

# Virtual Work and Telework: Challenges and Perspectives

## **CED Conference: Here or There**

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**By**

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# “Before” and “After” (very short) Surveys

1. Voluntary and no individual identification
2. Data held confidential
3. Results will be used by Verbeke/Schulz to assess the *State-of-Telemarketing* in Calgary
4. Summary of results available through CED
5. “After” survey at end of today’s conference
6. Hand in surveys 1 and 2 as you leave today
7. Complete survey 1 now

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# Overview of Applied Research

## Virtual Work and Telework

**Illegems & Verbeke**

*Moving Towards the  
Virtual Workplace*

(Edward Elgar, 2004)



**Verbeke, Schulz, Greidanus, Hambley**

*Growing the Virtual Workplace: The Integrative Value  
Proposition for Telework*

(Edward Elgar, 2008)

- 5 years of research
- Brussels sample
- Managers from 83 organizations and 260+ employees
- Focus on modeling and measuring societal impacts

- Funded by Transport Canada (2005-2007)
- Calgary sample
- Managers from 14 organizations and 280+ employees (survey/focus groups)
- Synthesis of all past insights; many tips
- Integrative approach (EOS-model)
- Focus on tracking and impact measurement

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# Virtual Work and Telework – Key Concepts

1. **Substitution of virtual travel  
(via communications technology)  
for work-related real travel**
2. **Paid work outside main office  
- At home or other location(s)**
3. **Occasional, part-time, or full-time telework**
4. **Includes peak shifting**

# Worldwide Telework Adoption Rates

Source: Adapted from Gartner, 2005

| Year | Worldwide Teleworkers (> 8 hr/month). | Penetration of Employee Population |
|------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 2003 | 63.29                                 | 2.2%                               |
| 2004 | 73.78                                 | 2.6%                               |
| 2005 | 82.47                                 | 2.8%                               |
| 2006 | 89.46                                 | 3.2%                               |
| 2007 | 94.88                                 | 3.2%                               |
| 2008 | 100.13                                | 3.3%                               |

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# Precursors to Virtual Work and Telework

1. Teleconferencing with remote branches
2. Practice of out of office meetings
3. Senior manager(s) who telework(s)
4. Strategic recruitment (e.g., talent in other locations)
5. Systematic employee e-mail checking from home or when traveling
6. Traffic gridlock
7. Ten conventional approaches (see below)

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# Conventional Adoption Approaches (1)

**Approach 0 - Management doesn't trust employees = no telework**

**Approach 1 - Employee driven: Personal circumstance**

- **Maternity leave**
- **Accommodation for injury**

**Approach 2 - Employee driven: Lifestyle focus**

- **Desire for work/life balance at home**
- **Childcare, eldercare**

**Approach 3 - Employee driven: Lifestyle flexibility**

- **Desire for work/life balance related to hobbies or volunteering**

**Approach 4 - Employee driven: Work productivity focus**

- **Focused time to work on reports, proposals, etc.**
- **More frequent time offsets (arrive late, leave early)**

## Conventional Adoption Approaches (2)

**Approach 5 - Employee driven: Equity focus**

**Opportunity provided to more employees through HR**

**Approach 6 - HRM department driven: Equity focus**

**Opportunity provided to all employees through HR**

**Approach 7 - Corporate driven: Cost savings focus**

**Office space, parking, other overhead costs**

**Corporation provides laptops and connections to encourage telework**

**Approach 8 - Corporate driven: Culture or philosophy focus**

**Walk the talk on sustainability, and corporate social responsibility**

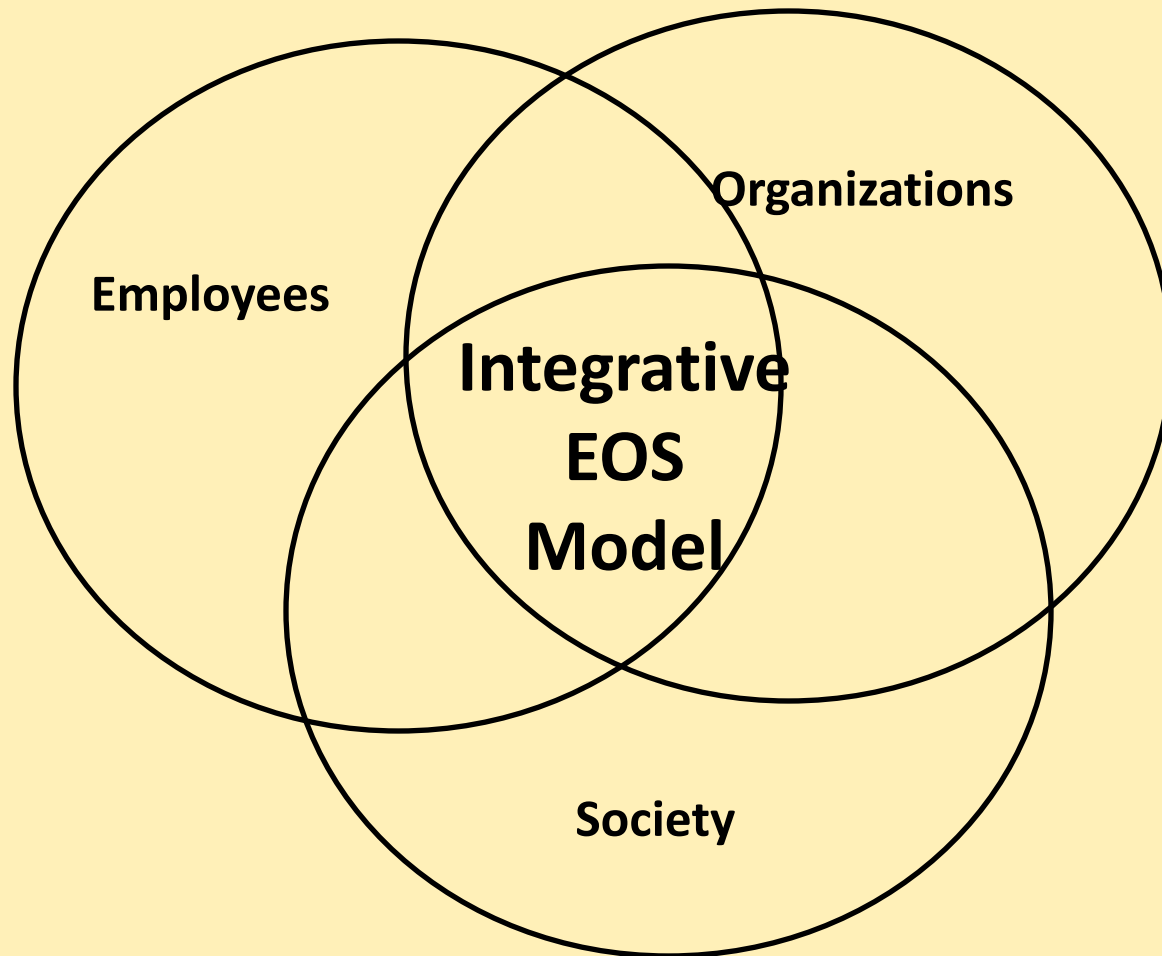
**Approach 9 - Corporate driven: Extension of integrity**

**Think global, act local for environment**

**Approach 10 - Corporate driven: Local corporate alliances**

**Organized traffic peak offsets**

# New Approach: Integrative Value Proposition for Virtual Work and Telework EOS Model



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## **Table 11.4**

### **Employees' Highest Rated Perceived Positive Impacts of Telework**

|   |             |
|---|-------------|
| <b>1. Flexibility of my working hours</b>   | <b>6.19</b> |
| <b>2. Job opportunities for disabled people</b>   | <b>6.04</b> |
| <b>3. My capability to continue to work when working in the office isn't possible (e.g., downtown bomb scare)</b> | <b>6.00</b> |
| <b>4. Possibilities for childcare and eldercare</b>   | <b>5.92</b> |
| <b>5. My job satisfaction</b>   | <b>5.90</b> |

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|   |             |
|---|-------------|
| <b>6. My job satisfaction</b>                   | <b>5.90</b> |
| <b>7. Overall quality of my life</b>            | <b>5.84</b> |
| <b>8. My ability to structure my workday</b>    | <b>5.78</b> |
| <b>9. Flexibility of my employment contract</b> | <b>5.71</b> |
| <b>10. My independence/autonomy</b>             | <b>5.66</b> |
| <b>11. Balancing my work and non-work life</b>  | <b>5.65</b> |

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## Table 11.3

# Employees' Perceived Negative Impacts of Telework

|  |      |
|--|------|
| 1. My relationships with employees who do not telework | 3.63 |
| 2. Informal training possibilities (e.g., mentoring)   | 3.74 |
| 3. Communication with other employees                  | 3.83 |
| 4. Scheduling meetings                                 | 3.89 |
| 5. Promotion opportunities                             | 3.91 |

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## Table 12.2

# Organizations' Highest Rated Perceived Positive Impacts of Telework

|  |      |
|--|------|
| 1. Employee retention  | 6.36 |
| 2. Employee loyalty  | 6.21 |
| 3. Employment contract flexibility<br>(e.g., move from full to part-time status) | 6.00 |
| 4. Adjustment capability when<br>catastrophes occur (e.g. bomb/bird flu )        | 5.93 |
| 5. Ability to respond to environmental<br>regulations/concerns                   | 5.93 |

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|   |             |
|---|-------------|
| <b>6. Relations with trade unions</b>                                       | <b>5.93</b> |
| <b>7. Recruiting potential</b>  | <b>5.86</b> |
| <b>8. Employee commitment to excellence</b>                                 | <b>5.79</b> |
| <b>9. Image of the organization<br/>(e.g., environmentally responsible)</b> | <b>5.64</b> |
| <b>10. Organizational culture</b>   | <b>5.57</b> |
| <b>11. Working time (i.e., number of work hours per day)</b>                | <b>5.57</b> |
| <b>12. Job opportunities for disabled people</b>                            | <b>5.57</b> |

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# Table 12.1

## Organizations' Perceived Negative Impacts of Telework

|  |      |
|--|------|
| 1. Social contact                                    | 3.21 |
| 2. Teamwork  | 3.21 |
| 3. Manager's ability to supervise employees          | 3.29 |
| 4. Scheduling meetings                               | 3.29 |
| 5. Costs of information and communication technology | 3.29 |

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# Important Observation

- 1. Systematic underestimation of positive effects and overestimation of negative effects by non - teleworkers (Table 11.5, p. 199)**
- 2. Changing the mindset is therefore critical  
(employee personality traits are not critical)**
- 3. Build-up of experience is critical (no turning back)**
- 4. Best practices information on impacts and tracking is critical**
- 5. Investments in impact assessment and tracking are critical**

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# Societal Impacts - City-Related ROI

1. **Reduced road construction and maintenance costs**
2. **Reduced emissions**
3. **More accessible city core and risk mitigation**
4. **Calgary (most cities): few employers or employees aware of impact on city**
5. **Calgary: - 2% reduction in peaks has major impact**
6. **Scope for public-private sector cooperation (construction of telework centres on ring road expansion; standardized tracking and city-wide aggregation of data; crisis planning)**

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# Brussels – Annual Monetary Savings in External Costs by Teleworking

1. Road congestion
2. Air pollution
3. Noise pollution
4. Road accidents
5. Energy savings (pre 2005)

**For 1.5 days/week for 15.3% penetration of commuters**

**= 240 million euros (\$C 336 million)**

**for a city of 1 million people**

# Telework - Future Considerations/Drivers

1. Emission offset credits for CO<sub>2</sub> -- \$/ton not high enough yet
2. Possible need to track supply chain emissions (including employees) for ISO14064 in 2008
3. Corporate leadership needed, but government agencies (cities and provinces) need to show leadership too
4. Tracking tools will become integrated in conventional accounting/performance monitoring metrics
5. More precise estimates for ROI to individuals, corporations, governments

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## Table 12.3

# Work Group Telework Penetration Potential

Source: Normative information from Canadian and US corporations,  
Canadian Telework Registry, 2006 and Verbeke/Schulz

| <u>Work Group</u>        | <u>Telework Penetration Potential</u> |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Peak shifting            | 85% - 100%                            |
| IT (mostly Sox required) | 85% - 100%                            |
| Exec. Management         | 70% - 73%                             |
| Line Management          | 20% - 30%                             |
| Finance-Legal-Accounting | 15% - 20%                             |

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