


# frequently asked questions about telework/hybrid schedules



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The following pages provides easy to read definitions and frequently asked questions about telework and hybrid schedules.

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## telework

- + Telework/Telecommute refers to the option of working from home or another employer-approved location to eliminate or reduce the commute to work, typically 1-4 times a week. Telework can serve as a business strategy to enhance productivity, improve recruitment and retention, reduce absenteeism and overhead costs, and decrease traffic congestion and emissions.

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## hybrid

- + Hybrid is a post-pandemic term that refers to a work schedule allowing employees to telework for one to four days a week. In a hybrid model, either the employer designates specific days for in-office work, or the employee chooses which days to work remotely and which to be present in the office.



# frequently asked questions about telework/hybrid schedules

## **What types of jobs are appropriate for teleworking or hybrid schedules?**

Most “information-based” jobs are appropriate for teleworking. Teleworking is ideal for jobs that require reading, writing, research, analysis, working with data and talking on the phone. Many jobs that may not seem appropriate at first may be modified so that the employees can telework, at least on a part-time basis.

## **Which employees are ideal for teleworking or hybrid schedules?**

The ideal teleworker is well-organized, able to work independently and requires minimal supervision. Successful teleworkers have a high degree of job skill and knowledge and strong time management skills. Teleworkers don't mind working alone. Teleworking is not ideal or desirable for every employee.

## **What are some of the issues that managers confront with teleworkers or hybrid employees?**

Some managers of teleworkers have a problem with the concept of employees working from home or at another location. They fear that their employees may be distracted with household duties and/or dependent care and unable to accomplish their work, when, in fact, it seems to be the exact opposite. Managers can expect more productivity and a higher quality of work from teleworkers who are less stressed and distracted in their flexible work environment.

## **How do I know if the teleworkers or hybrid workers are really working?**

The employee's completed work product is the indicator. Telemanagers must focus on quantity, quality and timeliness. They must manage by objectives or results, rather than by direct observation.

## **Who is the ideal manager for supervising teleworkers or hybrid workers?**

The ideal manager of teleworkers (telemanager) has a positive attitude towards teleworking and is willing to allow employees to telework. A telemanager manages by results and not by monitoring work hours. Telemanagers delegate work easily, are well organized and trust their employees. Not every manager is comfortable with a style of management that is conducive to successful teleworking.

## **How will managers know how to supervise teleworkers or hybrid workers?**

Teleworking presents an opportunity for telemanagers to become better supervisors. By focusing on the employee's work product, telemanagers will improve their organizational abilities and their own skill in managing by objectives.

## **Will employees work less if they are at home working unsupervised?**

No, survey results showed marked improvements in productivity. Productivity increases because employees have fewer distractions and interruptions, work at their peak times and experience less stress due to the absence of the commute to work.

## **Will loyalty to the company be diminished?**

No, loyalty is likely to improve as employees are happier with their working conditions. Employee morale also improves because of teleworking.



### **How can social interaction be maintained to keep teleworkers from feeling isolated from their colleagues?**

Many techniques are available to overcome the feeling of isolation. These include part-time teleworking, core days in the office and frequent communication via telephone, voice-mail, e-mail and web conferencing. In addition, teleworkers should be included in all scheduled meetings and events electronically or in person.

### **Is teleworking a substitute for child- or elder-care?**

No, a teleworker must focus on his or her job, not handle demanding child- or elder-care situations. However, due to their flexibility, teleworkers are better able to manage their work/family schedules.

### **Can teleworking result in reduced use of sick leave?**

Yes. An employee working in a regular office usually uses half a day to go to the doctor or dentist appointment. A teleworker can take one or two hours and then return to work. In addition, often an employee that does not feel well enough to drive or whose child is sick may work some hours at home.

### **Will the need for overtime decrease as a result of teleworking?**

For non-exempt employees, the rules for overtime are the same as they are in the office. Please refer to your HR handbook for guidance.

### **What are some of the issues that teleworkers should be aware of?**

Teleworkers should designate a work area for teleworking in their homes. A separate room provides greater privacy but is not necessarily required. Teleworkers must gain the trust and support of their families, coworkers, clients and managers. Teleworkers need to be aware of the tendency to work long hours and the need to take breaks.