Telecommuting – Teleworking: Is it a practical option for you?

Council on Foundations
2002 Annual Conference

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"In a country that has been moaning about low productivity and searching for new ways to increase it, the single most anti-productive thing we can do is ship millions of workers back and forth across the landscape every morning and evening."

Alvin Toffler
    "Future Shock" 1970
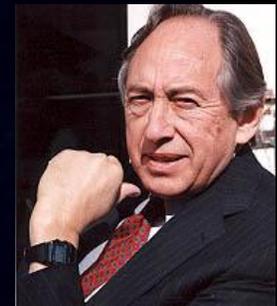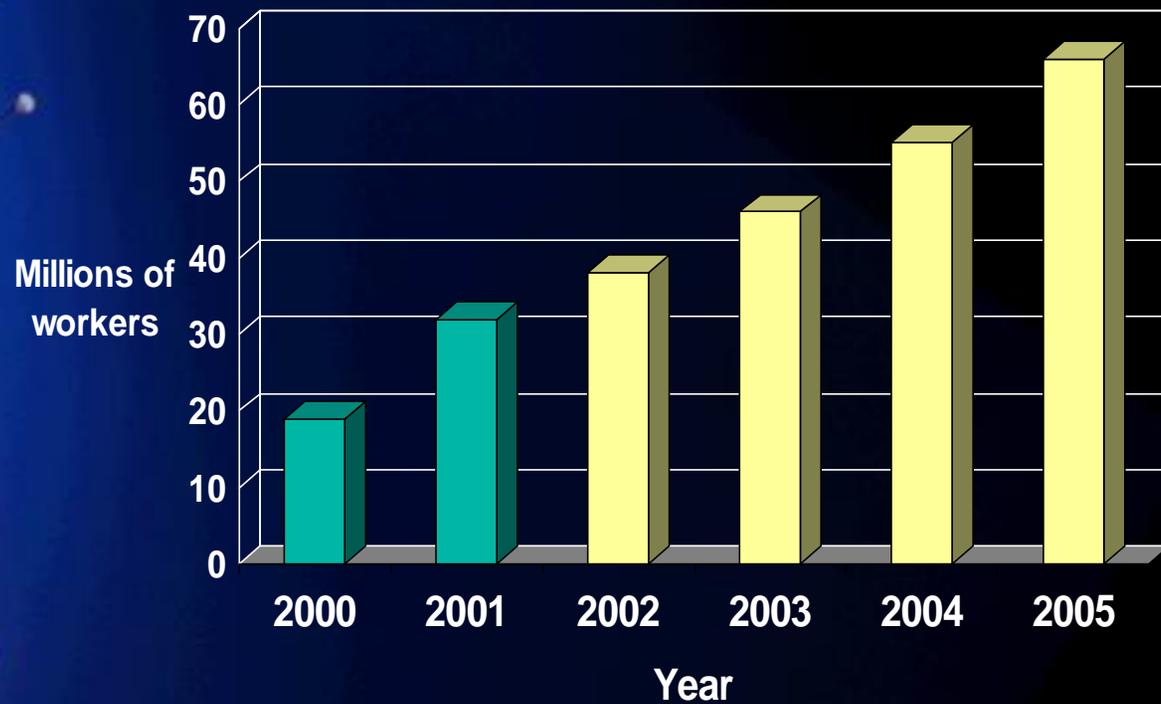
Telecommuting and Teleworking

The terms "telecommuting" and "teleworking" mean the same thing . . .

a geographically dispersed office where workers can work at a location other than a central office.

It typically involves moving work to the worker using computers and telecommunications, instead of moving the worker to the office.

Teleworking Statistics

§ A daily 40 minute commute = eight working weeks every year

§ Teleworkers work:
- 38% of the time at their computer
- 17% on the phone
- 24% reading, research & analysis
- 9% in face-to-face meetings

§ Teleworker ages:
- 17%, 18-29 years
- 60%, 30-49 years
- 22%, 50-64 years

Sources: Telework America Survey – 2000 and CO Telework Coalition

§ Teleworkers typically work 1-2 days per week from home

§ 39 percent of the workers who do not currently work remotely are interested in teleworking—and 13 percent of those workers would consider the ability to telework an important influence when making a decision to accept another job.

Sources: Telework America Survey – 2000 and CO Telework Coalition

Importance of Teleworking
for Staff in Philanthropies
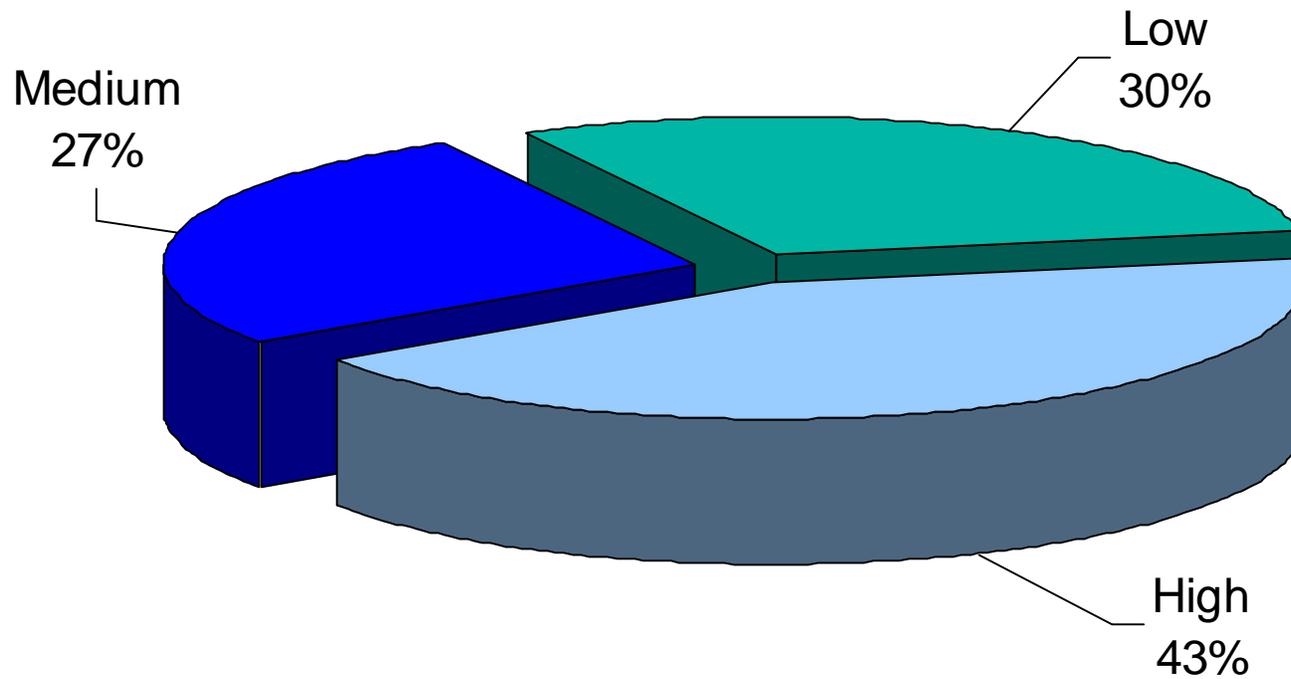
Low
30%

Medium
27%

High
43%

Source: Telecommuting / Teleworking in Philanthropy survey of 44 organizations – April 2002

Foundations That Offer Telecommuting From Home
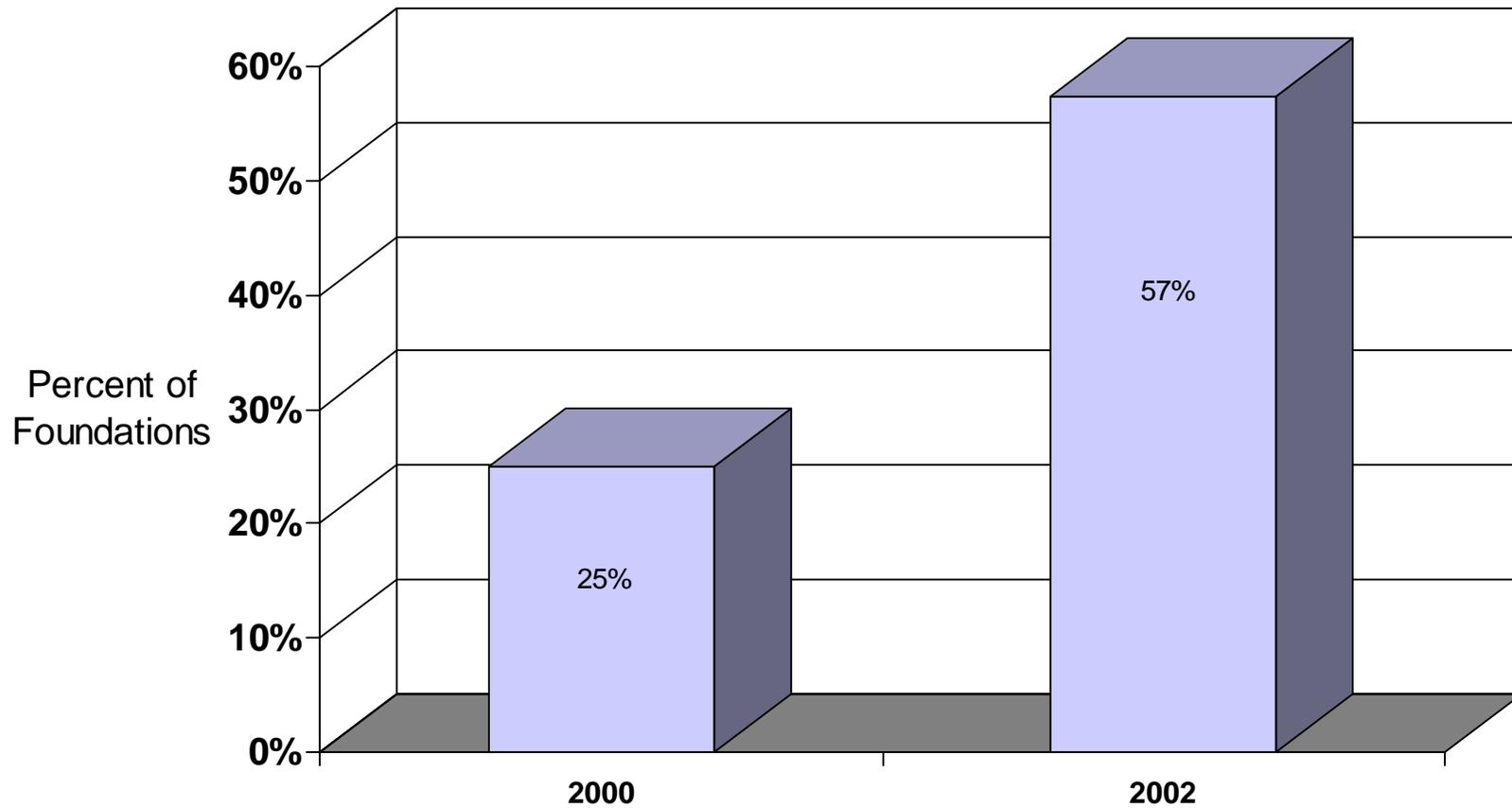
Percent of Foundations

- 60%
- 50%
- 40%
- 30%
- 20%
- 10%
- 0%

25% (2000)

57% (2002)

Source: Council on Foundations Annual Salary and Benefits Survey – 2002 preliminary results of 364 responses

Applications Staff in Philanthropies Can Access Remotely
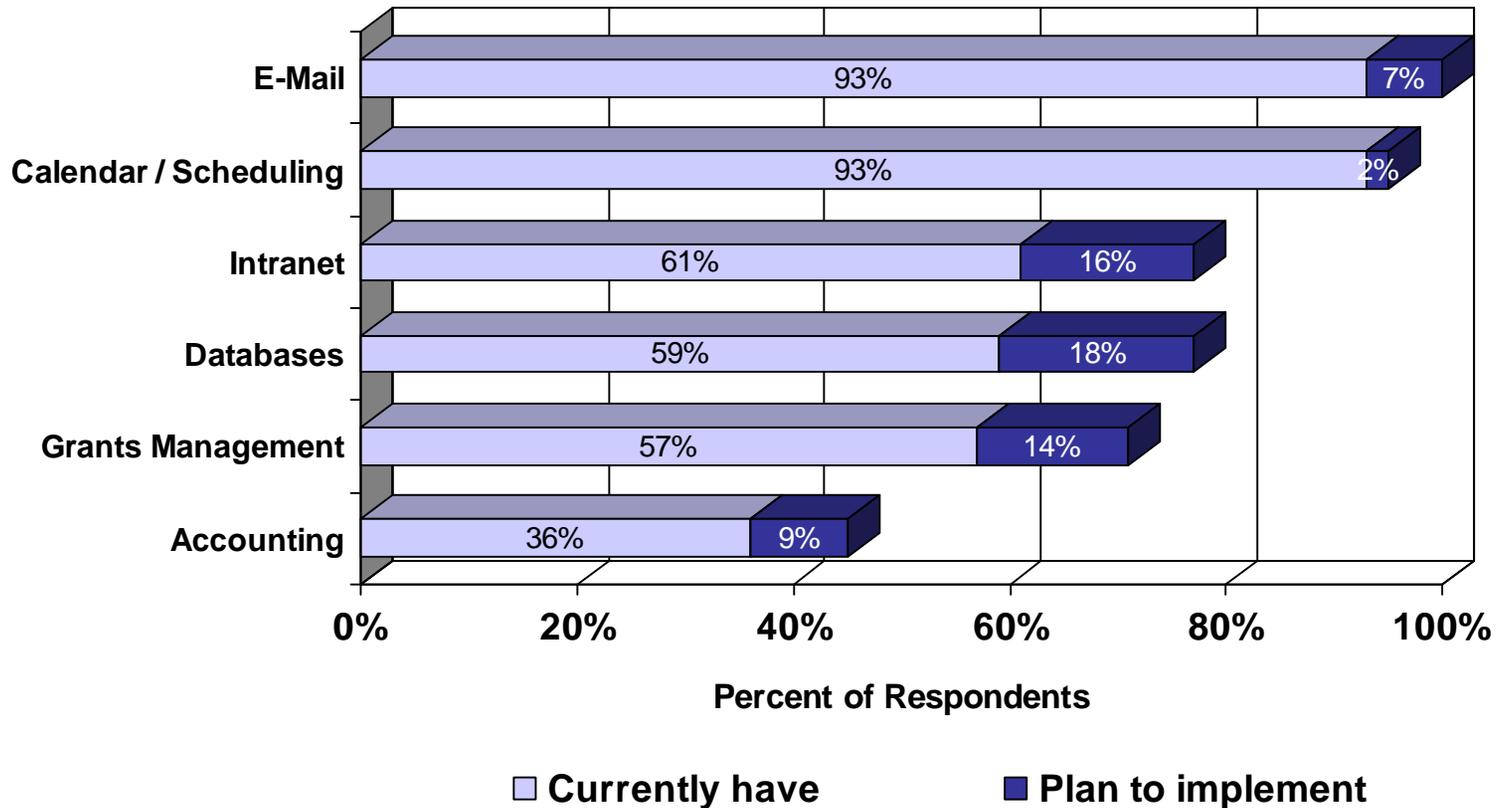
Application	Currently have	Plan to implement
E-Mail	93%	7%
Calendar / Scheduling	93%	2%
Intranet	61%	16%
Databases	59%	18%
Grants Management	57%	14%
Accounting	36%	9%

Percent of Respondents

☐ **Currently have**   ■ **Plan to implement**

Source: Telecommuting / Teleworking in Philanthropy survey of 44 organizations – April 2002

Major Incentives to Teleworking in Philanthropy

Incentive	Percent
Greater Productivity	82%
Improved Quality of Life	68%
Reduced Travel Time	66%
Increased Job Satisfaction	64%
Reduced Stress	59%
Enhanced Morale	45%
Improved work opportunity	25%
Other (multiple)	23%

Percent of Respondents

Source: Telecommuting / Teleworking in Philanthropy survey of 44 organizations – April 2002

Foundation Support of Teleworkers
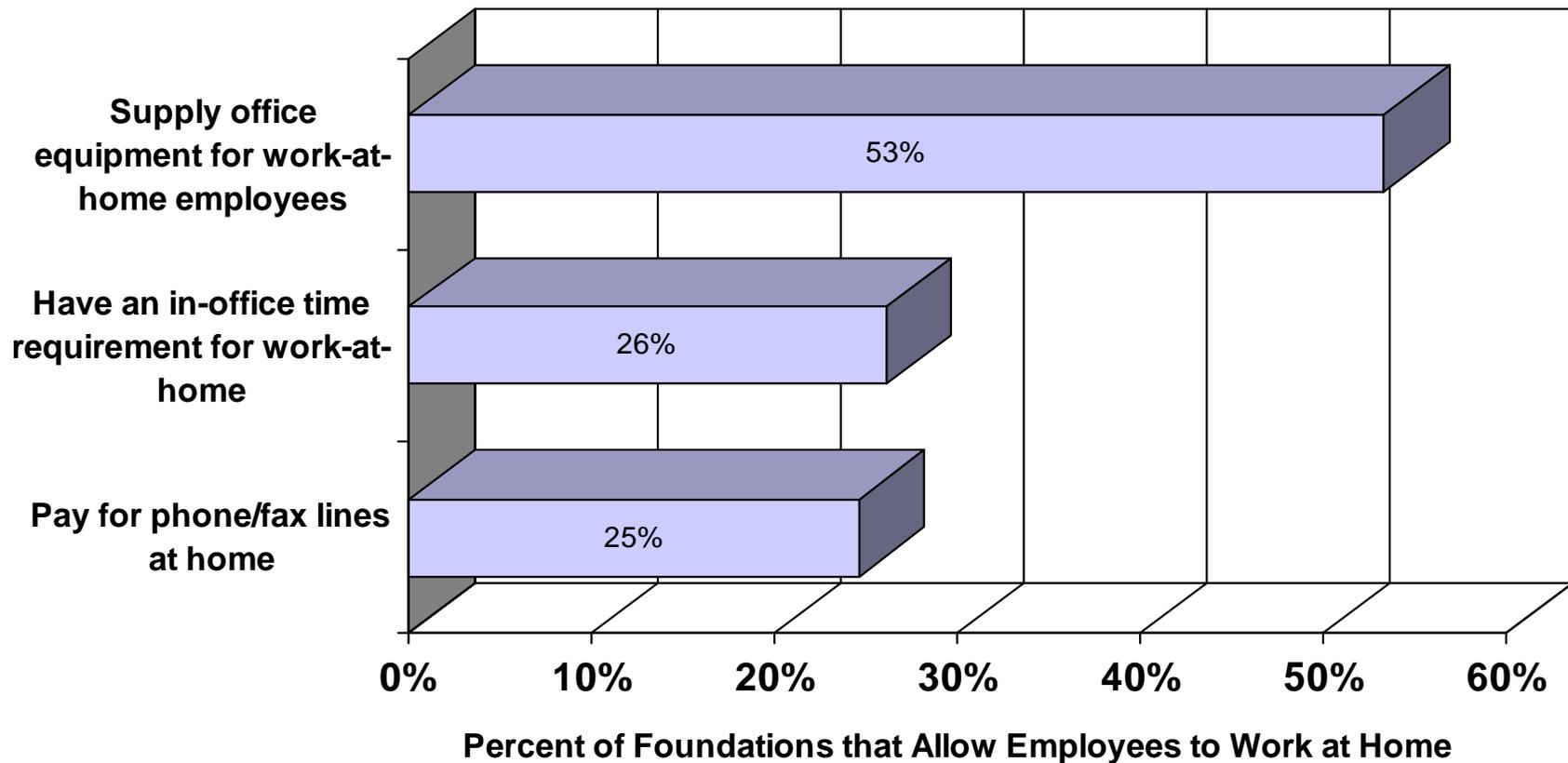
Supply office equipment for work-at-home employees — 53%

Have an in-office time requirement for work-at-home — 26%

Pay for phone/fax lines at home — 25%

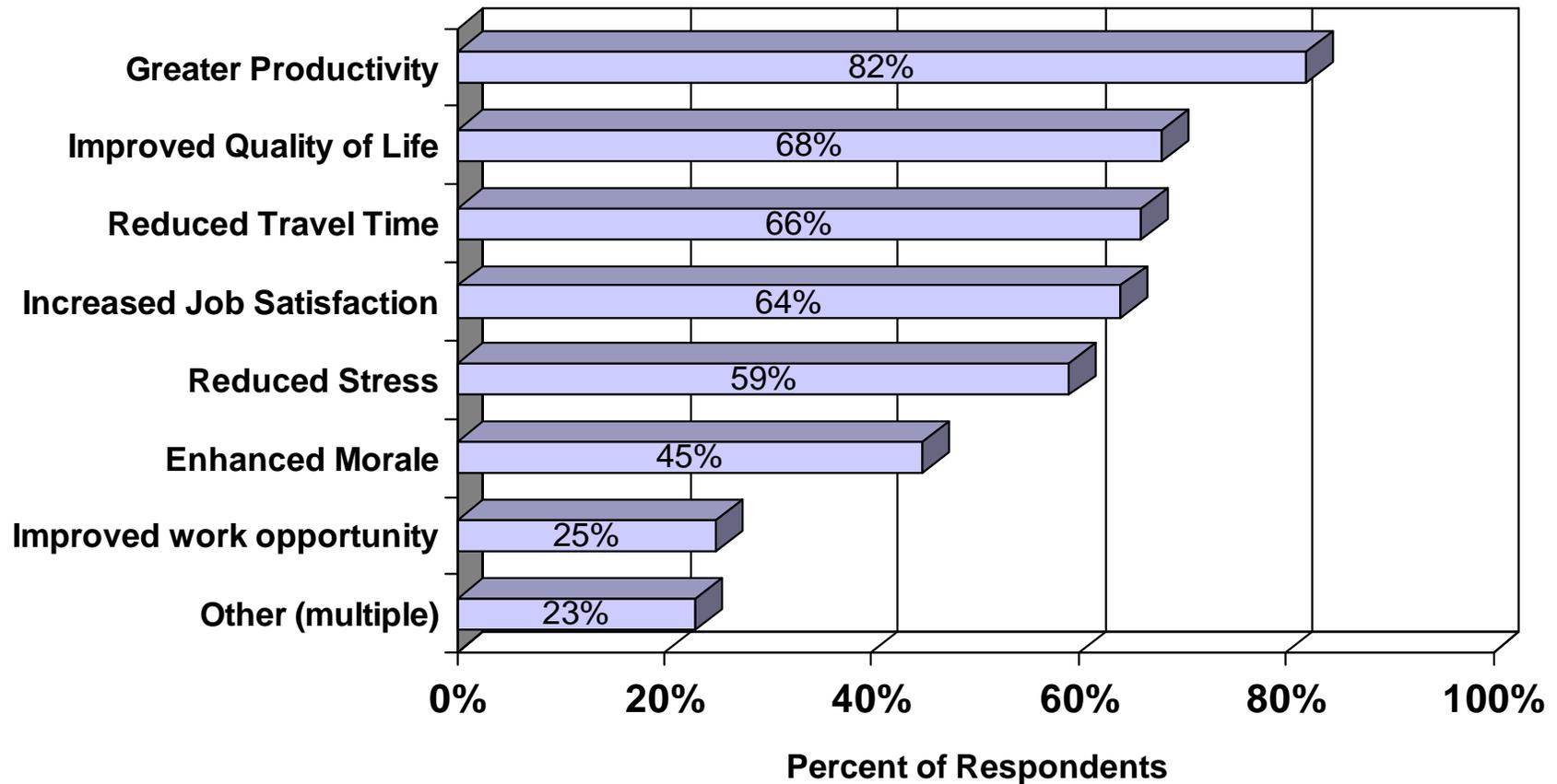0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60%

Percent of Foundations that Allow Employees to Work at Home

Source: Council on Foundations Annual Salary and Benefits Survey – 2002 preliminary results of 364 responses

Social and Economic Benefits

§ Reduced energy consumption and pollution

§ Reduced traffic congestion

§ Wider employment and work opportunities

§ Access to work for individuals with disabilities

Costs to the Teleworker

§ Office and computer equipment

§ Broadband telecommunication charges

§ Larger utility bills

Potential Problems for Teleworkers

§ Getting disconnected from co-workers

§ Getting out of touch with day-to-day office operations

§ Lower professional visibility

§ Distractions

§ Loneliness

§ Envy and resentment by colleagues

Organizational Benefits

§ Decreased costs
  - Rent, parking, utilities, taxes

§ Increased productivity
  (Est. from 10-40% due to less travel time and fewer interruptions)

§ Flexible staffing

§ Improved recruiting

§ Decreased absenteeism (*Est. ~60%)

§ Lowers staff turnover (*Est. ~20%)

§ Lower recruitment & training costs

§ Emergency contingency

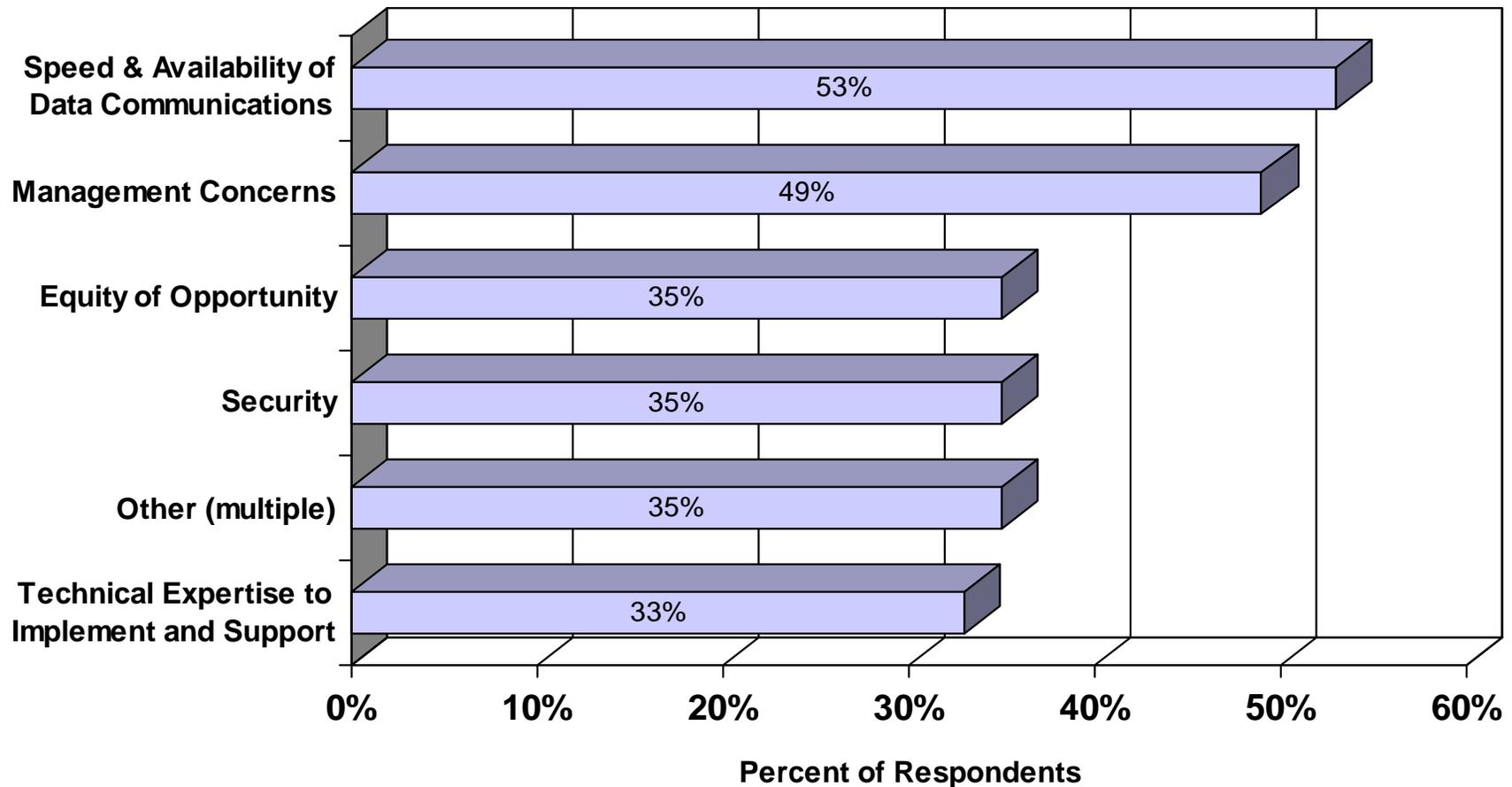* Source: International Telework Association Council

Organizational Costs

§ Increased training

§ Administration

§ Additional hardware and software

§ Telecommunications

§ Network security

§ Higher level of ongoing technical support for remote users

§ Lost productivity when systems are unavailable

Major Barriers to Teleworking in Philanthopy

Speed & Availability of Data Communications — 53%
Management Concerns — 49%
Equity of Opportunity — 35%
Security — 35%
Other (multiple) — 35%
Technical Expertise to Implement and Support — 33%

Percent of Respondents

Source: Telecommuting / Teleworking in Philanthropy survey of 44 organizations – April 2002

Management Speak:

I prefer to have people in-house to work together to do the jobs that need to be done.

Translation:

We change directions so often we can't let you out of yelling distance.

Managerial Concerns

§ Some managers fear losing control over staff who aren't in the office every day

§ Measure the quality and volume of work

§ Establishing fair guidelines concerning who should be able to telecommute

§ Envy and disappointment among staff who are denied the opportunity to work from home

§ Teamwork can be jeopardized

Assess your job's teleworking potential

§ List all of the different job tasks that can be done away from the worksite.

§ How long does it take to do each of them every week?

§ Are these tasks performed daily – or can they be grouped together for a day at home?

§ Do you have a suitable workspace and the proper equipment at home?

§ Can you work without interruptions?

Work that may be well suited to teleworking

§ Conducting research

§ Analyzing data

§ Phone-intensive tasks

§ Reviewing proposals and reports

§ Writing reports and correspondence

§ E-mail communications

§ Creating spreadsheets and graphics

§ Using online systems
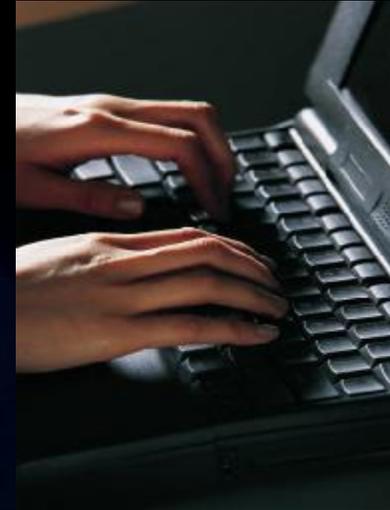
Work that may not be suitable for teleworking

§ If the employee needs face-to-face contact with the supervisor, other employees, or the general public.

§ If the employee needs frequent access to materials than cannot be moved from the regular office.

§ If it would be too costly to duplicate the same level of security at the alternate workplace.

Good Candidates for Teleworking

§ Experienced at their job

§ Strong work ethic

§ Self-starter

§ Disciplined

§ Well-organized

§ Flexible

§ Innovative

§ Problem solver

§ Technology troubleshooter

First Steps

1. Begin with a pilot program

2. Establish a trial period and set a date to evaluate it

3. Start by teleworking just a few days per week

4. Select only the right jobs and tasks

5. Select the right employees and managers

6. Establish productivity standards

7. Set up a well designed work area

8. Establish a teleworking handbook with polices that address:

- Hardware and software costs plus upgrades

- Expense reimbursements (voice and data lines plus usage charges, consumables)

- Hours of availability by phone

- Security, liability, and safety

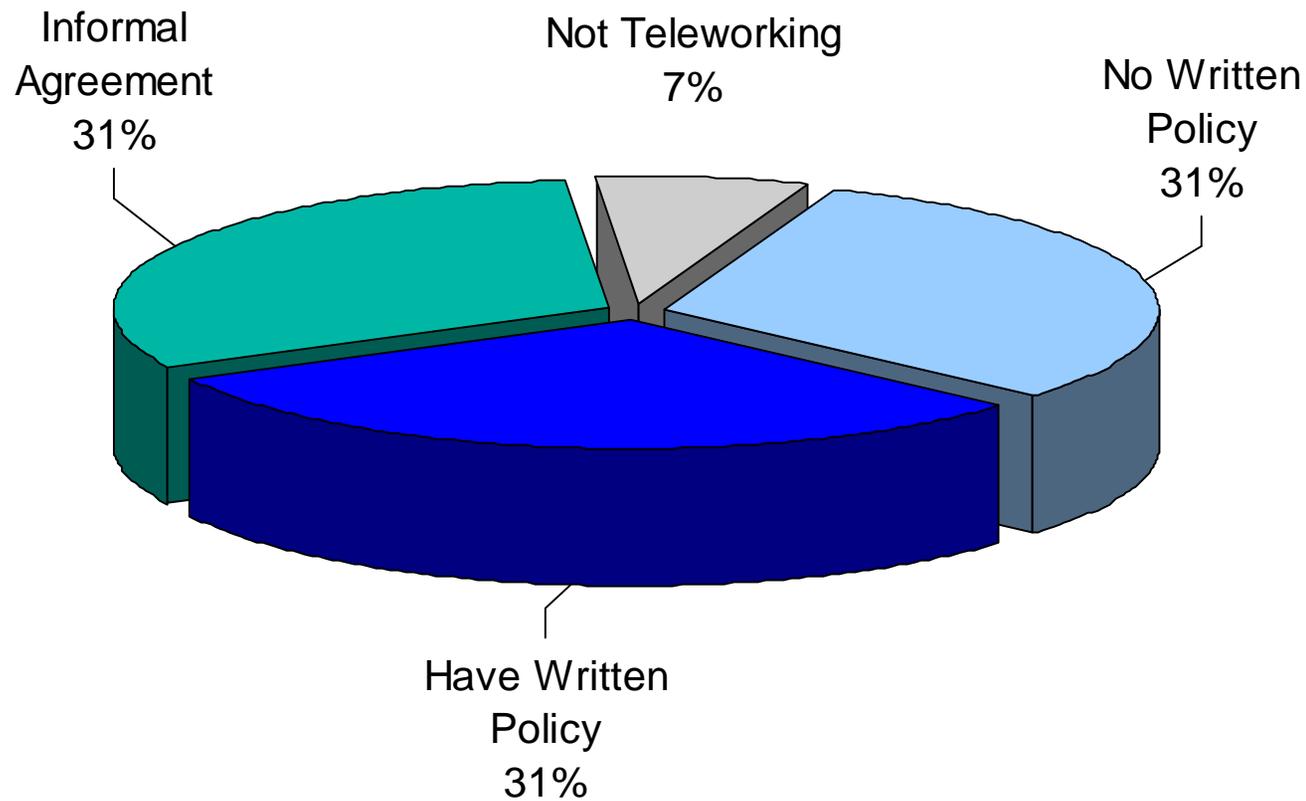- Work plans, progress reporting, and performance expectations

9. Make sure that everybody knows the terms of the arrangement

10. Keep regular work hours

11. Review the program

Teleworking Policies
in Philanthropy

Informal
Agreement
31%

Not Teleworking
7%

No Written
Policy
31%

Have Written
Policy
31%

Source: Telecommuting / Teleworking in Philanthropy survey of 44 organizations – April 2002

Broadband Communications

§ Boosts efficiency, improves communications, facilitates information sharing and allows remote workers to telecommute inexpensively

§ Always-on access to the Internet make all networks increasingly vulnerable to intruders

§ You'll need to install and maintain a combination of Internet security devices and software

Internet Access Options

	Availability	10MB Download Min:Sec	Cost	Networkable	Issues
56KB modem *(Dialup)*	Available everywhere	29:36	~$20 per month	No	Requires existing phone line
Cable Modem *(Always on)*	Limited access in commercial areas	:26	~$40 per month	Yes	Speed degrades as neighbors access cable
DSL *(Always on)*	Rapid national deployment – mostly in metropolitan areas and suburbs	:26	~$40 per month	Through the use of a router not supplied by DSL provider	Must be within ~3 miles of a DSL switching office

Technical Considerations

§ Get professional help when choosing and installing a remote access solution

§ Provide ongoing technical support

§ Implement firewalls and high network security - encrypt all data transmissions

§ Ensure reliable, redundant high-speed remote access

§ Develop a realistic plan for what to do <u>when</u> the Internet connection fails

Lessons Learned

Mary Ellen Craig – Director
American Express Foundation

"Support by my foundation's senior management is critical to the success of my teleworking arrangement."

"I now work from my home office 2 days a week - that eliminates 8 hours of commuting. I actually work longer hours and it's much more productive for me and my company."

"At the outset I needed to set ground rules for my colleagues, family members, and friends."

"Colleagues in other groups who telecommute and aren't flexible about coming into the office for important meetings aren't viewed favorably by their peers."

"It's my company's policy to review all teleworking arrangements every six months."

Mike Sutton – Program Officer
David and Lucile Packard Foundation

"Telecommuting is a huge issue for staff productivity, morale, and retention."

"Being able to work from my home office was a key factor in my accepting this position."

"People who live close to the office don't always appreciate the importance of this arrangement."

"Most of our program officers work from home a couple of days each week."

"Telecommuting is more feasible now that I have full access to all of my workplace desktop applications and data."

"Security has been a major concern of our IT department. The foundation installed a hardware firewall in my home office."

Technology Resources

Articles about technology, industry trends, surveys, and links to references of special interest to foundations and nonprofits.

The site is updated regularly

www.iaa.com/resources.html

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