

## Thinking About Virtual Workers?

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A lot of companies have or are considering allowing employees to work from home. Should you?

There are obvious advantages to a telecommuting work arrangement:

- Less office space (less rent, lower utility costs)
- Recruitment and retention

However, there are many things that need to be considered in order for a telecommuting work arrangement to be effective:

- The type of job: Some jobs are more easily done in a telecommuting arrangement. Other types of jobs just cannot be done anywhere but at the workplace.
- The personality of the employee: Not all employees can work in this type of arrangement. If an employee has a high need for interpersonal interaction, they may not like working in isolation.
- Teamwork: Most jobs, even those which are highly autonomous, rely upon teamwork. How will you ensure the feeling of team in a workforce that is not co-located?
- Performance management: How will you determine how well the employee is doing the job if you cannot see them?
- Technology: A virtual environment relies on technology. You need to consider what type of technology is most effective as well as the training and expertise of your workforce.
- Security: How do you keep your company information secure?

None of these issues are insurmountable, but they do require planning and attention.