

Leader Decisional Job Aid: Defining Eligibility for Work-at-Home Arrangements

Work-at-home is only feasible for those tasks within a job that are amenable in whole or in part to being performed away from the main office. The usefulness of work-at-home arrangements depends on the work group, organization, and the employee's past and present level of performance.

Leaders should establish employee selection criteria for deciding which employees are eligible for work-at-home. Selection of employees should not be arbitrary, but should be based on specific work related criteria established by management. In deciding to establish a work-at-home agreement, these aspects should be considered:

Job Duties: Tasks that are clearly defined and easily quantifiable are ideal for work-at-home arrangements.

Tasks that might work well for work-at-home:

- System administration with tasks that can be done remotely
- Technical writing
- Communications development
- Graphic design
- Referral consulting
- Course development
- Web development, software development, programming
- Certain research (i.e., on-line)
- Individual work (non-collaborative)

Tasks that present a challenge when working from home:

- Work requiring face-to-face contact with customers (front-line support)
- Anything that requires hands-on contact with equipment
- Interviewing and performance reviews
- Projects requiring large amounts of collaboration
- Clerical support (i.e., receptionist, file clerk)
- Hardware related services
- Contract discussions
- Staff meetings

Employee Characteristics: Employees who are good candidates for work-at-home generally have a number of work-related characteristics in common.

- History of reliable and responsible discharge of work duties
- Full understanding of the operations of the organization
- Trust of their supervisor
- Ability to establish priorities and manage their own time
- Proven track record of personal motivation which is reflected in past performance ratings

Ideal Candidates are:

- Self-motivated and responsible
- Results oriented and comfortable setting priorities and deadlines
- Able to work independently; need minimal supervision
- Successful in current position
- Knowledgeable about office procedures
- An effective communicator who takes initiative
- Adaptable to changing routines and environments
- Committed to work-at-home success