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## **MSPB REPORT DISCUSSES THE USE OF TELEWORK IN THE FEDERAL WORKPLACE**

The U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) finds that telework, which provides flexibility in where and when work is accomplished, can be leveraged to further mission accomplishment, providing that there is proper preparation and planning. In our most recent report, “[Telework: Weighing the Information, Determining an Appropriate Approach](#),” MSPB uses survey data from Federal employees and supervisors coupled with other information to provide a holistic picture of the key benefits, concerns, and implementation considerations for organizations to weigh in determining how to integrate telework into their overall business strategy.

Our study confirms that telework can result in many benefits for organizations and employees alike. Further, and of critical importance, our findings indicate that the benefits of telework can occur while maintaining productivity and performance, if telework is managed appropriately. A key step that organizations must take in implementing an effective telework program is ensuring supervisors have the necessary skills and support to manage performance in a telework environment. Good performance management skills will be critical for enabling supervisors to make wise decisions about using telework in their work units and ensuring fair treatment of teleworkers and nonteleworkers. In addition, organizational leadership must foster a culture that is conducive to telework, and ensure that a well thought-out technology infrastructure is in place, allowing access to necessary business tools and continuity in work unit dynamics. Flexibility in perspective about telework will be key, as will continuous evaluation of the effectiveness of telework in each work environment.

These strategies will be critical for realizing the benefits of telework and mitigating concerns.

Overall, our report's central message is the importance of weighing applicable benefits of and any concerns about telework in conjunction with legal requirements and implementation considerations when making decisions about how to appropriately use telework in a given situation.

As MSPB Chairman Susan Tsui Grundmann stated, "Telework can be a powerful tool for organizations, especially as they endeavor to recruit, engage, and retain highly capable employees. However, telework needs to be managed appropriately to be successful, with a strong emphasis on good performance management practices. In addition, organizations need to identify and weigh the pros and cons of telework for their situations and customize approaches that will maximize benefits and minimize challenges. Telework does not occur in a vacuum, and organizations need to find the right balance."

The U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) is an independent, quasi-judicial agency that protects Federal merit systems and the rights of individuals within those systems. The MSPB Office of Policy and Evaluation conducts studies of the Federal workforce and makes recommendations for its improved efficiency and effectiveness. To request a printed copy of the reports, email [STUDIES@mspb.gov](mailto:STUDIES@mspb.gov); call (202) 254-4802, ext. 4802 or write: U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, Office of Policy and Evaluation, 1615 M Street, NW, Washington, DC 20419. The MSPB's studies are also available for viewing or downloading at [www.mspb.gov/studies](http://www.mspb.gov/studies).

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