

Chapter 4

Information Technology and the Design of Work

Learning Objectives

- Understand how IT has changed the nature of work.
- Define virtual organizations and how they work.
- List the technologies that are used to support communication and collaboration.
- Explain telecommuting and the technologies that support telecommuting.
- Discuss how managers need to manage virtual teams, and the challenges this creates.
- Understand how attitudes impact technology acceptance in organizations.

Example

- Best Buy, the leading U.S. retailer in electronics, completely transformed its view of the ordinary workday.
- Known for killer hours and herd-riding bosses, it ushered in a new approach to work: Results-Only Work Environment (ROWE).
- Brainchild of two passionate employees who thought that Best Buy managers were mired in analog-age inertia and did not recognize that employees could use technology to perform work from a variety of places.
- ROWE is a program that allows limitless flexibility when it comes to work hours.
 - Employees can choose where and when they will do their work --- as long as project goals are satisfied.
 - Employee decisions about working hours and location are framed by 13 guideposts --- the most surprising of which is "Every meeting is optional."