

Social Implications of a Computerized Society

Computers in the Workplace

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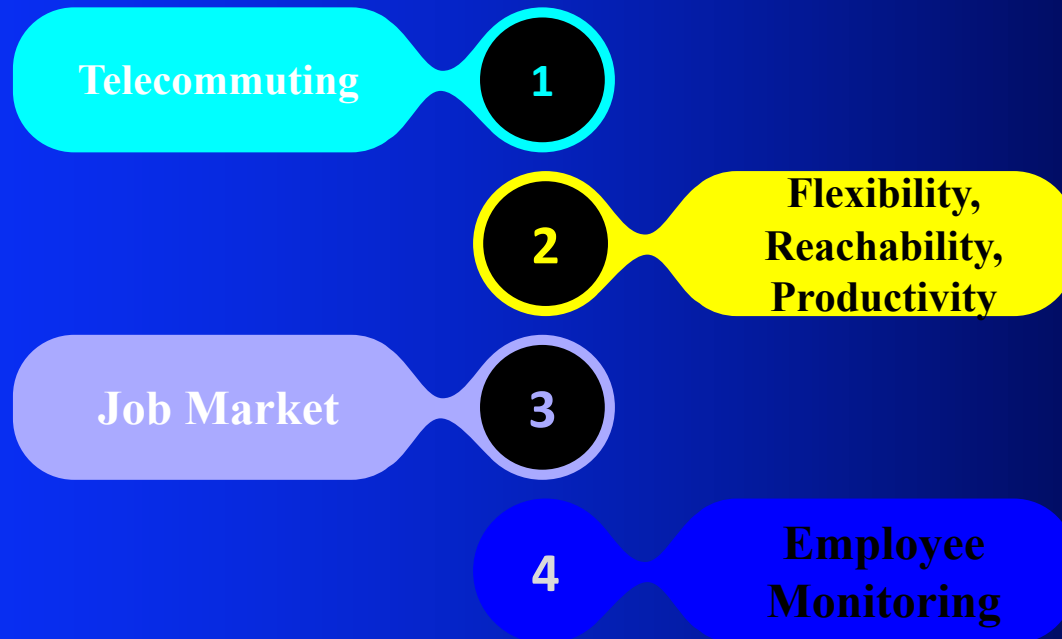
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Main Topics

- The Impact on Work Environments
- Flexibility, Reachability, Productivity
- Job Market Dynamics
- Employee Crime
- Employee Monitoring

Key Topics

EXAMPLE WITH 5 PARTS



The Impact of IT on Work Environment: Themes

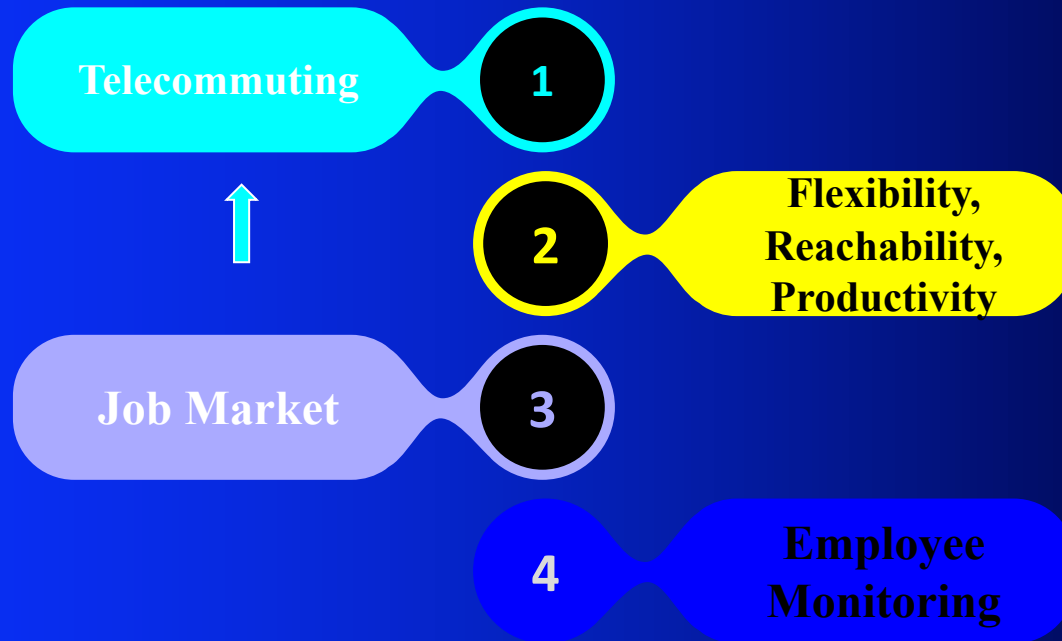
- Access to Employees
 - time and space: employees can communicate after hours and at home
- Flexibility
 - employees can work after hours and at home
- Information about Employees
 - screening before hiring
 - monitoring during work

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Flexibility IN space

Key Topics

EXAMPLE WITH 5 PARTS



Telecommuting

- Work From Home (WFH) using a computer electronically linked to one's place of employment
- Mobile office using a laptop, working out of your car or at customer locations
- Fulltime and part-time telecommuting
- See Canvas survey
- What benefits do you see in telecommuting (and to whom)?
- What downsides do you see in telecommuting (and to whom)?

Telecommuting: Benefits

Employers	Employees	Society
Reduce need to maintain physical office	<u>Less Commuting Time/Money</u>	Reduce traffic congestion, pollution
Wide geographic hiring	Save money on work clothes	
Fewer disruptions from storms, blizzards etc	Work/life balance (errands, child care)	

Telecommuting: Downsides

Employers	Employees	Society
Data Security Risks	Take on cost of office space/electricity	?
<u>Corporate Loyalty may weaken</u>	Cramped home spaces	
Employee collaborations may suffer: brainstorming, coordinating, conflict resolution, onboarding	isolation	
Resentment from office workers (SFU staff)	Reduced promotion chances	
	Blurred work/home boundaries	

Hybrid Work: A Closer Look

- Robert Kelly: home/family boundaries
- About 70% of firms plan to move to hybrid work model
 - Some time at home, some in the office
- Just under 70% of U.S. workers want some time at home
- Wide variance in time preferences
 - Including gender bias
- WFH much lower chance of promotion than full-time office workers
- Productivity went up during lock-down

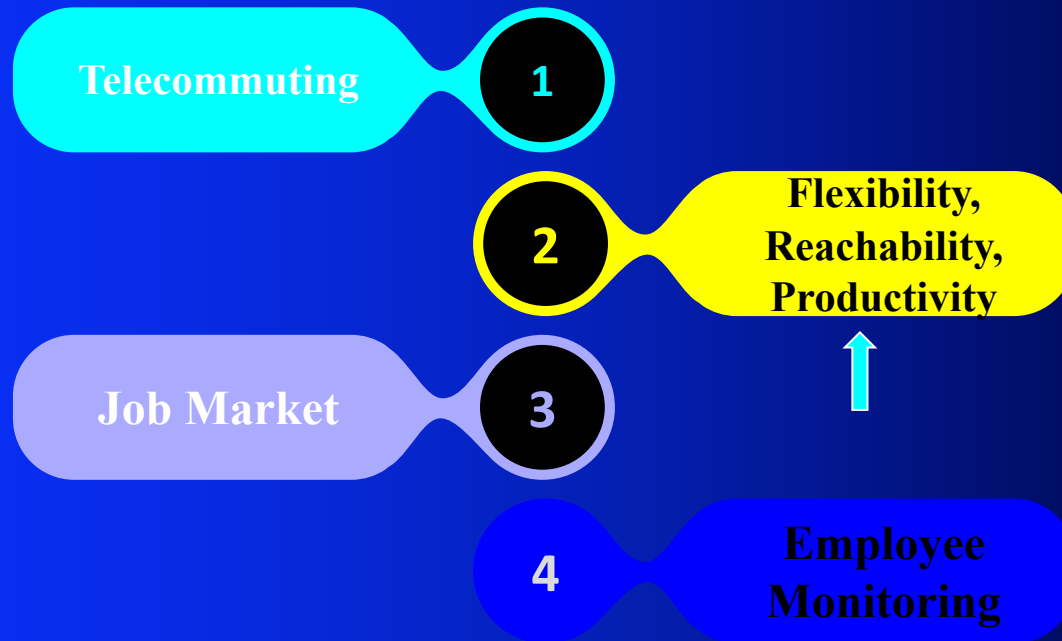
Telecommuting Surveys

- These resources will not be on quiz/exam.
- Promoted by many people, [CIO Insight](#)
- Various surveys with statistics [here](#) and [here](#)
- [Cisco Survey](#)



Flexibility in time

Key Topics



Reachability and Productivity

- Study that those distracted by emails and phone calls saw a 10-point fall in their IQ
- Research shows that it takes 25 minutes to reach full productivity after an interruption.
- But we are interrupted every 3 minutes
- Some companies have restricted email
- Replace with slack, social networks

Reachability and Well-Being

- Individuals experience anxiety, declare e-mail bankruptcy
- Long work hours lead to sleep deprivation in Americans
- Canada 3rd-most sleep-deprived country

Employment Trends: Are We Working More?

- See Canvas survey Time Poverty
- Are we working more?
 - People work fewer hours compared to the Industrial Revolution.
 - But the average American worker puts in 200 hours more per year than in 1973 (J. Schor).
 - Tax law, benefits encourage overtime work rather than hiring additional workers.
 - One-earner per household used to be sufficient for middle class.
 - Free time the major concern for U.S. workers.
- Some Canadian studies report an increasing time crunch

BC High Tech Legislation

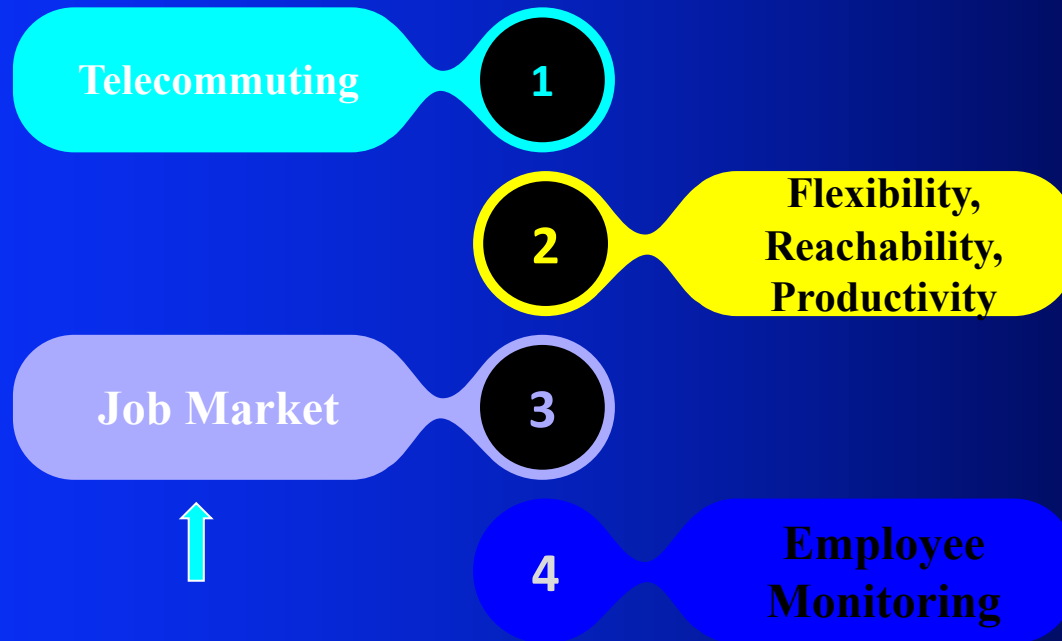
- BC high technology companies are exempt from some labour regulations like paying overtime for extra work
- Can lead to disputes about when the exception applies

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Information: Screening and recruiting

Key Topics

EXAMPLE WITH 5 PARTS



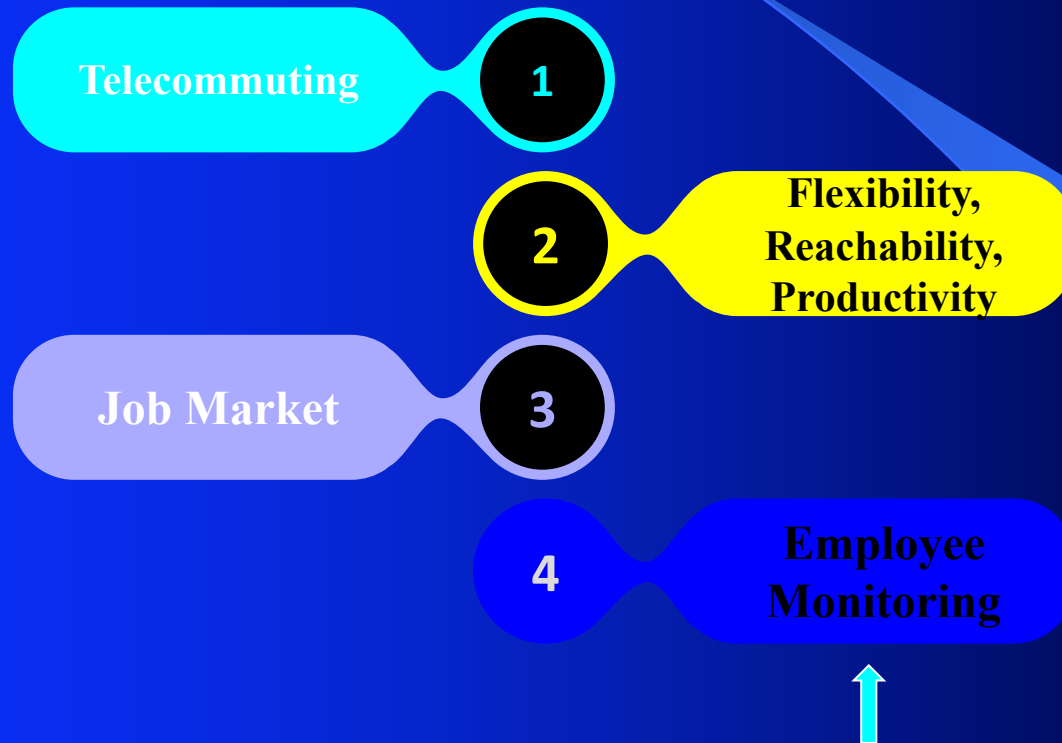
New Job Market Dynamics

Getting a Job:

- Learning about jobs and companies
 - Online company histories and annual reports
 - Job search and resume sites (monster.ca)
 - Online training
- Learning about applicants and employees
 - Search online newsgroups and social networks
 - Legal advice from Monster
 - Prospective employees may craft an online profile and presence geared towards the job they want

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Information: Employee monitoring



Cyberloafing

- Stats from large U.S. companies
- In 1 day
 - 50,000 YouTube videos
 - 4,000 hours of music
- In 1 month, 5M videos
- Percentage stats
- University students also cyberloaf
- See canvas survey “cyberloafing”

Employee Monitoring

Monitoring is not new

- Early monitoring was mostly ‘blue-collar’ (factory) and ‘pink-collar’ (telephone and clerical) jobs
- Time-clocks and logs
- Output counts at the end of the day
- Bosses patrolled the aisles watching workers

Modern Employee Monitoring

Data Entry, Phone Work, and Retail:

- Data entry
 - Key stroke quotas
 - Encourage competition
 - Beep when workers pause
- Phone work
 - Number and duration of calls
 - Idle time between calls
 - Randomly listen in on calls
- Retail
 - Surveillance to reduce theft by employees

Employee Monitoring Discussion Questions

- How much privacy is reasonable for an employee to expect in the workplace?
- Under what circumstances is it appropriate for an employer to read an employee's e-mail?

Employee Monitoring: E-mail

E-Mail, Voice Mail:

- E-mail and voice mail at work
 - Employees often assume passwords mean they are private
 - Roughly half of major companies in the U.S. monitor or search employee e-mail, voice mail, or computer files.
 - Most companies monitor infrequently, some routinely intercept all e-mail.
 - Over half have fired employees for e-mail/web use.
 - Microsoft: access private, password-protected folders on work computers.

Employee Monitoring: Web use

- Some companies block specific sites (e.g. adult content, sports sites, job search sites, social-network sites)
- Employees spend time on non-work activities on the Web (cyberloafing)
- Concerns over security threats such as viruses and other malicious software
- Concerns about inappropriate activities by employees (e.g., harassment, unprofessional comment) - see [NYT article](#).

Employee Monitoring: legal aspects

- Law and cases
 - Electronic Communications Privacy Act (ECPA) prohibits interception of e-mail and reading stored e-mail without a court order, but makes an exception for business systems
 - Courts put heavy weight on the fact that computers, mail, and phone systems are owned by the employer who provides them for business purposes

Employee Monitoring: Labour Relations

- Courts have ruled against monitoring done for protected employee communications (US):
 - discussing working conditions
 - union activities
 - whistle blowing
- Many employers have privacy policies regarding e-mail and voice mail
- The B.C. Labour Relations Board sets rules and decides cases about worker-employer relations

Social Media Use By Employees

- 1/3 of multinational companies took disciplinary action against employees for misuse of social media
- School district fired teacher for photo of her drinking in a bar
- Social services organization fired 5 employees for criticizing working conditions on Facebook
- Sheriff fired deputy for “liking” a Facebook campaign page by an election rival

Conclusion

- Information technology increases flexibility, access, and monitoring
- Telecommuting: flexible work place
- Often flexible non-standard work hours on-line
- Employee monitoring: social media use, emails sent from company computers