

## 10.5: Summary

### Section Summaries:

#### 10.1 More Telecommuting or Less?

Remote workers save themselves the time and cost of a commute and are better able to balance work and home life. Companies often benefit from the higher productivity and lower turnover of telecommuting employees, and they can also provide a social benefit by permitting employees to avoid commuting, reducing traffic congestion and pollution. Some challenges of telecommuting for the manager are maintaining the privacy of the firm's data, transmitting corporate culture, defining performance objectives, and encouraging collaboration. Employees have the challenge of remaining focused on work when they are working elsewhere. Ethical companies support their remote workers by developing and encouraging trust and guarding against abuse. They also set clear and equitable expectations and rewards to ensure fairness and keep open the lines of communication.

#### 10.2 Workplace Campuses

Traditional office buildings with separate workspaces for each worker are giving way to multifunctional worksites where employees are encouraged to actively collaborate. Some companies have expanded the workplace to include restaurants, recreation facilities, and convenient amenities to attract and retain employees. Other companies are building villages around their campuses to assist employees seeking to balance work and home life. These all-encompassing work environments have some potential downsides for employees, however, including a risk of tethering them to their workplaces. Their effects on local communities are being questioned as well.

#### 10.3 Alternatives to Traditional Patterns of Work

When undertaken with equity and fairness, job sharing and flextime can create flexibility for workers who need or want to limit their hours. These practices allow employers to recruit more diverse employees, help them meet employees' need for work-life balance, and, in the case of job sharing, bring more than one person's perspective to problem solving. However, employers must clearly spell out expectations and procedures for each employee to ensure success.

Given flexible hours and job-sharing arrangements, the traditional employment-based U.S. economy appears to be in transition toward new business models that offer many opportunities but also serious challenges. Ethical issues in the access economy include the responsibilities of each of the parties in a sharing transaction and the character of any regulation, including taxes, that may be passed. In the gig economy, they include workers' insecure positions and lack of benefits, employers' responsibility for paying their fair share of social insurance (payroll) taxes, and the fair treatment of interns.

#### 10.4 Robotics, Artificial Intelligence, and the Workplace of the Future

Initially, robots and AI inspire both intrigue and fear in most of us. Fear of losing jobs is a reality, but so too is intrigue about what the future holds. A key for companies is to help workers retrain to become part of that future.

### Key Terms

#### **access economy**

a nontraditional business model in which consumers participate on both sides of a transaction, sometimes facilitated by a third party

#### **artificial intelligence (AI)**

the branch of science that uses computer algorithms to replicate human intelligent behavior by machines with minimal human intervention

#### **flextime**

a work schedule in which employees can select their own start and finish time

#### **gig economy**

an environment in which individuals and businesses contract with independent workers for the completion of short-term assignments, engagements, or projects, offering few or no benefits beyond compensation

**job sharing**

the use of two or more employees to perform the work of one full-time position

**robotics**

a field of research that includes computer science, mechanical and electronics engineering, and science process with the objective to produce robots, or related forms of automation, to replicate human tasks

**telecommuting**

working from a remote location (home or other space) by means of electronic connections

---

This page titled [10.5: Summary](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by [OpenStax](#) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.