



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Telework Exchange and Federal Managers Association Study Reveals Only 35 Percent of Managers Believe Their Agencies Support Telework

*Highlights Major Management/Agency Telework Misalignment; Provides Management Training Recommendations to Make Telework a Standard Operating Practice for Federal Agencies*

**ALEXANDRIA, Va., January 22, 2007** – Telework Exchange<sup>SM</sup>, a public-private partnership focused on telework in the Federal government, and the Federal Managers Association (FMA), an association representing the interests of 200,000 Federal managers, today announced the results of a first-of-its-kind study of Federal managers' perceptions of telework, "Face-to-Face with Management Reality – A Telework Research Report." Underwritten by TANDBERG, a leading global provider of visual communication products and services, the "Face-to-Face with Management Reality" study reveals that Federal management resistance represents a strong barrier to Federal agencies embracing telework as a standard operating procedure.

Key study findings include:

- **Telework Impressions:** As managers become exposed to/involved in telework, their approval of the operating practice improves significantly
- **Inhibitors and Drivers:** Only 35 percent of managers believe their agencies support telework. In contrast with agency priorities, managers do not perceive Continuity of Operations (COOP) and pandemic planning as telework drivers. Managers ranked fear of not having control over employees and productivity issues as the top telework inhibitors

- **Face-to-Face with Reality:** Thirty-two percent of managers rate lack of face-to-face contact as a telework challenge. Sixty-one percent and 43 percent of managers have misinterpreted co-workers via e-mail and phone, respectively
- **Management Lessons:** Encouraging managers to telework is a critical step to achieving overall agency telework adoption. Further, agencies must educate and train management on telework drivers and benefits

“The study highlights the disconnect between the perception of telework and the practicality of telework,” said Darryl Perkinson, national president, FMA. “While funding seems to be the least impediment, managers must find a balance between performance output and employee supervision before agencies can fully realize the benefits of telework.”

#### *Try It and You’ll Like It*

The study reveals that as managers become more involved in telework, they express more favorable attitudes toward telework. Managers who are teleworkers and managers who supervise teleworkers are more favorable toward telework than managers who do not supervise teleworkers. Sixty-six percent of managers who manage teleworkers find that teleworkers are as productive as their in-office counterparts.

#### *Reality Check*

Federal managers’ perceptions of the drivers for, and benefits of, telework are fundamentally out of sync with agencies’ mission drivers for telework. This finding indicates agencies need to embark on programs to educate managers on the priorities for, and agency mission benefits of, embracing telework as a standard operating procedure. Managers across the board view work/life balance and impact on employee recruitment/retention as major telework drivers. In contrast with agency priorities, managers do not perceive COOP and pandemic planning as telework drivers. Managers rank fear of not having control over employees and productivity issues as the top telework inhibitors. Interestingly, managers do not consider security or funding concerns as significant inhibitors to telework.

*Lost in Translation?*

Benchmarking on management’s apprehensions, 32 percent of Federal managers rate a lack of face-to-face contact as the number-one telework communication challenge. A majority of managers – 61 percent – have misinterpreted co-workers through e-mail.

“As the study indicates, telework is not a ‘nice to have’ anymore; it is critical to agencies’ business continuity and productivity, as well as retaining a knowledgeable workforce and appealing to a new generation of employees interested in work/life balance,” said Joel Brunson, president, TANDBERG Federal. “Agencies must focus on training and educating management on the role telework can play in the organization. Finally, agencies should provide the technology management needs to support a dispersed workforce.”

“We consistently hear that management is the main barrier to telework,” said Stephen W.T. O’Keeffe, executive director, Telework Exchange. “Telework Exchange looks forward to engaging in dialogue with these managers to better understand their perceptions, and we are committed to working together with FMA to overcome the challenges to implementing telework.”

The “Face-to-Face with Management Reality” study is based on a survey of 214 Federal managers. To download the full results of the study, please visit [www.teleworkexchange.com/managementstudy](http://www.teleworkexchange.com/managementstudy).

**About Telework Exchange, LLC**

Telework Exchange is a public-private partnership focused on demonstrating the tangible value of telework and serving the emerging educational and communication requirements of the Federal teleworker community. The organization facilitates communication among Federal teleworkers, telework managers, and IT professionals. For more information on Telework Exchange, please visit [www.teleworkexchange.com](http://www.teleworkexchange.com).

**About Federal Managers Association**

FMA is the largest, oldest, and foremost Federal employee organization representing the interests of the nearly 200,000 managers, supervisors, and executives in the Federal government today. FMA advocates excellence in public service through effective management and professionalism, as well as the active representation of its members’ interests and concerns. FMA

advances its mission through consultation in the Executive Branch and advocacy in Congress, top-notch professional development programs, and informative publications for networking among its members. For more information, visit [www.fedmanagers.org](http://www.fedmanagers.org).

### **About TANDBERG**

TANDBERG is a leading global provider of visual communication products and services with dual headquarters in New York and Norway. TANDBERG designs, develops, and markets systems and software for video, voice, and data. The company provides sales, support, and value added services in more than 90 countries worldwide. TANDBERG is publicly traded on the Oslo Stock Exchange under the ticker TAA.OL. Please visit [www.tandberg.net](http://www.tandberg.net) for more information.

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