



Staples Survey Shows Telecommuting Offers Edge to Companies Looking to Recruit Talent

Work/Life Balance Ranks as Top Reason for Telecommuting

Toronto, ON, June 2, 2014 – The third annual telecommuting survey by Staples shows that telecommuting is increasingly attractive to employees – with 71 percent of telecommuters saying it’s an important benefit when considering a new job. Ten percent of respondents even say they would take a salary reduction to keep the telecommuting benefit – something for employers to take note of when recruiting.

Achieving a better work/life balance ranks as the number one reason employees like telecommuting (74 percent) – up from number two last year. Transportation savings (69 percent) and green benefits (47 percent) are also cited as top reasons.

Employees also cite reduced stress as a major telecommuting benefit (69 percent) – up significantly from 48 percent in 2013. In fact, an overwhelming majority of employees (88 percent) believe telecommuting is a win-win for both them and their company – and employers agree:

- 65 percent of employers who allow their workers to telecommute report happier employees.
- 33 percent of employers report less absenteeism in the workforce when telecommuting is allowed.

“When a few companies recently banned telecommuting, it sparked a debate on the benefits of such programs,” said Paul Mullen, vice president of technology solutions, Staples Advantage, the business-to-business division of Staples. “Our survey clearly shows the benefits. Not only does telecommuting lead to a happier workforce, it’s also a critical benefit to have from a recruiting standpoint. Employers who are flexible and support their staff with the tools they need to telecommute have a definite recruiting advantage.”

How to solve telecommuting challenges

Even with these benefits and the growing popularity of Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policies (50 percent of organizations surveyed offer BYOD), companies are still doing a poor job of educating employees around proper security measures and equipping them with appropriate furniture:

- Only 25 percent of employees have been trained on data backup/security best practices.
- Sixty-four percent of employees name a poor VPN connection as their biggest tech challenge when working from home.
- Fifty-eight percent of employers report that their telecommuters have connectivity problems several times per month or more.
- Only ten percent of employers offer furniture services to new telecommuters.

To ensure a smooth and secure telecommuting experience for employees, many experts recommend:

- **Equipping the Workforce** – With IT connectivity issues a main concern, telecommuting programs should ensure easy access to email, document sharing, instant messaging and video conferencing. Providing remote VPN capabilities to telecommuters is also important for easy network access.
- **Employee Actions** – Having employees set up lock screens is one simple step businesses can take.
- **Implementing Security Measures** – Encrypting device-side data by adding another layer of protection is important in the event an attacker manages to bypass a lock screen or finds a backdoor.
- **Furnishing Office Spaces Appropriately** – It’s important to consider furniture options in telecommuting programs, from ergonomic furniture to items like desk and drawer organizers. This will help telecommuters make their home offices more productive. In addition, more and more offices are designed with telecommuting in mind.

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About the Survey

Staples conducted an online survey of 137 decision makers and 174 office workers at organizations of all sizes across the U.S. and Canada. The survey, conducted in March 2014, asked a series of questions about telecommuting programs, supplies and services provided, reimbursement and attitudes/behavior. Every work place is different and appropriate telecommuting and security policies vary by industry and by the nature of individual jobs and employees.

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About Staples Advantage

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