

Workplace Flexibility and Telecommuting

Workplace Flexibility and Telecommuting have become increasingly popular among workers because both options help them to balance full time work and other responsibilities.

While workplace flexibility and telecommuting are two separate ideas, they have many similarities. Both provide the option of working in or out of the office at different times.

Workplace Flexibility

- 70 percent of families with children in 1960 had a parent (usually a mom) home full-time. Today, 70 percent of all families are headed either by two employed parents or a single parent who is in the workforce.*
- Productivity of working parents suffers as a result of stress caused by inflexible jobs and inadequate after-school options.*

* Information according to *A Real Mother's Day Gift: Flexibility, Economic Security, and a Good Night's Sleep* by Karen Kornbluh



What is Workplace Flexibility?

Workplace flexibility is when employees have the option to work both in and out of the office. There are several examples of this type of flexibility:

- Jobs that don't require you to work a "normal" work day (from 9 am to 5 pm).
- Job sharing, where two or more people share a job designed for one person.
- Salary paid positions that do not require you to come in at certain times during the week.

To get started, Check with your current employer on whether there is a workplace flexibility policy.

Telecommuting

- An estimated 17 million teleworkers work from home at least once a month.*
- A much larger number (29 million in 1999) are "day-extendors," catching up on reading, email, and other tasks from home instead of staying longer at the office.*
- Some 8 million full-time workers, work from home locations all the time.*

* Statistics taken from eworkingwomen.com

What is Telecommuting?

Telecommuting is working from outside of the office made possible by technology. It is a form of workplace flexibility that allows employees to make their own flexible schedule. It also requires a lot of motivation. As technology has become easier to use and more readily available, telecommuting has become a popular way of working.

To telecommute from your current job:

If you're already working in a job, and want to start telecommuting, you need to find a way to convince your employer that telecommuting will help you do more work or better work. It will also help reduce the need for office space along while attracting and retaining a high quality workforce.

To find a new job:

In order to find a job that will allow you to telecommute, you must first evaluate yourself and your skills and begin searching for jobs that match your expertise. Once you are hired, you may have to work in the office for a while to build a trust level, and then suggest working from home.

Often if you have the appropriate skills, you may be able to find a telecommuting job right away. However, the company may require that you spend time training in the office before being able to telecommute.

Book Resources:

Work+Life: Finding the Fit That's Right For You (April 2004)
by Cali Williams Yost

Telecommuting Success: A Practical Guide for Staying in the Loop While Working Away from the Office (February 2001)
by Michael Dziak, forward by Gil Gordon

Momprenuers: A Mother's Practical Step by Step Guide to Work at Home Success (June 2002)
by Patricia Cobe, Ellen H. Parlapiano

Web Resources:

The Dept. of Labor Women's Bureau

The Flex-Options for Women program and web site offers a simple yet thorough Flex-Options Guide as well as a resource center and tool kit.

Visit the Women's Bureau site online at www.dol.gov/wb and click on the Flex-Options for Women logo, or call the Women's Bureau at 1-800-827-5335.

Women Entrepreneurs Inc.

www.we-inc.org/flex.html

e-working Working Women

www.eworkingwomen.com/experts/telecommute.html

Quintessential Careers

This website gives advice as well as ways for women to obtain telecommuting jobs:
www.quintcareers.com/telecommute_jobs.html.

Mommy's Place

This website is very informative and gives a variety of tips concerning finding employment from home.
www.mommysplace.net/what_is_telecommuting.html

Women's Career Center

www.jobsearchtech.about.com/cs/womencareer/

National Partnership for Women and Families

This website includes links to information concerning legislation that can help working women. Visit them online at:
<http://www.nationalpartnership.org/Default.aspx?tabid=48>