Robin Switzer
A VERY DISTANT WORKER
Relevant Background

- Program Consultant, Injury Prevention Branch, NC Dept. Health and Environment
- Copy Editor and English Teacher, Prince of Songkla University, Faculty of Medicine
- Vice President, International Scientific Information
My Work/Job

- Biomedical science copyeditor
- Work from home
- Interact via company manuscript management system online
- Occasional email and phone contacts
- I “fix” medical manuscripts from around the world, already accepted for publication
Am I a Telecommuter?

- Vice president for linguistics and communications and part owner of company from which I get 100% of my work.
- But also sole proprietor of ESL Medical Editing.
- A contractor, not an employee.
- Never been to “central office”, never met coworkers.
- 100% of work done on computer and via internet using company website.
Why I Love Telecommuting

- Can care for elderly parents
- Freedom to schedule all aspects of my life
- Copyediting requires frequent breaks
- I can live wherever I want
- I can control my work environment
- I can work while traveling, can’t sleep
- Perfect for “piece work”
- No office politics or distractions
- My visit to an office
Ways in which telecommuting is not so great

- Lack of relationship
- Social isolation
- Lack of learning from others, collegiality
- Out of the loop about new developments
- Crisis communications
- Lack of feedback, assurance
- Can’t sit down with author to discuss manuscript
The 3 Rights: right person, right work, right organization

- Can thrive without direct coworker contact.
- Self-motivated and internal locus of control.
- Reliable and honest.
- Willing to suggest improvements, not cover-up problems.