The Ecology of the Mobile Worker

Excerpt 1 - Mobile Work and Time/Activity Patterns

Becker, F., Quinn, K. L., & Callentine, L. U. (1995). *The Ecology of the Mobile Worker*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University International Workplace Studies Program.

This research assessed the effects on the sales force of a large American computer company of adopting a mobile workplace strategy in which sales staff could choose to work at home, a telework center with nonterritorial workstations, or at their customer's. We wanted to better understand how demographic characteristics of the employees affected their response to the mobile work approach; and also how they actually worked, in terms of time/activity and communication patterns.

The most productive work hours for all employees tended to be in the normal working hour range of 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. However, almost 40% of the 105 respondents found non-traditional hours to be productive (see below).

Almost 40% of the respondents reported their most effective work time to be *outside* the traditional 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. workday.

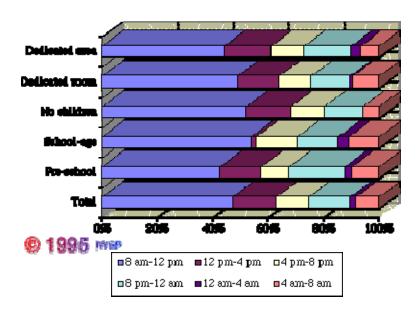


Figure 11: Most productive work hours.

The most productive work setting was reported to be the home environment. Users cited fewer interruptions and better concentration at home as explanations for why they preferred this environment. Surprisingly, there were no significant differences for household composition, home workspace, or gender.

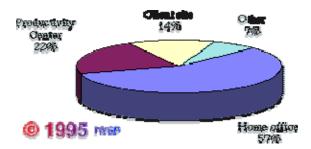


Figure 13: Overall work effectiveness.