

**THE VIABILITY OF TELEWORK IN SRI LANKA
(BASED ON STUDY CARRIED OUT IN THE WESTERN
PROVINCE)**

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Abstract

Sri Lankan commuters daily face problems of transport in traveling to and from their places of work. Traffic Congestion, poor road conditions and an inadequate public transport system creates unnecessary hassles and stress for the average commuter.

The aim of this research was to ascertain if teleworking can be introduced as a viable alternative mode of working to eradicate the problems faced in commuting as well as bring about economical, environmental and social benefits in terms of increase productivity, reduced real estate and administration costs, less pollution and improved quality of life for employees.

The objectives of this project are to identify critical success factors for teleworking and determine if Sri Lanka is able to meet the needs for teleworking,

and to find out what the perceptions of information workers and their employees are with regard to teleworking. A survey was carried out by means of e-mail questionnaires and telephone interviews and also with face to face interviews with a few employers to get their feedback on the subject.

It was found that many employees seem agreeable with the idea of telework, and also that several employers would not mind certain of their employees teleworking. But it was also found that several challenges exist in relation to telework. From an employees point of view certain assumed benefits such as enablement of more free time and savings in costs were not perceived. Similarly employers thought that employees being disciplined to telework, security concerns, difficulty of monitoring & measuring performance and opposition from senior management would be obstacles to telework. Also employees did not see much benefit from telework in the aspects of improving productivity and cutting costs.

Therefore although a rather positive answer was received regarding willingness to telework of both employees and employers, many future challenges which need to be addressed before adopting telework were also found.