

Work Away
Telework Survey Results
August 2004



Work Away Telework Survey August 2004

Key Findings

The Work Away - Telework August 2004 Survey was designed to gather information regarding the success, satisfaction, and possible improvements to the telework program in Georgia state government. This is the first statewide survey since Governor Sonny Perdue announced the Work Away initiative on September 9, 2003. The survey was distributed to a random sample of 486 employees from various agencies and 274 responses (56%) were received.

The audiences responding to the survey were:

- 185 Teleworker (not manager)
- 89 Telemanagers (managers of teleworkers)
 - 69 who telework
 - 20 who do not telework

274 Total respondents

Telemanagers reported that their teleworkers:

- Are more or similarly productive as those who do not telework
- Are more or similarly as productive as they were before they began teleworking
- Generally require the same or less supervision as they did before they began teleworking
- Have either the same or slightly less time to interact with coworkers

Additionally, when asked if teleworkers are more difficult to evaluate, 88% of telemanagers reported no change in difficulty.

Among all teleworking respondents (254), the satisfaction with the positive aspects of teleworking, i.e., decreased commuting time, less frequent interruptions, ability to have more time at home, saving money, and increased work productivity was 95% and above. Satisfaction with decreased leave usage was less significant.

Improvement with quality of life was reported by 92% of all teleworkers. Increased work productivity on telework days was reported by 97%.

Survey participants were asked to write in other positive aspects that attracted them to telework. The most frequent responses were related to stress reduction, relief from traffic, increased productivity, control over work environment, noise reduction, air quality, decrease in personal vehicle use, and issues related to clothing (cost savings, casual attire, etc.).

Of the 157 written suggestions on program improvement, most were on program expansion, requests for increase in number of allowable telework days by agencies, and technology improvements.

Respondents were given text space for additional comments. Most of the 109 comments were in support of the program and general appreciation for the opportunity to telework.

The Survey

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Please select one of the following	
	Percent
I am a teleworker (not a manager).	68%
I am a telemanager who does not telework.	7%
I am a telemanager who teleworks.	25%
	100%
TELEMANAGERS*	
Of all the employees I supervise, the number of teleworkers are _____.	
Response	Percent
1 to 5	81%
6 to 10	11%
11 to 15	2%
16 to 20	1%
More than 20	0%
No response	4%
	100%
I supervise ____ employees.	
Response	Percent
1 to 5	60%
6 to 10	22%
11 to 15	9%
16 to 20	2%
More than 20	7%
No response	0%
	100%

My employees who telework are ___ as those who do not telework.	
Response	Percent
More productive	47%
Similarly productive	46%
Less productive	1%
No response	6%
	100%
My employees who telework use ___ as before they began teleworking.	
Response	Percent
More leave	1%
Same amount of leave	55%
Less leave	38%
No response	6%
	100%
My teleworkers require ___ as they did before they began teleworking.	
Response	Percent
More supervision	1%
Same supervision	72%
Less supervision	19%
No response	8%
	100%
My teleworkers have ___ to interact with coworkers.	
Response	Percent
More time	8%
Same time	62%
Less time	24%
No response	7%
	100%
My teleworkers accept their share of unexpected tasks.	
Response	Percent
Yes	92%
No	1%
No response	7%
	100%

Teleworkers are more difficult to evaluate.	
Response	Percent
More difficult	3%
No change	88%
Less difficult	3%
No response	6%
	100%
My employees who telework are _ as they were before they began teleworking.	
Response	Percent
More productive	45%
Similarly productive	49%
Less productive	0%
No response	6%
	100%
TELEWORKERS*	
When you decided to telework, what were the positive aspects that attracted you? Mark all that apply.	
Response	Percent
Decreased commuting time	92%
Less frequent interruptions	88%
Ability to have more time at home	39%
Saving money	61%
Increased work productivity	85%
Decreased leave usage	24%
No response	1%
Now that you have been teleworking, how pleased are you with the following six aspects?	
Decreased commuting time	
Response	Percent
Very pleased	87%
Pleased	11%
Displeased	0%
Very displeased	0%
No response	2%
	100%

Less frequent interruptions

Response	Percent
Very pleased	74%
Pleased	26%
Displeased	0%
Very displeased	0%
No response < 1%	1%
	100%

Ability to have more time at home

Response	Percent
Very pleased	50%
Pleased	46%
Displeased	0%
Very displeased	0%
No response	4%
	100%

Saving money

Response	Percent
Very pleased	59%
Pleased	36%
Displeased	0%
Very displeased	0%
No response	5%
	100%

Increased work productivity

Response	Percent
Very pleased	75%
Pleased	23%
Displeased	0%
Very displeased	0%
No response	2%
	100%

Decreased leave usage

Response	Percent
Very pleased	33%
Pleased	56%
Displeased	3%
Very displeased	0%
No response	9%
	100%

Please mark responses to the following statements.

My quality of life has improved with telework.	
Response	Percent
Strongly Agree	46%
Agree	46%
Disagree	4%
Strongly disagree	0%
No response	3%
	100%
My work productivity has improved with telework.	
Response	Percent
Strongly Agree	58%
Agree	39%
Disagree	1%
Strongly disagree	0%
No response	2%
	100%
I am able to have more time at home.	
Response	Percent
Strongly Agree	39%
Agree	54%
Disagree	2%
Strongly disagree	0%
No response	4%
	100%
I save more money when I telework.	
Response	Percent
Strongly Agree	49%
Agree	46%
Disagree	2%
Strongly disagree	0%
No response	2%
	100%
I increase work productivity on telework days.	
Response	Percent
Strongly Agree	66%
Agree	31%
Disagree	1%
Strongly disagree	0%
No response	3%
	100%

I use less leave time.	
Response	Percent
Strongly Agree	23%
Agree	47%
Disagree	21%
Strongly disagree	2%
No response	6%
	100%

* * *Telemanagers who do not telework responded to the first ten items; Telemanagers who do telework responded to the entire survey; and Teleworkers who are not managers responded to the first item, then item 11 to end. All respondents were encouraged to comment.*

Comments*

General Comments About Teleworking

- Great program for the State. It increases worker productivity, employee morale, and helps fight pollution. Taxpayers' dollars are saved through this program.
- Thank you for trying to help ease the traffic situation and eliminating the frustration of commuting.
- The telework program has increased my job satisfaction. I find that I am very productive when I work from home. In addition, my computer is much better [than the one in the office]. It's nice to know that I get to avoid traffic one day a week.
- I have been pleasantly surprised at the increased productivity since I began teleworking. I did not realize how many interruptions I had during the day.
- Teleworking has been a fantastic fit personally and for my agency. I am far more productive on my telework days (due to fewer interruptions I am better able to focus on tasks), and I find that skipping my 2 hour a day commute actually give me more energy, even on days that I come into the office.
- The long commute takes a toll on me both physically and mentally. Teleworking has had an extremely positive impact on my productivity and my attitude. Thank you for the opportunity to telework!

- That management trusts me to be productive at home, without being directly monitored.
- Less driving = less pollution, traffic congestion, wear and tear on car. I can walk at lunch in less congested area.
- More control of my work environment.
- Close proximity for emergencies for my small children.
- It has helped my relationship with my kids. I am able to see them play their respective after school sports.
- Teleworking eliminates at least 3 hours a day in my car and I can spend more quality time with my husband and daughter.
- My stress level was so high that I was being treated by a physician. I have been teleworking for the past few months and am no longer on medication. It has amazed me how much better things are. Thank you, Governor Perdue!
- Keep up the good work and efforts to maintain a healthier workforce.
- I would not have continued working with state government if it had not been for the teleworking option. I live too far away to drive in daily, and there is really no need to do so.
- My own personal combination of an alternative workweek and teleworking provides me with a very nice mix of time with my colleagues at work, time to myself to work productively with few interruptions at home, and long weekends. I also appreciate the fact that I am commuting much less, helping with the environment and saving some of the money I spend on lunch. Thank you!
- The time at home and \$\$\$ savings are insignificant compared to the convenience of not having to dress up, make up, crank up, fuel up and show up! I appreciate having a little flexibility and hope to utilize telecommuting more in the future.
- Being able to telework as much as possible feels like a raise when you don't have to buy gas.
- Work Away, fully utilized, is the best thing that has ever happened for State of Georgia employees; especially in the Atlanta area where traffic and commute time is horrendous.
- I would like to thank anyone and everyone for this opportunity. I have been with state government for 28 years and this is the one thing that has made a huge improvement in my professional and personal life.

- I've worked for the State of Georgia for 32 years. I have not found state government to be very progressive in many areas. In terms of the environment, traffic congestion, energy costs and productivity, teleworking is the best idea the State of Georgia has ever developed. Expansion to more employees and for more days is the next step.
- Thank you for trying this innovation in state government.

Suggestions for Improvement

- Encourage more participation.
- Increase the number of days and hours that employees can telework
 - Especially where productivity has increased
 - As long as teleworkers have work that is measurable
- Make sure that more managers are “in the program” and informed about teleworking.
- Take steps to overcome manager’s distrust of their subordinates’ telecommuting.
- Look at making certain jobs exclusively telework positions. This would be a great recruitment/retention tool.
- Some managers are under the impression that you can only telework a day or so per week. They look at telework as a day off instead of a day at another work site. More training for managers of teleworkers would increase the number of teleworkers and have a positive impact on employees.
- Look at ways that Work Away could be developed into an extensive, labor-attracting program that would be used to develop jobs, especially in rural counties with high unemployment rates.
- Offer better technology services to link home and office.
- Promote teleconferencing in place of face-to-face meetings.
- Offer a tax benefit for those who telework since they are not adding to the ozone, traffic congestion, gas consumption, etc.

**The above represents a sample of comments received. As noted in the Key Findings, many of the comments were similar in nature. For additional information, send an email to workaway@gms.state.ga.us.*