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Success Story: AT&T



Interview on the Benefits of Teleworking – April 2017 with Adrian Teague, Operations Manager for AT&T Services, CBRE Property Management in Redmond, Washington

Company Profile:

As the world's largest telecommunications company, AT&T maintains the second largest real estate portfolio in the U.S. next to the federal government. AT&T's Flexible Work Force program reduces the need for office space while increasing work space usability, employee productivity, and flexibility. This corporate initiative provides telecommuting opportunities once employees see they can perform the same job functions from anywhere.

There are approximately 7,500 AT&T employees in King County, including those at retail stores. Of those, 4,000 have occupancy indicators (how frequently they have to be on-site) that allow them to work from a variety of locations, such as client, vendor, AT&T facilities, home and just about anywhere they plug-in to fulfill their job duties. AT&T calls teleworkers Flexible Office Workers (FOW).

What inspired AT&T to launch teleworking?

AT&T saw that teleworking supports how people work today. Teleworking is more mobile, more virtual, more flexible and more collaborative. We allow our employees the freedom to do their work wherever it needs to be done because that maximizes productivity. Collaborative office environments allow employees freedom to work from virtually anywhere.

What kind of technology support do you have in place for teleworkers?

AT&T provides tools to work such as SKYPE, VPN, WIFI, and AT&T Connect to allow employees to "plug-in" wherever they are.

What is the response of employees? Both those who telework and those who do not.

The collaborative workplace environment offers tools to increase FOW (Flexible Office Work). Some business units remain 100% office building employees due to the style of work they perform such as device testers and call center employees, but on the whole, increasing FOW capability decreases office square footage requirements and increases telecommuting opportunities.

How does the company decide which employees telecommute? Job function. Individual business units determine where they are most productive based on job function.

How does teleworking impact productivity? Teleworking increases productivity immensely by adding flexibility.

What are the biggest advantages in having a teleworking program?

Teleworking decreases our reliance on office square footage, offers employees flexibility and increases productivity.

What are the biggest challenges in having a teleworking program?

Teleworking lends a new mindset. Office employees adjust to the new workplace environment. Employees are essentially asked to 'borrow' space instead of owning it, and employees learn a new means to store information electronically.

What is your advice for other companies that may be considering implementing a telework program?

- ◆ *Invest in and offer tools to allow employees to be more flexible and productive than they are when they are entrenched inside the office.*
- ◆ *Promote teleworking as a win-win tool for management and staff.*
- ◆ *A teleworking program is worth its weight in gold.*