done by GlobalWorkplace-Analytics (2016) based on data from 2005 to 2014 of U.S. telework population. In those nine years, except for occasional small drops in government workers, such as 2013 which rebounded in 2014, all other organizations experienced growth. Table 3 depicts the figures from 2012 – 2014.

According to the Telework Advisory Group of World at Work, the representative teleworker is a college educated 40 year old male working from home. And although this credible not for

profit organization of 30,000 members in 100 countries, founded in 1995, reported that people who worked remotely one day a month declined, the number working more than one day a month increased (Telework 2011, 2011). Teleworkers often include knowledge workers, a term coined by management author Peter Drucker, who are occupied with analysis and manipulation of data as opposed to production (Knowledge worker, 2010). Today's technology has enabled knowledge workers to work remotely from anywhere in the world be it at home, an offsite office or telecenter, or even a coffee shop. Improved ICT, personal incentives and even employer encouragement will add to the number of teleworkers.

## Legislation

In March of 2010, a House subcommittee approved legislation to promote telework in Federal

Table 2. Telework benefits

Organizational	Employee	Societal
Productivity	Savings	Work opportunities
Retention/attraction	Flexibility	disabled, homebound, distant
Virtual Workplace	Work/life Balance	Ecological – less car pollution
24 hour cycle	Some autonomy	Environmental
Continuity	Job satisfaction	less traffic congestion

(Caillier, 2014; GII, 2008; Rhodes, 2009; Telework=better, 2009; Urserly, 2003)

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