

Case Study



Safeco saves money and increases employee satisfaction with its telework program.

The Situation

Safeco field claims examiners have been teleworking for almost ten years and in 2006, Safeco implemented a pilot program with about 80 employees from their Redmond office to see if their in-office employees could successfully work from home. The pilot program was a success and encouraged Safeco to start a Virtual Worker Program for teleworking. Since 2006, Safeco has expanded its original pilot program to include nearly 500 participants.

Keys to Success

Safeco's telework program has 4 primary elements where Safeco:

- Evaluates employees to determine if working from home is the right choice for them. Key factors considered include: departmental business need, ability to provide an appropriate work space, proximity to customers and an assessment process to ensure they will be able to thrive in a solidarity environment.
- Facilitates move home including transporting and hook-up of computer and phone, coordinating installation of broadband and phone lines, and purchase of furniture.
- Provides employees with the training and resource materials on the technology and processes needed to work from home.
- Provides ongoing support to employees so they do not lose their "sense of community". Safeco has training classes and tools for virtual employees and managers to help them stay connected to each other.

Benefits Realized

Safeco currently has over 1,700 employees nationwide teleworking, which equates to over 24% of their entire workforce, and they continue to see those numbers grow every month. Attrition of teleworkers is less than half of in-office employees, and employee productivity is equal if not better after an initial adjustment period. Among employees who telework, 95% said they prefer working at home.

Teleworking has also had a direct cost benefit in real estate savings from consolidating office space.

Safeco's most recent CTR survey results for their downtown Seattle Corporate offices show that 90% of their employees are now using a non-drive alone commute mode.

Quotes

"I wouldn't trade it for anything; I love working virtually! I am more satisfied overall with my job and feel like I'm more in control of my own attitude and performance!"

– Wayne Thompson
Customer Care Professional

"... I can concentrate better on each caller's needs because of the fact that I don't have any distractions or background noises, I am very happy that I don't have to worry about the traffic or being late."

- Robin Alameda,
Customer Care Professional

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