



TWIN CITIES
Telework

by
Commuter Services



Telework Guide for Commuters

Why Telework?

Many professionals are adopting teleworking arrangements not only because it is convenient, but also because it allows greater work-life balance. In addition, increased traffic congestion and lengthy commutes make working from home an appealing option. If you would like

to work remotely, you will need to show how the arrangement is good not only for you but also for the business. If you are uncertain about how to approach your boss, consider the following steps to create a convincing approach.

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1. Gather the facts

Start by contacting your human resources department or consulting the employee manual to determine whether your company has a teleworking program already in place.

If one exists, you can build your proposal on actual policies. Of course, you may discover rules that prohibit or limit teleworking. If this is the case, Commuter Services provides assistance to companies located in Bloomington, Richfield, Edina, Eden Prairie, and Minnetonka interested in establishing telework policies.

Please [contact our office](#) to receive a sample copy of a telework policy your company can consider implementing.

Although teleworking presents many benefits, remember that not everyone performs well outside the office.

The best candidates for teleworking are self-disciplined, feel comfortable setting priorities and deadlines, and are able to work independently with minimal supervision.

It is easiest to approach a teleworking arrangement by asking to telework one day a week, or even a few days per month to start.



Consider all angles

2.

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3.

Prepare a written proposal

Make your case in writing.

A written proposal enables your boss to consider your ideas carefully, demonstrates forethought and underscores your commitment to the proposition. It also serves as an important tool to make your case if your manager must obtain approval from higher-ups.

Your document should include:

- **EMPLOYER BENEFITS:** How will teleworking increase your productivity or help the company reduce costs? Remember, there must be something in it for your employer.
 - Studies show teleworkers are nearly 40% more productive than employees who work in the office.
 - 67.8% of teleworkers report having a higher job satisfaction.
 - 64.6% of teleworkers report having more commitment to their company.
- **QUALIFYING CHARACTERISTICS:** Are you self-motivated and well-organized? Do you have a history of dependability and proven work habits? Describe qualities that will allow you to thrive while working from home.
- **SAFETY MEASURES:** Many firms are concerned that allowing staff to work remotely increases the likelihood that confidential information will be compromised. Ease your employer's fears by including a description of the security measures you have in place at home, such as current anti-virus software and active firewall settings. Your company's information technology department may be able to provide hardware or software that allows you to access the firm's systems securely from remote locations.

4.

Consider alternate proposals



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If you think your boss will resist the idea of you working from home, consider proposing a trial period.

You may wish to suggest an “out” clause that enables either of you to discontinue or adjust the arrangement before the end of the trial if the telework arrangement proves problematic. Convincing your company that you are a good candidate for teleworking is only half the battle. Once you begin working from home, you have to prove the arrangement continues to benefit both parties. Here are some strategies:

- **RECORD ON- AND OFF-SITE RESPONSIBILITIES.** Distribute to your team a list that shows which of your job activities will be accomplished at home versus in the office. Include information on how you will ensure key relationships with co-workers are not hurt. This will show your boss that your absence will not affect the progress of group projects.
- **MAKE SURE YOU ARE EASILY ACCESSIBLE.** Let everyone know which days you will be working from home and give them your contact information. Check in frequently and pledge to return phone calls or e-mails within a given period. Assure your boss you can come into the office if you are needed.
- **BUILD IN ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES.** Your manager’s biggest fear is likely that you will be unproductive without close supervision. Keep him or her informed of your progress by submitting a daily or weekly report of your at-home activities, or setting up regular evaluation meetings to review your accomplishments.
- **BUILD YOUR CASE.** If the possibility of working from home appeals to you, put together a case that indicates how such an arrangement could benefit you and your employer. By considering all aspects involved, anticipating your manager’s concerns and continuing to demonstrate the advantages of teleworking, we hope you will be among those who dial, rather than drive, to work.
- **CONSIDER A HYBRID ARRANGEMENT.** If full time telework is not an option, consider asking for a hybrid schedule where you go into the office some days and work from home others. Hybrid arrangements can mean you telework as little as one to two days per month on up to a fixed schedule combining work from home/work at office days each week. Work with your employer to determine what telework arrangement might best suit both of your schedules and your organization’s business needs.