

TIGTA: A Telecommuting Success Story



Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration

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Background

The Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA):

- **Mission:** *Provide audit and investigative services that promote economy, efficiency and integrity in the administration of the internal revenue laws.*
- Bureau within the Department of the Treasury
 - \$132 Million
 - **849** employees
 - Based in Washington, DC.
- Geographically dispersed: **73** different offices coast-to-coast.



Getting Started

- Foremost is the creation of a **multi-functional committee** to develop a Concept of Operations. This **must** have executive representation and an eye to evolving work practices in a non-traditional office environment.
- Design a **Pilot** with a representative sample of the organization participating.



Getting Started

- Document everything:
 - Use **logs** to record how day is spent by teleworker.
 - Capture information indicating what equipment is used or needed.
 - Capture services required and compare to services provided.



TIGTA Telecommuting

- Function heads established eligible positions.
- Managers determined eligible employees.
- **Tools** provided to managers to help in decision making process.
- **Training** provided to all participants.
- Managers and employees meet and agree upon Telecommuting arrangement.
- Signed agreement filed in Employee Drop File.
- Appeal rights to next level of management only.
- Terminate by either party at any time.



TIGTA Telecommuting

- Several different options to choose from:
 - **EPISODIC:** on a task-by-task basis
 - **LIMITED:** 1 day per week
 - **EXPANDED:** 2-3 days per week
 - **FULL:** 4-5 days per week



TIGTA Telecommuting

- Equipment and service expenditures based on level of participation:
 - Printer
 - Locking file cabinet
 - Second phone line/mobile phone
 - Installation costs of high-speed Internet access
 - **50%** of monthly service charges for high-speed Internet service
 - Router



Putting It Into Practice

- Derive requirements from Pilot:
 - Use **only** Government owned and supplied equipment.
 - PC model changed from Desktop/Laptop mix to **all Laptops**.
 - Secure, high-speed connectivity is **absolutely, positively required** (Virtual Private Network).
 - Nature of some work and some people are not conducive to telecommuting. **Don't force it on everyone and everything.**



Putting It Into Practice

- Derive requirements from Pilot:
 - ***Train, Train, Train!*** Training is essential for the telecommuters and especially for managers to get over “separation anxiety.”
 - Break the mold of managing conduct and move to a model of **managing results**.
 - **Phase in** organization-wide.
 - High-speed bandwidth to the home (the “*Last Mile*” problem) is the long pole in the tent.



Success Not Focused on Technology

- Technology enables Telecommuting and helps improve efficiency of Business Applications and Tools.
- Work Methods and Processes **must be adapted** for the Virtual Environment.
- However, adequate Technology is required;
 - High Speed Access
 - Portable PC's
 - Appropriate office-like environment
 - Printers, fax machines, copiers, etc.



Telecommuting Statistics at TIGTA

- TIGTA enjoys a well represented Telecommuting Program
- Participation statistics are as follows:

Full = 150 (18%)

Expanded = 217 (26%)

Limited = 50 (6%)

Episodic = 322 (38%)

Not Participating = 60 (7%)

Not Eligible = 42 (5%)

TOTAL Employees = 849



Benefits

- **Productivity Gains**

- You must already have **performance measures** in place to determine any gains.
 - Cases/Audits opened, in progress, closed.
 - Revenue Protected, Funds put to better use.
- Current Federal employment laws prohibits us from differentiating between in-office and telecommuters.



Benefits

- **Employee Morale**
 - **Big win** for TIGTA. While there are other contributing factors, job satisfaction is high (**77.5%**).
- **Rent savings** by implementing Hoteling, but it can be an emotional mine field.



Voilà! COOP is Enhanced

- Employees can work from **anywhere**
 - The Office is no longer a single point of failure.
- Production continues with slight interruptions
 - You **must** have a robust disaster recovery plan in place.
- Business Process “elimination”
 - Performing in virtual space keeps a lot of trees alive.



Conclusion

- ***Executive Support!***
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