

Is Telecommuting Right for You?

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Table of Contents

What is Telecommuting? 1

What Positions are Appropriate for Telecommuting?..... 1

Who are the Best Candidates for Telecommuting Positions? 1

Are You the Right Candidate for a Telecommuting Position? 1

 Do you have an appropriate workspace? 1

 Do you have work distractors? 2

 Do you have the right temperament? 2

Other Available Articles 2

Is Telecommuting Right for You?

With the price of gas, the stress and time involved in commuting, and life's demands, telecommuting is becoming more attractive to many of us. Know, however, that telecommuting is not for every company or worker.

The concept of telecommuting has been around for decades. Serious research about its viability started in the 1980s and continues today. With the improvements in technology and in understanding how to make telecommuting successful, telecommuting is becoming more viable for more positions.

What is Telecommuting?

Telecommuting is the act of working at a location other than the company's location; usually the worker's home. The opportunity may be part-time or full-time and may be allowed for employees and / or contract workers.

What Positions are Appropriate for Telecommuting?

Telecommuting is ideal for jobs that require reading, writing, research, working with data, and talking on the phone.

Companies often decide the appropriateness of the position based upon the amount of interaction the worker needs to perform, or the physical limitations of the position.

Who are the Best Candidates for Telecommuting Positions?

Companies often review individuals to determine if workers are appropriate candidates for a telecommute position. Companies look for well-organized workers who can work independently and require minimal supervision. Successful telecommuters have a high degree of job skill and knowledge, and strong time-management skills. Often companies start workers out as part-time telecommuters to ensure that the new working arrangement is agreeable to both the company and the worker.

Are You the Right Candidate for a Telecommuting Position?

Before you seek a telecommuting position, ask yourself these questions. Be honest with yourself as these questions really will help you determine if telecommuting is right for you. You may want to discuss the answers to these questions with your supervisor and start slow as a part-time teleworker.

Do you have an appropriate workspace?

- Do you have a dedicated space where company equipment can be placed or installed?
- Is this space away from household interruptions during working hours?
- Will equipment, documents, and other work materials be safe?
- Do you have high-speed Internet access?

Do you have work distractors?

- If you have children, do you have childcare available away from the workspace during work hours?
- If you have pets, will they be a disruption during work hours?

Do you have the right temperament?

- Do you have good time management skills?
- Are you well organized?
- Can you work with little supervision?
- Can you tell family and friends to respect your time while you are working? Watch out for short visits to Facebook, texting, and phone calls.
- Do you need social interaction with others during your work day? It is amazing how quiet and lonely telecommuting can be if you need social interaction.
- Are you focused and disciplined enough to perform work tasks in the same way that you would sitting at a desk at the company?
- Are you good at staying connected with others when you can't see them? Some companies complain that teleworkers can "go dark" on them. That is, they stop communicating with them.
- Can you walk away from the job at the end of the day? Many people find that they end up working longer hours because their desk is present 24 hours a day. You need to be able to set and keep regular work hours.

Some of these factors for success can be developed over time. Others are unlikely to emerge if they are not part of your basic make-up. But with discipline and a desire to cut the strings with the commuting world, you can be a successful telecommuter.

Other Available Articles

- Search for and identify Good Telecommute Positions
- How do I apply for a telecommute position?