Casual Friday for the Telecommuter

Working from home

Firing a telecommuter is a lot easier than doing the same with an "in-house" employee, and working alone in remote solitude is not for everyone. It does have the advantage of avoiding the proverbial "rat race" on the motorway every day, and it does allow you to have more flexibility in your schedule. Telecommuters are not substantially different from any other type of employee, with the exception that you don't see them while they are working; only what they produce. I've had a particular good experience with telecommuting.

Last fall, I happened to come across a site while looking for opportunities to telecommute and freelance write. One add struck me, and I contacted the editor of that website through an e-mail message. At the time they were looking for writers and I pitched a column idea to them. Within a few days I was contacted and told that I could start writing a column on a biweekly basis. My column, *Technosporting*, was instantly welcome with great enthusiasm. Within a month it was increased to weekly.

From that day on I've been asked to contribute with several articles in addition to my regular column. My employer is in Texas and I live in Florida. Although we've only met personally once, we have a wonderful working relationship. Now, what I do is not like working hourly. I get paid by what I turn in, but that's fine by me, and it works well for my employer as well. It also allows me to work for more than one employer and I can earn as much as I am willing or able to work.

Of course, anybody considering getting into telecommuting had better think long and hard about it. While in examples like my case you can set your own hours, you'd better have the self-discipline to get your work done, and deliver things on deadline. There are no exceptions, no bad days, and failure is simply not an option. As for me, I'm quite proud of what I have accomplished as a telecommuter.

Paul Campbell

A. Skim the text and choose the correct word to complete the summary.

Paul doesn't regret being a **(1) telecommuting / telecommuter**. He sees in it a lot of **(2) disadvantages / advantages** but working on your **(3) own / alone** is not for everyone. He is now a freelance writer and loves it. His column was a great **(4) failure / success** and is now published every **(5) week / weekly**. Not only can he work for more than one **(6) employee / employer** but he can also **(7) make / win** much more money.

B. TRUE or FALSE? Quote from the text to support your answers.

1. Telecommuters have more job security compared to other workers. TRUE/FALSE

2. Traffic is no problem for a telecommuter. TRUE/FALSE

3. Paul was looking for a job on the Internet. TRUE/FALSE

4. Paul has regular meetings with his employer in Texas. TRUE/FALSE

5. Paul doesn't have a fixed salary. TRUE/FALSE

6. Telecommuting provides more working opportunities for Paul. TRUE/FALSE

C. Find the synonyms for the following words in the 1st and 2nd paragraph.

1. to dismiss (an employee) from a job _____

2. the state or situation of being alone _____

3. to find something by chance _____

4. to find particularly interesting, noticeable, or impressive _____

5. to persuade someone to accept (something) _____

D. "On a biweekly basis" (2nd paragraph) means:

1) twice a week	**2)** every week
3) every two weeks	**4)** every month

E. Rephrase the following sentences as started without changing their meaning.

1. They expect that Paul will be a very successful freelancer.

Paul ...

2. Paul didn't get much sleep last night in order to deliver his work on time.

Paul didn't get much sleep last night so that ...

3. They didn't pay him enough, so Paul quit his job.

Paul ... so he quit his job.

5. We believed that the editor of the website had already contacted Paul.

It ...

6. Paul works very hard so that he doesn't miss any deadline.

Paul works very hard so as ...

F. Complete the following text with the words supplied below.

save arrangement schedule professionals remotely strategic flexible distractions efficiency online

Now more than ever, it is possible for many different types of _____ to work from home. As technology becomes increasingly pervasive and more companies move their operations _____, many tasks can become completed _____.

More and more businesses are allowing employees to work from home, even it is only for just a few days a week. While this can increase the _____ of an individual worker, eliminating commute time and office _____, for example, it can also _____ the company valuable resources.

If you're thinking about working from home, you should make a _____ plan to approach your employer.

Decide on what type of _____ you would be interested in, and what would work best for both you and your company. Also be prepared to be _____ when negotiating a work from home _____. The more flexibility you suggest to your employer, the better your chances of getting a "yes" answer.