RESEARCH-BASED CASE STUDY

Telework and organizational support

A leadership agenda for large institutions

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Based on doctoral research | April 2026

425,815
federal employees analyzed

4
employee outcomes examined

The executive finding

Perceived organizational support was the strongest and most consistent predictor in all four outcome models. Telework frequency had smaller associations, with no statistically significant relationship to engagement after accounting for support.

For agency heads, enterprise executives, HR leaders and CIOs: an evidence summary, a support-centered operating model, and a proposed roadmap for local validation.

01 / THE INSTITUTIONAL CHALLENGE

Make workforce policy serve the mission

The federal workforce provides a large-scale case for examining the relationship between work arrangements, organizational support and employee experience.

Large institutions must coordinate distributed teams while maintaining service quality, accountability and equitable access to resources. A policy centered on days in the office can overlook differences in management quality, job design and technology access. This study asks whether telework frequency or perceived support is more strongly associated with four employee outcomes.

> **Decision for institutional leaders**
>
> Set work arrangements according to mission and role requirements, while treating support quality as a measurable management responsibility across remote, hybrid and on-site teams.

The research case at a glance

Element	Study specification
Evidence base	2023 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS); secondary, cross-sectional data.
Analytic sample	425,815 complete records from an original 625,568 respondents; 199,753 excluded for missing data.
Telework groups	Never telework (reference); infrequent: 1-2 days per week; frequent: 3 or more days per week, as coded in the dissertation.
Support measure	Five-item mean: training, resources, supervisor work-life support, senior-leader endorsement and management communication.
Analysis	Survey-weighted linear regression with agency-clustered robust standard errors, as reported; 31 de-identified agency codes.

This is a research-based case study, not a report of an implemented institutional program. The roadmap and scorecard on pages 5-7 are proposed applications of the evidence.

Source: Atalla (2026), pp. 132-146, 170-171. Study estimates are taken from the dissertation; the underlying survey data were not reanalyzed for this case study.

02 / WHAT THE EVIDENCE SHOWS

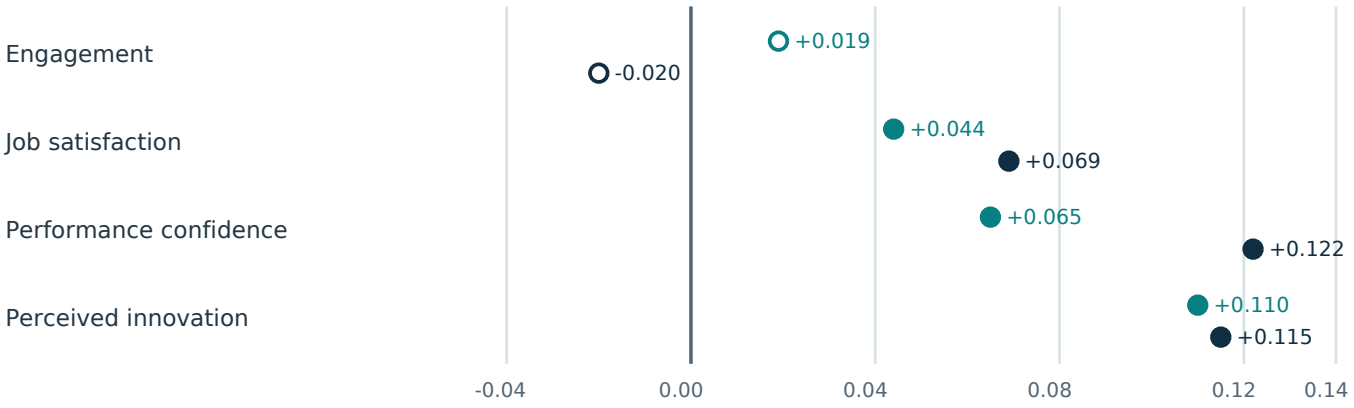
Support stands out across outcomes

Telework differences were small. Support was the largest predictor within each main-effects model.

Outcome	Support B	Model R^2	Telework finding
Engagement	0.832	0.611	Neither group significant
Job satisfaction	0.941	0.649	Small positive differences
Performance confidence	0.537	0.388	Small positive differences
Perceived innovation	0.886	0.641	Small positive differences

All support coefficients and overall model tests: $p < .001$. B is the outcome-point association with a one-point increase in the support composite, holding telework group constant. R^2 describes the full model; it is not the variance explained by support alone.

Telework differences relative to never teleworking



TEAL: INFREQUENT / NAVY: FREQUENT

Open circles denote nonsignificant engagement estimates ($p = .298$ and $.224$). Other estimates are significant at $p < .05$. Values are unstandardized B on 1-5 outcome scales; no confidence intervals are displayed. These are associations, not percentage gains or causal effects.

Leadership implication: The study provides a stronger basis for investigating support gaps than for claiming that a particular number of remote days will improve outcomes.

Source: Atalla (2026), Tables 3-4, 8-9, 13-14 and 18-19, pp. 165-186. Chart values reproduce the two telework coefficients in each main-effects model.

03 / FROM RESEARCH TO INSTITUTIONAL PRACTICE

Design a support-centered system

The Support-Integrated Telework Model (SITM) provides the dissertation's conceptual bridge from observed associations to institutional action.

SITM integrates Work Design Theory, Conservation of Resources Theory and Social Exchange Theory. Its central proposition is that work arrangements should be understood within a broader environment of resources, managerial relationships and job design. The dissertation presents SITM as an interpretive framework; it was not directly validated as a causal or moderation model.

WORK ARRANGEMENTS + SUPPORT CONTEXT

A framework for interpreting engagement, satisfaction, performance confidence and perceived innovation

Five support dimensions, made operational

Study dimension	Proposed institutional practice	Accountable lead
Training adequacy	Role-based learning, manager coaching and onboarding that works across locations.	HR / learning
Resource sufficiency	Reliable equipment, secure access, accessible tools and responsive help.	CIO / operations
Supervisor work-life support	Clear priorities, realistic workloads and predictable boundaries.	Line managers
Senior-leader endorsement	Visible sponsorship and consistent decisions about work-life programs.	Executive sponsor
Management communication	Regular decisions, explanations, feedback and routes for escalation.	Leadership / HR

These practices translate the measured support dimensions into action; the study did not isolate or rank the causal contribution of any one practice. Support should be available to employees whose roles require on-site work as well as those eligible for telework.

Source: Atalla (2026), pp. 133-134, 145, 223-240 and 245-247. Operating practices and accountability assignments are proposed adaptations for large institutions.

04 / DECISIONS AT INSTITUTIONAL SCALE

Standardize support. Tailor arrangements.

Use a common support baseline and explicit role criteria, with documented exceptions for local mission requirements.

The findings are most directly relevant to large public institutions. Their transfer to universities, health systems and private enterprises requires local validation. Begin with the research questions and measurement approach, then test before scaling.

Role or operating condition	Proposed policy response	Evidence to review
Physical presence is essential	Maintain on-site coverage; strengthen scheduling, training and support.	Service coverage, workload, employee support gaps.
Work mixes individual focus and coordination	Pilot role-specific hybrid schedules and planned collaboration.	Handoff quality, timeliness, rework and team feedback.
Work can be delivered remotely	Define outputs, availability, secure access and escalation routes before expansion.	Quality, customer experience, access failures and coordination.
Security or infrastructure limits flexibility	Resolve tool constraints; document work requiring approved locations.	Control readiness, system reliability and unresolved restrictions.
Support is inconsistent across units	Address manager and resource gaps before comparing schedules.	Support scores, training coverage and recurring employee concerns.

Governance that connects policy to delivery

Executive sponsor: owns mission alignment and resolves cross-unit barriers. HR: maintains role criteria, manager development and employee feedback. CIO: owns digital access and service reliability. Unit leaders: agree on outputs and review support gaps. Evaluation lead: checks data quality and reports findings with their limits.

Decision rule: Review service outcomes and employee support together. A schedule should be expanded, adjusted or paused using locally agreed criteria, rather than attendance counts alone.

Source: Atalla (2026), pp. 236-240 and 244-250. The role framework, governance assignments and decision rule are proposed applications, not tested study findings.

05 / A PROPOSED 90-DAY PILOT

Build the evidence before scaling

A phased pilot gives leaders a reviewable basis for investment and policy decisions. The timeline below is illustrative, not an outcome of the dissertation.

01

DAYS 1-30

Diagnose and agree on the baseline

Select a small set of comparable units and document mission, role mix and existing schedules. Assess the five support dimensions and four employee outcomes. Gather service-quality baselines and identify access, workload and management gaps.

Deliverable: baseline brief, role criteria and agreed success thresholds.

Accountability: Sponsor + HR + evaluation lead

02

DAYS 31-60

Strengthen support and run the pilot

Train managers in expectation-setting, feedback and distributed supervision. Correct priority access and resource issues. Establish team agreements for availability, coordination and escalation. Pilot feasible arrangements; record concurrent changes.

Deliverable: support actions, team agreements and midpoint review.

Accountability: Unit leaders + CIO + HR

03

DAYS 61-90

Evaluate and decide

Repeat the employee measures and review operational results. Compare with the baseline and, where feasible, a comparable unit. Examine response patterns, role differences and unexpected service effects. Separate observed change from claims of attribution.

Deliverable: evidence brief and decision to expand, adjust or pause.

Accountability: Evaluation lead + executive sponsor

Evaluation discipline: If schedules and support are changed together, their separate contributions cannot be identified from a simple before-and-after comparison. Stagger changes or use stronger comparison designs when attribution is important.

Basis: Atalla (2026), pp. 236-237, 245-247 and 251-253. Pilot phases, timing, deliverables and owners are proposed for institutional use; no pilot outcomes are claimed.

06 / A LEADERSHIP SCORECARD

Measure experience and mission delivery

Pair consistent employee measures with operational evidence. Perceived performance confidence is not a substitute for measured performance.

Measure	What to collect	Review and use
Support quality	Five dimensions used in the study; retain item-level results alongside a composite.	Monthly pulse; HR and unit leaders address the weakest dimensions.
Employee outcomes	Engagement, satisfaction, performance confidence and innovation perceptions.	Baseline and follow-up; evaluation lead reports comparable scores and uncertainty.
Mission delivery	Locally appropriate quality, cycle time, backlog, rework and customer measures.	Weekly or monthly; operations checks service guardrails.
Access and readiness	Access failures, tool availability, help resolution and manager-training completion.	Monthly; CIO and HR prioritize recurring barriers.
Fairness and reach	Role eligibility, support access, response rates and results across relevant groups.	Monthly; HR examines whether aggregate trends hide gaps.

Interpret the dashboard responsibly

Use stable definitions. Keep questions, scales and collection methods consistent. Check reliability and comparability when adapting the study’s 1-5 composites.
Set thresholds locally. Agree on service guardrails and meaningful score changes before the pilot. The study provides no universal targets or predicted returns.
Look beneath averages. Compare relevant roles and units, record response rates, and consider differences in role mix and management conditions.

Executive review question

Are employees receiving stronger support while the institution maintains or improves its agreed service standards? Use the answer to refine the program and the next evaluation.

Source: Atalla (2026), Table 2, p. 154; pp. 236-237 and 247-253. Scorecard cadence, operational measures and review rules are proposed; objective performance was not measured in the study.

07 / EVIDENCE BOUNDARIES

A strong signal, with clear limits

The findings support a management agenda for investigation and local testing. They do not establish that telework or organizational support causes better outcomes.

Boundary	Implication for institutional decisions
One survey, one point in time	Direction of influence and temporal order cannot be established. Use repeated measurement and comparison designs.
Self-reported outcomes	Performance confidence and innovation describe perceptions, not verified output, productivity or innovation delivery.
Complete-case selection	31.9% of the original records were excluded. Retained respondents had somewhat more positive perceptions; selection bias may remain.
Limited model adjustment	Primary models included support and telework groups, not demographic or occupational controls. Other factors may explain part of the associations.
Federal context and modest differences	Do not assume transferability or an optimal remote schedule. Statistical significance does not establish practical importance; SITM remains conceptual.

The leadership takeaway

Treat support as a core institutional capability. Align work arrangements with mission and role requirements, then evaluate employee experience alongside objective service outcomes before scaling.

Source and adaptation note

Atalla, J. (2026). Examining the Relationship between Telework Intensity, Perceived Organizational Support, Employee Engagement, Job Satisfaction, Perceived Performance Confidence, and Perceived Innovation among U.S. Federal Employees: A Quantitative Study. Doctoral dissertation, April 2026.

Source guide: methods and measures, pp. 132-154; main findings, Tables 3-4, 8-9, 13-14 and 18-19; conceptual model, pp. 223-240; institutional implications and limitations, pp. 244-253. Page references follow the dissertation’s printed numbering.

Prepared for leaders of large institutions from the author’s supplied dissertation. Quantitative results are reported as published in that document. Implementation proposals are analytical adaptations; no institutional deployment, financial savings or causal gains are represented as completed results.

Research author: Dr. Joseph Atalla. This case study distinguishes reported evidence, the dissertation’s conceptual framework and proposed institutional applications.