

2013

Can I Telework

A step by step guide on how to talk to your boss about telework



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Introduction

Anyone can telework, it doesn't matter what your job role is you can telework but the question always comes up "Can I Telework?" and the answer: Yes. Another question that always comes up is, "how can I get my boss to let me telework?" and the answer: you can't, at least you can force them too. So now that you know you can telework, and you can't let your boss make you telework, the question now becomes, "so what can I do?" the answer "Ask for the opportunity to telework".

In this Step by Step guide our goal is to create a proposal that you can present to your boss for consideration for telework. Its goal is to reduce the level of uncertainty in telework by providing as much information as possible to help guide the discussion. Our aim is to give your boss the information they needs to make an informed decision about you. Remember working in a telework environment is all about taking initiative and getting your job done.



Step 1: Due Diligence

In order to get the results that you want you must to put in the time necessary for it to work. By doing the work now you reduce the work you have to do later.

Part 1: Do your research

What's the policy: Most companies today have some form of 'work from home' policy which is normally in the company's employee handbook/manual. Review what the manual says and identify the entire requirement listed in the document. Highlight the requirements since you will need them later.

Google: Find and Read articles about telework articles like ['http://digitallydaunted.com/2012/10/05/tips-for-telework/'](http://digitallydaunted.com/2012/10/05/tips-for-telework/); they will let you know what areas you will need to consider when deciding to telework and how to prepare for it.

Part 2: Evaluate your Job

Review your job description: All jobs have a job description and with it a list of task that are associated with that job. At some point you did these entire tasks and didn't take note of them you just did it. Depending on your job requirement you may be doing task that can be done just as well if not better in a telework environment.

Evaluate Telework tasks:

- Print out a copy of your job description with the entire task listed.
- List the task in order of frequency with the ones you do regular at the top.
- Highlight all tasks that you can do in a telework environment.
- Make a side by side comparison of your task list with one side holding task you can do in a telework setting and on the other side task you need to come into the office to do.



Step 2: Preparation

Preparedness is key when taking on any new challenges, by preparing your alternative location and your documentation you are one step closer to working from home.

Part 1: Evaluate your Telework area.

Pick your space: Unless your company intends for you to work at Telework offices that are closer to your house than most like you will be working at home. So if you are working from home you need to take some time to think where in your home is conducive to work. Make sure these areas are not areas where distractions are prevalent since these locations will prevent you from getting any work done.

Create a mockup: configure the area as if you intend to start teleworking today. Set it up the way you need it to be for it to work and make a list of any item you need to get it operational. Once completed take a picture of the area, you will need it later.

Part 2: Personalize the data

Daily Commuter Cost: Calculate your daily cost to travel to work both ways, this includes money spent on gas for your car or public transportation. Include the time it takes to travel to work with or without traffic as well as the cost for parking. A great place to gather this data is Google maps, gasbuddy.com, beta.costtodrive.com, etc. group this information under the following categories; gas, P T, time. Use a spreadsheet if necessary to project cost to travel to work every day, and for an entire year.

Expected Saving: Once you have your daily commuter cost, make a tally of all the days you are requesting Telework and add the total saving and put in your saving category.

Part 3: Compile your proposal

Letter of interest: Create a letter of interest that tells your boss or supervisor that you want to have a discussion about allowing you to telework. This letter will be your introduction so we clear language just as you would when writing a cover letter when applying for a job.

Supporting documents: In this area you want to include:

- Telework Summary (commute cost, commuting saving and any graphs if necessary)
- Job evaluation (job description, job task and all job task that are telework eligible)
- Work Area evaluation (work area checklist, wish list and supporting pictures)



Recommendation: In your recommendation area includes the following:

- A trial period (about 3 months) with proposed start and end dates.
- Your main form of communication (email) as well as a backup (cell).
- Expected deliverables (action/to-do list)
- Review dates (proposed follow-up date to discuss performance)

Make sure to identify high demand days where your boss may need you on hand and suggest expectations on these days as well. This will reduce trouble periods where your boss needs you but you are not in the office, days like end of week briefing or major clients function fall into this category.

Work Impact: This area will mostly likely be the most important area to your boss. Your boss wants to know more than anything else how you teleworking will impact the team and the team's productivity. In this area highlight your current means of communication with other team members on current and past project, Include a schedule outlining areas of interest and expected action plans for these days. Reassure your boss that you can maintain a positive relationship with the team well at the same time improve your ability to be productive to the team.

Final Thoughts: Consider this area as your conclusion, keep it short and sweet



Step 4: Talk to Boss

Conversation opens the gate to trust, have a clear and focus conversation with your boss about your desires and you may be surprise of the positive results that will follow.

Part 1: Schedule a meeting

In person: When settings up a meeting in person try not to discuss the details of the meeting before the meeting, at this point a simple "Hi John can we talk later when you have a moment" is enough. At this point your interest should only be to get a time to talk.

Email: If you plan to set up a meeting via email, keep it simple "Hi John can I talk to you, I wanted to know if 4pm today works for you, I only need about 10 or 20 minutes of your time".
Don't include your telework proposal as an attachment.

Part 2: Present your research

Announce your purpose: Once the meeting start this would be a great time to tell your boss why you are here, a simple "hi John I want to discuss the possibility of me working from home" is a great start. Once it's clear what your intentions are you are free to proceed.

Your Story: Tell your boss why you want to start to teleworking, make it genuine, make it about you and your experience, and try to make it personal but not too intrusive in your personal live and once you done move on.

Note: *practice at least once saying your story in front of a mirror, this is not so you sound scripted but comfortable with your message. You won't have your boss attention long so make every minute count.*

Deliver your report: make sure you hand your boss a copy of your report also carry an extra one for yourself.

Discuss the report: don't try to read the report to your boss, only summary. Tell them about your letter, your commuter cost, your evaluations and your recommendation. Identify key areas in your report that are interesting address anything your boss would be concern about. Keep it brief since you're trying to honor your time arrangement with your boss. Make sure you review your recommendation before proceeding.

Ask for feedback: Your boss may or may not have any question or feedback. If they do answer them honestly since at this point you have done all you can do to assure your boss that you are capable of performing in a Telework environment, the rest is their choice.



Step 4: Call to Action

Follow up meeting: Ask for a follow-up meeting with your boss, allow your boss time to review your proposal and come to a decision. I suggest no longer than a week since the longer they wait the more likely are they to forget.

Set start date: Propose a few start dates in your recommendation and try to get a tentative start date from your boss. This will start the clock on your new life as a teleworker.

Final Thoughts

Telework is a privilege, to be able to achieve a better work life balance, save money on commuter cost and still matriculate in your career is a benefit not many workers get the opportunity to do. I wish you all the best in your telework endeavors.

Join us at teleworkportfolio.com and share your telework experience with us.

