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**Moderator: Frances Jefferson
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Coordinator: Welcome and thank you for standing by. At this time all participants are in a listen-only mode until the question and answer period. If you'd like to ask a question at that time please press star 1 on your touchtone phone. Today's conference is being recorded, if you have any objections you may disconnect at this time.

Now I would like to turn the meeting over to Frances Jefferson. You may begin.

Frances Jefferson: Thank you. Good morning to some and afternoon to others. Let me apologize for the long wait you had. We have over 300 that were waiting in queue. But welcome to this first Flex-Options teleconference in the new decade and new year 2010--where family issues will continue to be at the forefront.

The topic today is very appropriate, "Flex-Options: Best Practices in the New Year". For those of you who are joining this call today, let me say we are confident you will have a positive learning experience. I am Fran Jefferson, Denver Regional Administrator for the U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau and a Team Leader for the Flex-Options project with Michael Williams who is an Economist with the Women's Bureau National Office.

Before we introduce our speakers today, I'd like to share some quick information about the Flex-Options Project. This begins the sixth year in which the Women's Bureau has been focusing on Flex-Options as a means to working with employers to create more flexible workplaces by providing them

with resources that include peer mentoring, networking, teleconferences, discussion groups, and flexibility workshops.

Over the years, the project has been able to offer those resources to all types of organizations. To date, we are pleased to note that more than 800 organizations employing nearly 1.2 million people created more flexible workplaces. The program has helped businesses launch nearly 2000 workplace flexibility practices.

Additionally, we've joined business leaders across the U.S. to host more than 400 flexibility workshops and events. These teleconferences have drawn more than 4500 participants. If you are new to Flex-Options or would like more info about the project please visit our Web site at www.flexoptions.org.

We have posted many free resources to help you including our very popular 40-page "Flex-Options Guide" that is loaded with tools and templates to help you create more flexibility in your workplaces. Please make sure we have your email addresses and we will send you our bimonthly newsletter.

The January newsletter has just been released and is available on our Web site. It is now my pleasure to introduce you to our National contractors who have partnered with the Women's Bureau on this project since its inception-- Karen Kerrigan, President and CEO of Women Entrepreneurs, Inc. in Washington, DC and Linda Roundtree, President of Roundtree Consulting in Renton, Washington.

I will now turn this over to Linda who will introduce the agenda and speakers. Linda.

Linda Roundtree: Thanks Fran and welcome everyone. I'm very pleased to introduce our first speaker today, Danette Campbell, Telework Advisor for the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Danette is responsible for the agency's comprehensive and award-winning telework and hoteling programs which she'll share more with you today.

She is a well-recognized expert and advisor in the telework field and has testified before Congress and shared her knowledge with various global associations and committees.

In 2007, the U.S. Patent and Trade Office received the Alliance for Work Life Professionals prestigious Work Life Innovative Excellence Award for its telework program. And recently the agency was recognized by the Telework Exchange for its best use of innovative and technology to support telework.

Previously Danette worked for the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments where she provided oversight of public and private sector telework in the region and was instrumental in the development of programs such as Telework Virginia and Telework Partnership with Employers.

She holds a bachelor's degree from Lynchburg College and Public Manager Certification from George Washington. Danette, we're looking forward to learning from you. Welcome.

Danette Campbell: Thank you so much. It is certainly an honor and a pleasure to be with you all this afternoon. You know, best practices in telework require that effective telework management meet the challenges of an expanded workplace.

This is done by closing the impact of geographic distance, bringing onsite, and remote team members together around common goals, focusing on results, maintaining productivity, and communicating with the team.

The United States Patent and Trademark Office recognizes this and is considered a telework pioneer for its innovative and flexible programs in the federal government.

In 1997, the USPTO's Trademarks organization saw that there was a need to enhance customer service, improve productivity, and minimize space requirements. They believed that by helping eliminate employee's daily commutes, the employees may be more productive and customer focused.

At the time they needed additional office space so the telework program initially started by having people share offices and telework just a few days a week. Trademark started their first telework program in 1997 with 18 examining attorneys. Now there are 326 Trademark employees working from home four days a week and 162 work from home between one and three days a week.

By saving space costs, maximizing productivity, and retaining the highest quality employees, Trademarks continues to maintain an efficient and effective workforce that provides superior customer service to its clients.

The USPTO Patents organization followed Trademarks lead and continues to grow its telework program as well. Patents currently has almost 1800 patent employees who have relinquished their office space and are teleworking four days a week. There are 2200 additional Patent employees teleworking in Patents as well.

The USPTO's vision of telework is to provide a balanced work life program for our employees while advancing agency goals in productivity, efficiency and space planning.

Our telework participants have increased flexibility which helps translate to higher levels of productivity. Participating employees have demonstrated an improved work product as a result of fewer distractions when they work away from the office. And fewer distractions equate to better customer service.

Agency-wide, we have more than 5000 employees working from home between one and four days a week. Our telework programs provide space and related cost savings and provide for continuity of operations planning while helping to position our agency as an employer of choice.

Key elements to a successful telework program include having a strong well-communicated telework policy and business unit guidelines, having clearly defined performance measures, conducting pilot programs with pre and post-pilot surveys, setting clear expectations for customer service, incorporating good performance management practices, working in tandem with labor unions to develop telework programs and policies, incorporating comprehensive training programs for managers and teleworkers, ensuring that help desk personnel are thoroughly trained to assist our remote workers, duplicating desktop at home by ensuring full functionality while teleworking and using full disc encryption software which prevents an unauthorized person from accessing the data even if they have physical possession of the machine.

Our managers realize that to achieve the goal of a high-performing virtual team they must focus on communication, building an effective team, coaching for growth and success, rewards and recognition. They're instrumental in

setting the stage for strong two-way communication with the following fundamentals, timeliness, clarity, meaning, dependability and inclusiveness.

To improve communication amongst a virtual team our managers embrace the practices of holding virtual meetings, requiring project updates, using teleconferences and videoconferences, using voicemail and email effectively, establishing a team communication plan and building communication skills.

Telework is a carefully strategized business initiative at the Patent and Trademark Office and a great deal of effort goes into the scope and planning of each initiative. Those business units that have bargaining unit employees work closely with the unions and labor relations team to develop work agreements for individual telework programs.

I also work with the business units that do not have bargaining unit employees to design, develop and implement the telework process. This includes determining position eligibility for telework, designing pre-, mid- and post-pilot surveys, arranging and conducting focus sessions and writing a final report that addresses what went right and what didn't with the pilot.

At the end of the pilot process I present the final report to the business unit head for review and then the determination is made as to continuing in pilot status or program formalization.

Every business unit at USPTO has a telework coordinator who's also involved in the telework process. They're responsible for reporting quarterly business unit statistics and for attending quarterly telework coordinator meetings.

At the agency, we've developed a telework resource Website which provides information about the enterprise-wide telework policy, individual business

unit guidelines, frequently asked questions about telework, current research and media articles pertaining to telework, telework training materials for teleworkers and managers, the USPTO telework video highlighting our deputy commissioners and our hoteling employees in Patents and Trademarks, and links to telework resources outside of the agency.

This has become an excellent tool for providing education and resources to teleworkers and managers in the agency.

Looking ahead telework will continue to be an integral part of our business strategy to help support agency goals. We now have telework programs in all business units and will work toward expanding participation throughout the agency.

Linda, I'd like to turn the program back to you now.

Linda Roundtree: Danette, thank you so much for an excellent, excellent presentation. I wanted to check and see if Shirley Crews-Taylor has joined us?

Shirley Crews-Taylor: Yes I'm on.

Linda Roundtree: Okay Shirley, I'm going to do a short introduction and then we look forward to learning from you as well. So it's my pleasure to introduce Shirley Crews-Taylor who is the Director of the City of Houston's Flexible Workplace Initiative.

Shirley is responsible for consulting with Houston's CEOs and human resource professionals to keep them implementing flexible work options for their employees to keep Houston moving.

I expect that many of you on the call have heard about former Houston Mayor Bill White's globally-recognized Flex in the City Program. Well, Shirley will provide an update on this and the city's overall Flexible Workplace Initiative.

Previously Shirley worked as an HR and industrial psychology professional in multiple industries including oil and gas, retail, manufacturing, and education. She's very active in her community and involved in numerous professional organizations. She also volunteers as a coach to help educate youth about career development.

Shirley holds a master's degree in industrial psychology and organizational development from the University of Houston Clearlake and a bachelor's in business management from Alabama A&M. Shirley, we are very interested in hearing the latest about your innovative Flexible Work Program so welcome.

Shirley Crews-Taylor: Thank you so much, Linda, for that introduction and the time today. Yes, as Linda mentioned I do direct the Flexible Workplace Initiative Program. And this began as part of former Mayor Bill White's five-point plan to get Houston moving. And the program encourages area employers to use some type of flexible workplace option or policy to promote business activity and improve Houston mobility by getting a few cars off the road during key peak areas.

You might be aware that some examples of flexible work policies include flex-time (working hours different from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.), telecommuting (working from outside of the office), ride sharing, compressed work week, part-time or job sharing.

My focus as a consultant wouldn't be to direct an employer to one specific flexible work option over the other, but to help them build a business case around what works best for them and their culture.

To do that, we would go in and look at the culture, examine the policies, and help them to build a checklist that they can create a program and policy that works well for them.

Our program strategy is to raise awareness, create change, and also measure the impact of workplace flexibility and the numerous benefits to the community. One of our major activities -- and I'll talk a little bit about it in just a moment -- is our *Flex in the City* Program.

Our *Flex in the City* program is just a two-week pilot for employers who may not have any type of flexible work options to try it to see if they like it. During that two-week period, we allow employers to register and participate by measuring the productivity during those two weeks and then they allow their employees to come on our Website to register which freeway they'll be taking, which flexible work option they'll choose for that two-week period.

Employers then get to complete a post-survey about what the difference was and did productivity go down or increase. Employees have had an overwhelmingly positive reaction to the event. And we've been doing this about three years now.

Mayor Bill White's term ended last December, and as some of you may have heard, the city of Houston has a new mayor. We'll be doing some new things in 2010.

Some of you may have heard of the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation. The Sloan Foundation sponsors a national recognition award for companies and businesses that develop innovative workplace flexibility solutions. The City of Houston is currently going through this application process.

One of the objectives for the flexible workplace initiative is to promote business success where employers that are effective and flexible are more likely to have employees who are engaged, satisfied in their jobs, and just have a happier work life balance -- that's the overall goal.

We also want to promote community success. Communities that have effective workplaces can attract new employers as well as address other community issues.

Our target has been around transportation and getting Houston moving. So as a part of the *Flex in the City* event, we conduct a mobility measurement where the Department of Transportation actually measures the traffic on the major freeways in Houston.

Over the past three years, we've been able to save several user costs, minutes that employees are on the road, and also emission costs. Last year we changed the date of our Flex in the City event -- it had been in September of each year but because of hurricanes, we decided to move it to the month of May.

Because of this short notice change, we didn't have as many employers participate. We still, however, saved \$5.3 million in user costs and that's just been a remarkable program -- very successful, benefits all around. And even if we want to look at some of the benefits of going green or reducing emissions

for the Houston area, we've been able to do great things with this two-week pilot program.

It's also been an opportunity to introduce it to employers who might have been reluctant to implement a full-fledged flexible work policy. And so once we conduct a survey and mobility measurement is done, we go back to the employer and share with them the data that we've collected over a two-week period. Several of our employers really enjoyed participating in that.

In our first year we had over 140 companies participate. Due to hurricanes and other issues, the number of employers dropped over the last year. So we conducted a post-survey to see why those employers that had participated initially didn't participate in the previous year.

We were very pleased to discover that over 50% of those employers that participated in the pilot had gone on to implement some type of flexible work option for their company. And just about every department had some type of flexible work option.

The program itself does several things to promote flexible work options and to get employers participating with this and to be recognized. In addition to the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Award -- a national award that recognizes excellence in workplace flexibility -- we have a local designation called a *Flexible Workplace Employer* through the city of Houston. If the employer meets certain criteria, they can participate and use that logo on their Web site which shows that the City of Houston recognizes them as a flexible workplace employer.

This helps with recruitment and there are several other benefits to being recognized. The criteria for our *Flexible Workplace Employer* designation

includes that **35%** of managers need to be knowledgeable about flexible work options and how to leverage the advantages of that.

Seventy-five percent of the jobs need to be evaluated to see if they're suitable for flexible work options because, again, our program matches building a business case with flexible work options. **Eighty percent** of the employees need to understand the flexible work options that are available to them.

And at least **40%** of eligible employees need to participate in some type of flexible work option. We know because of the culture or just the work environment that it's hard to build a business case for every employer but if 40% of the eligible employees participate, their employer can be recognized.

We've had great success over the last three years with having several local employers apply for our *Flexible Workplace Employer* designation. In the fall, we also sponsor an award ceremony and luncheon.

We had over 40 companies to apply for The Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Award from the Houston community. We were very excited to know that last year there were 29 finalists from the Houston area and 24 winners. We had an awards luncheon and several of the Houston employers were able to come out and be recognized.

The vision of the Flexible Workplace Program is to continue the focus by improving Houston's mobility. We've been able to prove that if we can just a few cars off of the freeway during key traffic congestion times, we can go a long way with improving our emissions, improving stress levels and still being able to manage productivity.

We work with several partners in the Houston community such as (NuRide) -- a popular ride sharing system. The Houston-Galveston Area Council had several grants and other funds for employers that actually helped them set up a telecommuting office or satellite office.

So there are several things that we've been able to do in the past three years. We were very excited about former Mayor Bill White's vision. In the New Year, we plan to go in several directions and look forward to seeing what 2010 has to bring in terms of educating more employers about flexible work options and changing the way Houston works.

So I look forward to being able to consult with other CEOs and HR professionals in the Houston area to help them build a business case for workplace flexibility. Thank you.

Linda Roundtree: Thank you Shirley for a fantastic update on all of your programs. We are pleased to introduce our final speaker today, Laura Schoppe. She is the President of Fuentek, a consulting firm that provides intellectual property and technology management services.

Under her leadership, the firm has recorded more than \$2 million in annual revenue and is now the largest NASA contractor in North Carolina. Laura has been recognized with leadership awards by the Triangle Business Journal and Business Leader Magazine.

Her firm has received numerous awards -- including being recognized as one of North Carolina's top 100 women-owned businesses for the past four years. Prior to forming Fuentek in 2001, Laura was a program manager for Advanced Engineering at GE Aerospace Lockheed Martin responsible for,

among other things, leading a team of 16 engineers in developing innovative advanced signal imaging and information projects for the Navy.

Active in numerous professional organizations, Laura is passionate about education and helping students get involved in science. She holds an MBA from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, a master's degree in mechanical and aerospace engineering from Princeton, and a bachelor's from Carnegie Mellon. Laura, thanks so much for joining us today and welcome.

Laura Schoppe: Thank you very much. Having listened to our previous two speakers, I find it interesting that they're bringing really the public sector perspective and I'm going to give you more of the private sector perspective. There are a lot of similarities even though we're coming at it from two different angles.

Probably a good place to start is to explain to you when we started and why we started. Fuentek began in 2001. At that time, we weren't aware of any other commercial companies that were structured the way we were -- we were completely virtual right from the start. Everybody worked out of their home. They had their own computers and we were basically a 1099 structure, so everybody was an independent consultant.

And the reason we did that was that we were already working for clients helping them with their intellectual property, helping them find new uses for their technologies or solve some of their technology needs.

But the problem I was finding in managing many of these projects was that if I had a stable of engineers and scientists on staff, I had to use who was available and they may not have been a good match with what the client really needed. And that's just the reality of the corporate world. If you've got people sitting on overhead, you need to apply them as quickly as possible.

So I wanted to get away from that model, and making this a virtual organization gave me that flexibility. Our staff was available for projects that the client needed, but otherwise, we didn't have the constraint that we were paying them and had to have them sitting in the stable if they were not a match for the client.

So that actually provided flexibility on both sides -- the clients were getting the staff that they needed and the consultant staff were able to work on projects they really enjoyed because it was a good match them.

Now it would sound like it might be a little risky for the consultants, but it turns out that our work load picked up so quickly that it wasn't that big a risk. We like to say that most of our consultants are working as full time as they want to be.

We grew from a staff of three when we first started in 2001 to over 40 people right now. And actually, we're still hiring. Now that doesn't mean things don't ebb and flow -- because that's the reality of the consulting world. I think our staff does feel that they are working as much as they want to be on average throughout the year. They have tremendous flexibility that they didn't have before.

So our folks do not work 40 hours. In fact, when I take a look at timecards at the end of the week if I've got somebody that's working over 35 hours a week I get a little bit worried that they're working too hard and that we'd like them to be seeking that balance between their personal lives and their professional lives -- this structure has really allowed for that.

The other aspect that this virtual network allowed us was the ability to say no to projects that we were not a good match for. And that again helps us in delivering a better product for our clients and keeping our staff happy.

The way I view the organization is that I in fact have two sets of clients -- one are the companies that we work for and that are cutting me checks and the other are my consultant staff. And if they're not happy and they're not productive, they're going to leave the organization and I'm not going to be able to fulfill the contracts that we have.

And so I really have to be paying attention to both ends. And I have to be making sure that both sides of the equation are happy and productive. So being able to say no to contracts that aren't a good fit for us really did benefit that synergy between both sides.

The other aspect that I found very interesting when we started this organization and as we've grown is that there are some keys to success in a virtual organization that are not always obvious.

One of the aspects is that this isn't a good structure for everybody. You cannot make every business out there a virtual company just by the mere fact that there are certain things that you have to physically be located together. You have to have more oversight for the type of staff.

I'm very lucky that the type of people I work with are all professionals, they all have several years of experience and therefore, they can work independently and I don't have to be looking over their shoulders.

If your type of business and your type of staff really need a lot of supervision, a virtual organization is not going to be a good fit for you. So you really have

to trust your staff and you have to believe that the hours that they are working on something they are truly being productive and providing high quality. If you don't think your work environment can fit that, then you need to look at some other solutions.

So the way that we get there is that we actually have a very rigorous hiring process. We have all our applicants complete a behavioral survey up front and they actually have to do some tests for the type of work we do. It's a tremendous investment on our part. We actually have six of our high level staff -- the folks who manage most of the projects that we go through -- interview them.

And my philosophy is -- if they don't like them, it doesn't really matter whether I like them or not because they're not working directly for me on these projects. They're working for the senior staff. So it's very important that they feel empowered to pick people that they feel are high quality.

So they have to go through all those interviews -- some of them are behavioral and some of them are technical. But in the end -- after that pretty big investment on the hiring -- we feel pretty comfortable that they do have the right attitude to be able to work on their own from home and that they understand the way we're structured from a billing perspective, how we work for our clients, and that they have the right high quality mindset for the type of work we do.

We give ourselves a little bit of a safeguard in there because you're not always perfect in the hiring process and so we have a rigorous training process as well. Now we don't do it in person so we have to do everything virtually. We leverage Web tools significantly and that's where I think we've got a lot of common with the public sector perspective -- communication is critical.

If you don't communicate well with your folks on what your expectations are, what their requirements are, and give them the opportunity to communicate back with you, this will all fall apart. And we try to leverage everything we can -- email, IM, phone. We've got forums and we're constantly looking for other tools to help us in communicating well.

So in the training process, we discover a little bit more about the people that we're hiring to make sure that, again, they're a good fit in using these technology tools that we need in order to do the communication.

The other aspect on the communication end for us is the way we deliver our information or what we develop as deliverables for our clients -- its reports. We gather information on technologies in the industry and we have to generate reports.

To do that effectively, nationally with the network that we have, we developed a Web-based, online system. In today's environment, if you can't make things Web-based you're going to be very challenged in a virtual network.

So we've got a database system that allows us to collect all our information and share data across the whole company. That's very important. Now whatever that system is will be dependent on how your business is structured. But again leverage as much online tools as possible. Databases can often help you in sharing information or at least shared servers.

Despite the fact that we've got all these online tools and we use IM and things like that, there's no replacement for face time. Just because you're virtual doesn't mean you shouldn't meet and see each other on occasion.

We solve that problem by meeting for lunch or maybe doing kick-off meetings before projects start. We also belong to the City Club System so that we can use their facilities throughout. We're in the Research Triangle Park area, so we've got actually five of these clubs that we can go to but we can leverage them across the country and meet in any one of those locations.

You'll have to find common ground for your staff to meet and encourage them to do that. The more face to face time they can have -- and that doesn't mean they have to be sitting in the office together for eight hours a day, but meet on occasion and get to know each other -- the more effective they will be in working as teams.

That's probably about all I have, but I'd be happy to answer any other questions. I just wanted to give you a feel for how we're structured and why we're set up as we are. So with that Karen, I'm going to hand it back to you.

Karen Kerrigan: Great, thank you, Laura, for that terrific presentation. This is Karen Kerrigan with Women Entrepreneurs, Inc. And before we get started with Q&A's, let me ask the operator to come in to provide instructions on how to ask questions. Operator, are you there?

Coordinator: Yes.

Karen Kerrigan: Okay great.

Coordinator: Thank you. We will now begin the question and answer session. If you'd like to ask a question, please press star 1 and please record your first and last name. Your name is required to introduce your question. To withdraw your question, you may press star 2. Once again, if you'd like to ask a question please press star 1.

Karen Kerrigan: Great, thank you. And while those questions are coming in let me just quickly point out that we have a copy of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office's annual report posted on the Flex-Options site. I can't remember if Danette mentioned it in her presentation.

Danette Campbell: Yes.

Karen Kerrigan: www.flexoptions.org really provides some great resources for folks to look at and information about your program. Let me just ask you a quick question. Earlier in 2009 when the new administration began, there was some discussion about their flexibility initiative and what the White House is doing on workplace flexibility. And I know that you are a part of an interagency effort or taskforce. And is that part of that initiative?

Danette Campbell: Yes.

Karen Kerrigan: And can you give us a little - I think the audience will be interested on what's happening there.

Danette Campbell: It's a very exciting initiative. This is in partnership with General Services Administration (GSA), the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), and the White House Taskforce on Telework and Telejobs. We are developing several initiatives to help promote telework in the federal government.

One of the things is a blog that's available. It can be found at www.telework.gov for people who would be interested. Some great information is listed there. There's been an awful lot of response.

In addition, we are in the process of designing, developing if you will, a leadership thought forum that will probably be taking place at some point in the spring which will bring leaders in the federal government together to talk about some of the issues associated with telework -- especially some of the challenges.

Where are those challenges? Are they technology challenges? Are they management resistance, etcetera, etcetera? There are a lot of really exciting things going on. This group meets on a weekly basis.

Before I go on, I did want to say that you spoke about our annual report. This is specifically geared toward telework here at the United States Patent and Trademark Office. And yes it can be found on the flexoptions.org page.

Karen Kerrigan: Right, yeah. Great, thanks for that clarification. Okay Operator, are there questions?

Coordinator: No questions at this time.

Karen Kerrigan: Okay. Hopefully, there'll be some that do come in. Shirley, in regard to your pilot project -- Flex in the City -- that's a really exciting initiative and something that probably could be done in every city across America.

I thought it was just astounding that 50% of those participants move on to develop full time or permanent flexibility programs within their businesses. But are there any types of businesses or sized businesses that are more likely to participate in that project? And what are some of the things that you do to increase participation in that pilot program?

Shirley Crews-Taylor: Okay. Well it's really all five companies, but we do notice that there's a majority of the larger companies that participate. And I mean, they have, for example, a large current need that might have one department that's not flexing and they want to just try it for a few employees.

And so this is the perfect option of them. We give them the data and they have some things to work with and make their decision. The marketing strategy has been and continues to be that we get sponsors -- employers in the community that may have participated in the past. And because the city has very limited funding, we normally ask some employer to sponsor.

And then we'll run ads, we do press releases, we use quite a bit of electronic communication, and we get out to transportation fairs that employers might be holding within their organization -- just kind of building momentum from there.

Karen Kerrigan: Great. And Operator, are there any questions that have come in?

Coordinator: Yes, we do have a few questions.

Karen Kerrigan: Okay, let's go to the audience then. Thank you.

Coordinator: The first question comes from (Stacey Miller) -- your line is open.

(Stacey Miller): Hi. I had two quick questions. I was wondering if there was going to be a way to access a list of all the presenters and where they work and contact information is my first question. And then my second question is do you guys have any recommendations or suggestions on - as teleworkers how to keep in touch and connected with the company?

The company I work for is a big company. We have a good portion of teleworkers. And we do have an employee resource group for teleworkers to kind of keep in touch and make everybody feel valuable, however, it does seem like kind of a constant struggle because we don't want them to be just workers, we want to feel like they're part of the company.

Karen Kerrigan: Good, good question. Why don't we start with that second question first?

(Stacey Miller): Okay.

Karen Kerrigan: Danette how about you? Do you have any suggestions?

Danette Campbell: What I would like to say is that it's critical. And I think that Laura mentioned this earlier the importance of online communication -- whether it's instant messaging, whether its chat rooms, document sharing, or simple email. And we do still have the telephones.

We encourage communication. We speak to communication in our facilitated discussions that we conduct with managers and teleworkers. Another thing that I'd like to add is that several of our business units and specifically Trademarks has developed an incredible online magazine because of the number of teleworkers and hoteling employees that they have.

And let me just say those are folks who have completely relinquished their office space here on campus to work from home four days a week. And they only come into the office twice per bi-week. So Trademark has developed this online magazine called "TMPeople".

And I believe it is a quarterly publication. And it includes information about all of the employees in the Trademarks organization -- certain folks are

featured at different quarters. They have recipes in there from employees and activities that folks do outside of the office.

It's a very polished publication that is accessible online for their remote and for their in-house workers. But again the importance of communicating via email, instant messaging, and chat rooms is critical to have an effective and efficient remote workforce.

Karen Kerrigan: Good. Shirley or Laura?

Laura Schoppe: This is Laura. I'd be happy to add to that. If the caller is still online are you in the same town as your company?

(Stacey Miller): Yes, I live about an hour away from the main office and I probably go in about once a month.

Laura Schoppe: Okay, good. So at least you're going in to get that face time. Make the effort to talk to your manager, your boss, and your fellow telecom workers. And I'll tell you, my staff will call me up and say will you do lunch with me. I'm thrilled that they ask to do that because they feel the need for more face time and that connection with me to make sure that I understand their perspective -- where they're coming from.

And I appreciate them making that effort to reach out because I don't necessarily have the time to schedule it all. So take that initiative to do it. Even though we've got all those electronic things, pick up the phone. It's really easy to rely on those; however, it's also very easy to misunderstand some of those communications.

So as often as possible if you're doing a lot of pinging back and forth on a topic on email or on IM, just pick up the phone. The tone/ conversation can really help build those relationships if you're team building or you're working together on projects collaboratively.

And talk about things that aren't work related. Learn a little bit about each other. It really does help in getting to know that person.

Karen Kerrigan: Good, good. And in terms of information about the participants, their companies, and where you can find them, go to the Flex-Options site -- www.flexoptions.org, and right in the "Latest News" column, which is the center column, there is a flyer that has the bios, as well as the company names and the Website of those companies.

But would our participants be willing to give out their email addresses, is that okay?

Danette Campbell: Sure.

Karen Kerrigan: Okay. Laura was that you?

Laura Schoppe: That wasn't but I'll...

Danette Campbell: No that was Danette.

Shirley Crews-Taylor: And Shirley.

Karen Kerrigan: Danette?

Danette Campbell: Yes.

Karen Kerrigan: Yes, where can you be reached?

Danette Campbell: Danette.campbell@uspto.gov.

Laura Schoppe: And this is Laura. You can reach me, but I'd encourage you to go through the Website. And so if you go to the Website it's www.fuentek -F-U-E-N-T-E-K.com and there's a "contact" link on that page.

Karen Kerrigan: Great.

Laura Schoppe: for info@fuentek.com.

Shirley Crews-Taylor: And this is Shirley. And I'll have to spell my name for you but I'd be happy to give you my email address. It's Shirley - S-H-I-R-L-E-Y.crews - C-R-E-W-S.taylor -T-A-Y-L-O-R@cityofhouston.net.

Karen Kerrigan: Wonderful. Thank you so much. And thanks for that question. Operator is there another question?

Coordinator: Yes we have a few more.

Karen Kerrigan: Great.

Coordinator: The next one is from (Julie Lasarsina).

Karen Kerrigan: Hi (Julie), how are you?

(Julie Lasarsina): Hi, good thanks. I'm a workplace flexibility specialist at Chubb & Son Insurance. And this question is for Danette. I am familiar with Telework

Exchange and some of the coalitions that this new administration has put together to look at workplace flexibility.

Is there an easy way that private employers and those of us on the work life front -- on the private sector side -- could become involved and share any best practices or anything like that with the public sector?

Danette Campbell: That's a great question. If you would send that question to me in an email, I will get a very specific response for you.

(Julie Lasarsina): Okay great. Thanks a lot.

Danette Campbell: Sure.

Karen Kerrigan: Great, that's a great idea. That's wonderful. Is there another question?

Coordinator: Yes, our next question comes from (Charlotte Donaldson).

(Charlotte Donaldson): Hi.

Karen Kerrigan: Hey, good afternoon.

(Charlotte Donaldson): Good afternoon to you too. Thanks for taking my question. I'd like to ask what are the one or two most important things for a successful flexible working arrangement. If you get everything else wrong and you forget everything else, what are the one or two things can go a long way to help you be successful.

Danette Campbell: From a telework perspective, you know, I ask people to remember that remote workers should not be treated any differently than folks that are onsite.

And all of the things that are critical for managing folks in the brick and mortar environment should definitely be transferred when they're managing remote workers. Communication is a vital key.

Karen Kerrigan: Laura or Shirley do you have anything to add?

Laura Schoppe: This is Laura. I'd add to that integrity and respect goes both ways. If you expect people to do their jobs well, you are looking for people who have integrity, who respect what they're bringing to the table, and what you're trying to accomplish.

You have to treat your employees with respect if you're on the boss side of it and have integrity in what you do and be consistent with it. And I think that's very consistent with the comment you just got -- that you've got to treat people fairly and equally.

Shirley Crews-Taylor: Okay. This is Shirley. I would just like to add making sure that the decision makers at the top have buy-in and they're leading by example. You can always make changes and tweak the policy, but you need to make sure you have that buy-in where the employee feels comfortable being able to work in that flexible setting.

Karen Kerrigan: Great, those are all terrific, terrific tips if you will. Is there another question?

Coordinator: Yes. Next question comes from (Michelle Burnbaum).

Karen Kerrigan: Hello (Michelle).

(Michelle Burnbaum): Hi. How are you? I manage work life at my company -- Met Life. I'm calling with a question around measuring the productivity. We have a culture

of flexibility here -- some formal, some informal -- but what are some of the things that you'd recommend or that you've seen that get the attention of the lines of business -- leaders in the lines of business that kind of perk their ears up around adopting some flexibility?

Karen Kerrigan: Okay. Shirley would you like to start with that one?

Shirley Crews-Taylor: Thanks, I would be happy to start with that one because that falls under what I call "myth busters for managers". I always push that question back and ask "how are you measuring performance and productivity now?" And to me there's not a difference.

It's just that accountability and the communication between the managers and making sure that employees are aware of what the expectations are and having some effective ways to measure that. So my response is you would basically use the same productivity measure that you're using now and flexibility wouldn't necessarily have an adverse effect on that whether the person is in-office or working away from the office.

Karen Kerrigan: And Laura how about you - the business owner's perspective, if you will?

Laura Schoppe: Yeah, we have a fairly straightforward way to do it because we're all about the billable hours -- the hours that they are billing on a project and then how many projects they're working on. So we've got a system that tracks in great detail what they're doing and what projects they're working on. So we can do metric analysis very quickly and easily.

Now in our case, we're not comparing against those that are brick and mortar but it's the same concept. And having done this work in a brick and mortar

environment before, I'll tell you I'm way more productive without coffee breaks, chit-chat by the printer, and meetings that aren't going anywhere.

So I think you'll be very pleased with any of the statistics that results from doing that analysis.

(Michelle Burnbaum): Thank you very much for answering my question.

Karen Kerrigan: Oh great. And I was going to say Danette did you have anything to add or...

Danette Campbell: In the interest of time I'm going to keep it very short. I have three things I'd like to add; focus on results, maintain productivity, and continue to communicate with the team.

Karen Kerrigan: Good. Operator is there another question?

Coordinator: No further questions.

Karen Kerrigan: Great. Let me bring Michael Williams from the Women's Bureau. I wanted to get a check on time but then you always have some questions to ask Michael.

Michael Williams: Well actually I don't this time. And even though we started a few minutes late because we had some problems in the beginning, it's exactly about 3 o'clock.

Karen Kerrigan: Right, right.

Michael Williams: If we don't have anymore questions, I can give my closing remarks and that will end this particular call.

Karen Kerrigan: Great.

Michael Williams:I hope everybody got a chance to ask their questions because we do have a few more minutes.

Karen Kerrigan: Right. Well let's see, Operator, are there anymore questions that came in?

Coordinator: No questions at this time.

Michael Williams:Okay.

Karen Kerrigan: We can move it to you, but just let me thank Danette, Shirley, and Laura.

Michael Williams:Sure.

Karen Kerrigan: And I know you're going to plug the www.flexoptions.org Website again and all the terrific resources that we have on there.

Michael Williams:Okay. Thanks. I'm sorry if people had a little trouble getting in for today's call, but hopefully everybody was able to get in. We delayed the call maybe about 10 minutes so hopefully everybody got in and didn't miss much of what was being said today.

We had three great speakers today, Danette Campbell, Shirley Crews-Taylor, and Laura Schoppe - is that right Laura?

Laura Schoppe: Yes it is.

Michael Williams:Great. And we have two great national contractors with us, Linda Roundtree and Karen Kerrigan -- they've been with us since the beginning of our Flex-

Options Project. I would like to thank the audience for participating today and putting up with the little glitch we had earlier in the call.

This was our first Flex-Options call for 2010. We've turned the corner now and we're in a new year, new decade. We'd like for people to visit the www.flexoptions.org Website and the Women's Bureau's Website at www.dol.gov/wb to get more information about the Flex-Options project.

The new January 2010 Flex-Options newsletter just came out yesterday. There's a *Flex-Options Guide* that's posted on the Website. It has a lot of good information. Transcripts from all our conference calls are on the Website also. We should have the written transcript for our call today posted in about two weeks.

The last call we had was in November and that transcript is up if you want to view it. For usually the first two to three weeks after any call that we have, you can listen to an audio/vocal transcript. We will have a link posted on the www.flexoptions.org Website where you can click on that link and you can actually listen to our speakers.

We certainly appreciate everybody being on the call today. And we hope you've gotten some positive information to take back to your companies as you implement your flexible work arrangements. So this concludes our call for today and we once again would like to thank everybody for participating -- the speakers, the contractors and the audience. Thank you and have a good afternoon. Bye-bye.

Coordinator: This concludes today's conference. Please disconnect at this time.

END