

Item #7

Metropolitan Washington
Telework Resource Center
FY 2003 Employer Telework Seminars



Draft Report

June 19, 2003

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Commuter Connections Telework Resource Center FY 2003 Employer Telework Seminar Report

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I. Background

In FY 2003, the Commuter Connections Telework Resource Center conducted four, one-day Telework seminars for employers in the District of Columbia, Northern Virginia, and suburban Maryland. Five seminars were budgeted for in FY2003. The seminar scheduled for Rockville was cancelled due to lack of enrollment. Two of the seminars were held at local hotels in Arlington and Vienna, Virginia. The other two seminars were held at COG's offices in Washington, D.C. Seventy one percent of the 56 employer representatives who registered actually attended. The total attendance for all four seminars was 38 and the average attendance was 10 per seminar.

Table 1. Comparison of Seminar Attendance (FY 1998-FY2003)

	FY 1998	FY 1999	FY 2000	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003
Number of attendees	139	222	146	101	107	40
Number of seminars	8	8	4	3	4	4
Average attendance per seminar	17	28	36	34	27	10

The seminar, called "A Practical Approach to Implementing Telework Programs," is designed to help employers understand the business advantages of teleworking and provide practical information on designing, implementing, and evaluating a successful telework program. Staff from the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) worked with the selected consultant (WorkLife Performance, Inc.) to design and conduct the employer seminars.

II. Marketing

The seminars were offered free of charge and were marketed primarily by radio and e-mail notifications to multiple points of contacts within private sector organizations (e.g., president and chief executive officers, human resource representatives, and facility managers). Seminar brochures were distributed to approximately 14 Commuter Connections Employer Service representatives.

Minor changes were made to the FY 2003 seminar brochure. These include updating the dates and locations of the seminars and adding "2003" to the front of the seminar brochure and updating participant testimonials. COG staff provided seminar information to Commuter Connections Employer Service representatives and Transportation Management Associations. Additionally, the seminars were promoted through the Commuter Connections web site, nearly 414 60-second radio advertisements that aired on seven radio stations between April 16-May 13, 2003, and an opt-in e-mail was sent to 17,406 e-mail addresses of CEOs, CIOs and Human Resource Directors in the Washington Metropolitan region.

III. Direct Costs

The direct costs for developing, marketing, and conducting the FY 2003 seminars were approximately \$112,674 or \$2817 per attendee. This does not include COG staff time and overhead rates.

The following table provides cost comparisons for each seminar year.

Table 2. Employer Seminar Direct Costs

Expense Category	FY 1998	FY 1999	FY 2000	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003
Consultant services, including facility costs and food/beverage	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$36,200	\$29,932	\$28,419	\$35,205
Mailing lists	\$2,000	\$3,313	\$33,374			
Printing	\$13,000	\$6,662	\$6,171	\$2,176	\$1,513	\$1485
Mail House	\$1,700	\$1,015	\$2,260	\$290	\$135	\$145
Postage	\$17,600	\$13,860	\$12,870	\$1,780	\$442	\$193
- print ads		\$13,700				
- radio ads	\$3,000	\$44,400	\$31,000	\$67,690	\$58,841	\$67,291
- direct e-mail campaign				\$6,000	\$1,645	\$8355
Total	\$97,000	\$142,950	\$91,815	\$107,868	\$90,995	\$112,674
Number of Seminars	8	8	4	3	4	4
Average Cost per Seminar	\$12,200	\$17,900	\$22,969	\$35,956	\$22,748	\$28,169
Average Cost per Participant	\$700	\$644	\$629	\$1,058	\$843	\$2817

IV. Attendance

The number of registrants and attendees for each seminar location in FY 2003 is shown in Table 3 below. We expanded the table to represent the number of government and private sector registrants. The attendance rate ranged from 45 percent to 100 percent, with an average attendance rate of 71 percent.

Table 3. FY 2003 Employer Seminar Attendance Information

Date/Location	No. Registrants		No. Attended		Attendance Rate (%)
	Govt.	Private	Govt.	Private	
April 29, 2003 COG Offices Washington DC	7	3	5	3	80%
May 6, 2003 Hyatt Crystal City Arlington VA	13	1	11	1	86%
May 20, 2003 Dulles Hilton Herndon VA	7	3	7	3	100%
May 22, 2003 COG Offices Washington DC	11	11	4	6	45%
Total	38	18	27	13	
Grand Total	56		40		71%

The consultant handled all registrations and sent facsimile confirmation notices/reminders to registrants within 48 hours of each seminar. The seminars started at 9:30 a.m. and ended by 3:30 p.m. The agenda included a discussion of the following topics:

- Discussion of Teleworking as a viable work option;
- Teleworking as a business advantage;
- Six steps for organizing, planning, and implementing a successful telework program;
- Wrap-up and question and answer period;

The Telework Resource Manager gave opening and closing remarks at each seminar, introduced the seminar leader, reviewed the information on Telecenters and remained at the seminar

location throughout the day. The consultant served as the seminar leader, presented material, and introduced guest speakers (e.g. case study speakers).

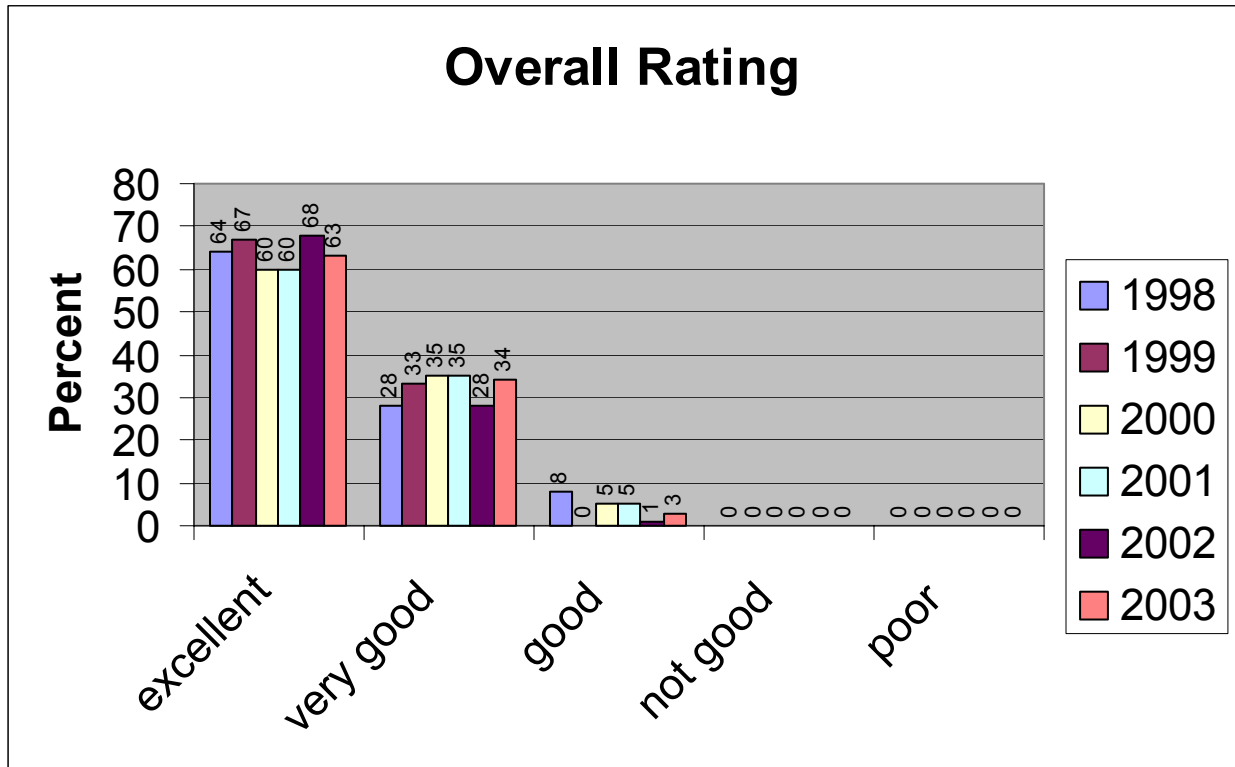
Seminar attendees received a three-ring binder that included copies of the PowerPoint presentation materials, Commuter Connections materials, and other resource materials.

V. Regional Seminar Evaluations

Attendees were asked to complete an evaluation form during the seminar. Of the 40 attendees, 38 completed the evaluations (95 percent). Participants were asked to rate a number of factors based upon a scale of “poor” to “excellent.” The evaluation also included several attitudinal questions requiring a “yes” or “no” answer, as well as several questions requiring a written response such as what information was the most and least useful, and recommended changes. The evaluation form also asked respondents for information about their organizations’ current level of telework activity, the short-term outlook for Teleworking, and the number of employees at their work sites. Following are highlights of the survey results and a comparison with the previous years’ results.

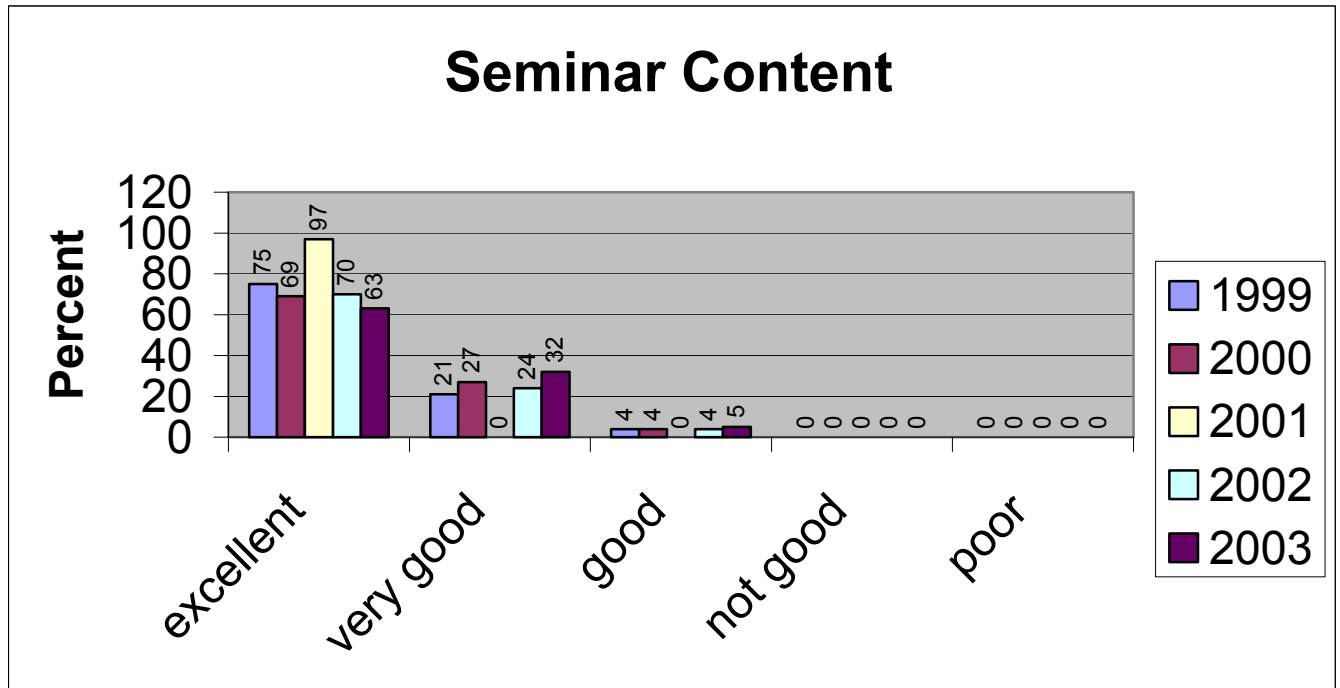
1. Overall Seminar Rating:

The employer seminars received high rating from FY 2003 respondents with 97 percent giving the seminar a rating of Excellent or Very Good. Three percent of the FY 2003 participants gave the seminar a rating of Good. As in past years, there were no responses less than Good.



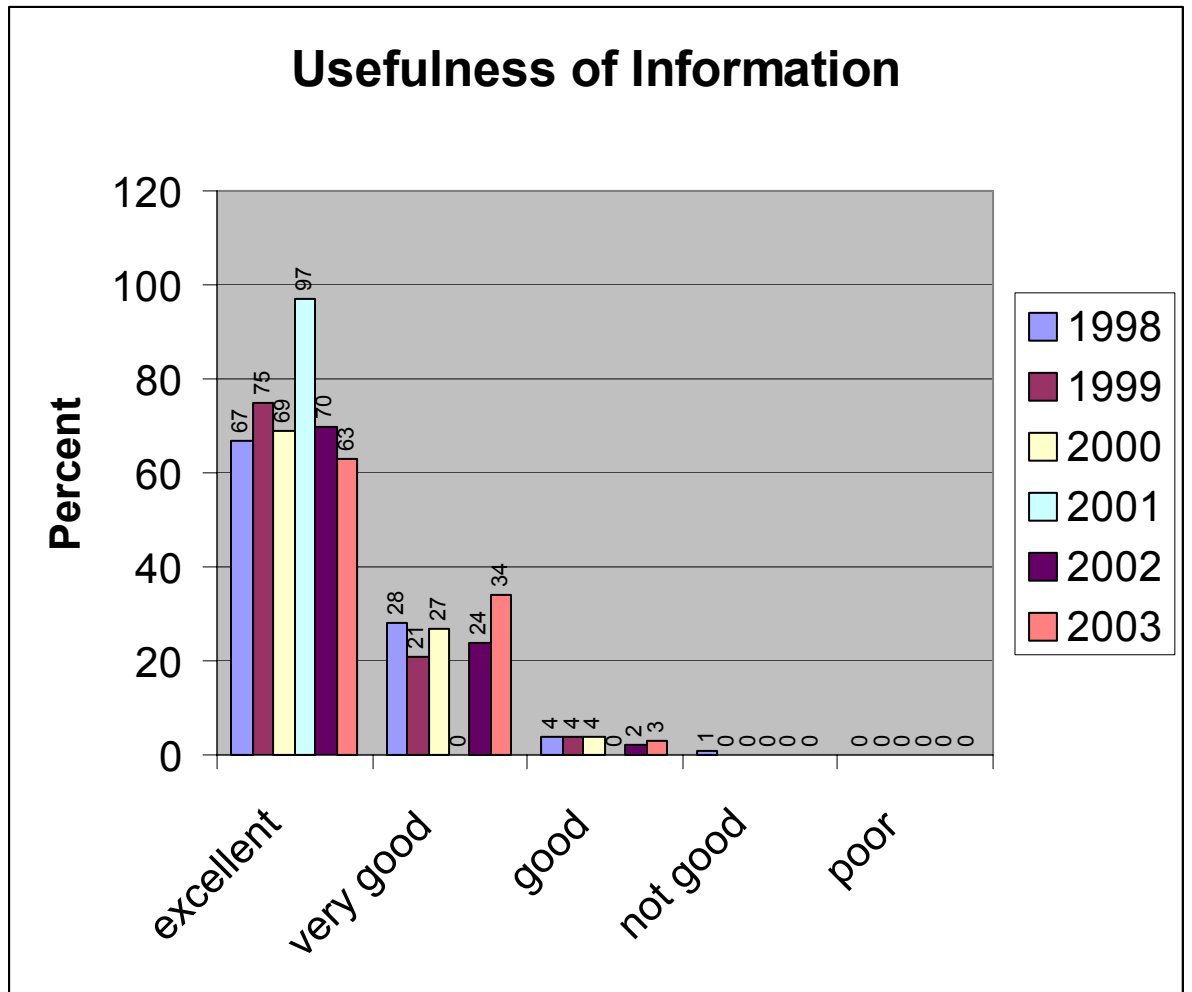
2. **Seminar Content:**

Ninety five percent of FY 2003 seminar respondents gave the seminar content a rating of excellent (63 percent) or very good (32 percent).



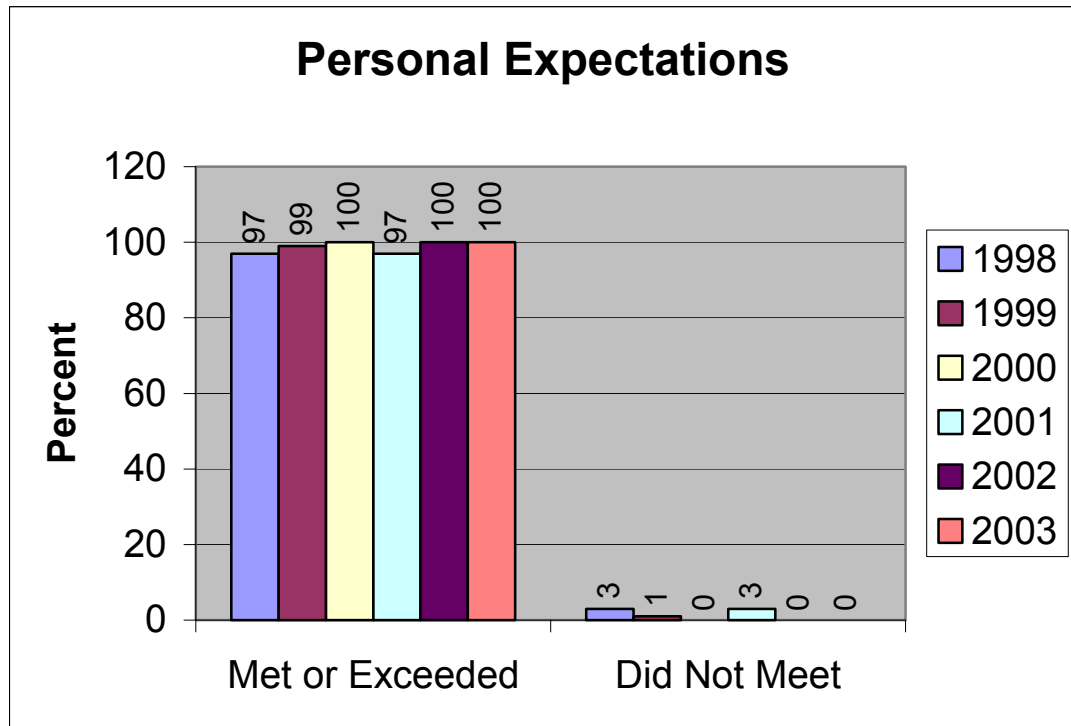
3. Usefulness of information:

Ninety seven percent of FY 2003 seminar respondents reported that the information would be useful to them (based upon a response of excellent or very good).



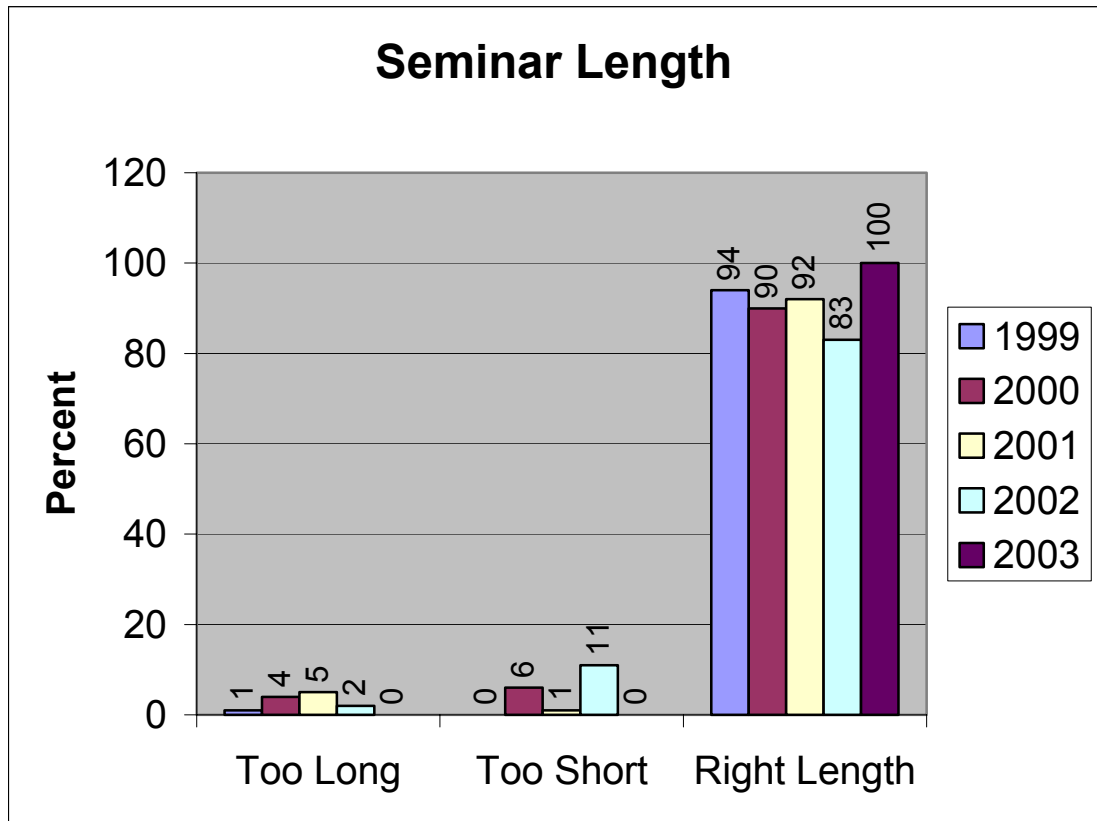
4. Personal Expectations:

One hundred percent of FY 2003 seminar respondents indicated that the seminar met (or exceeded) their personal expectations.



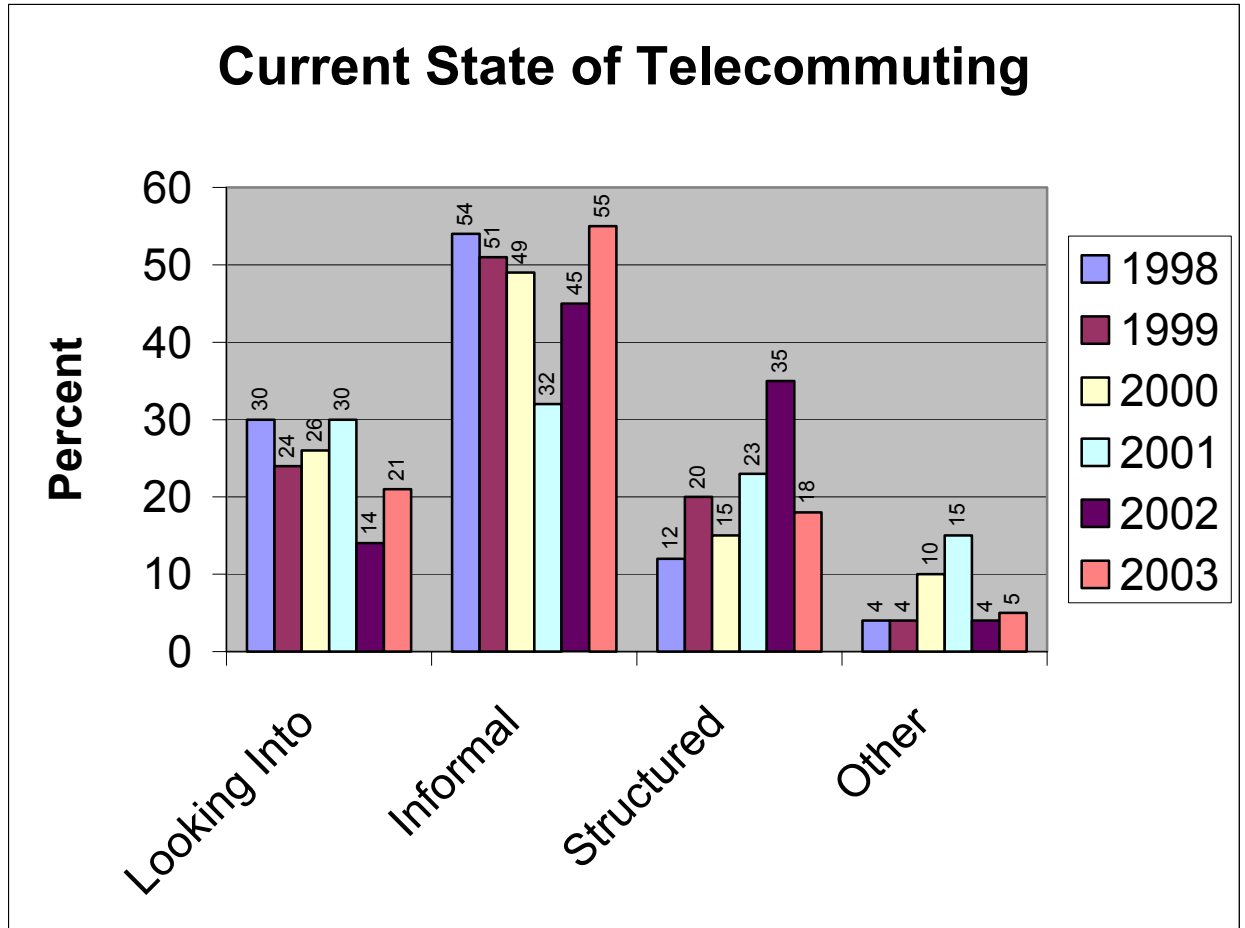
5. Length of Seminar:

One hundred percent of the FY 2003 seminar respondents indicated that the seminar was the right length. (This question was not asked of respondents who attended the FY 1998 seminars.)



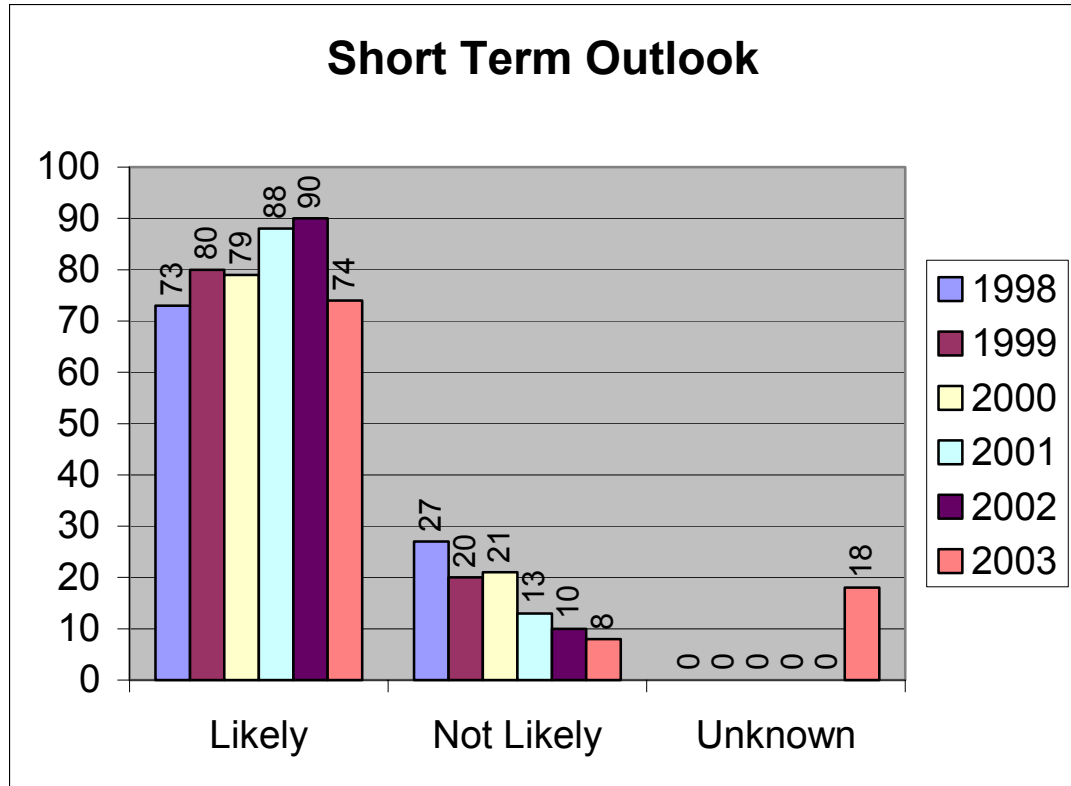
6. Current State of Teleworking:

The distribution of telework program activity has remained somewhat consistent over the past five years with most seminar respondents reported having informal programs, followed by those who reported that they were just looking into it. Eighteen percent of FY 2003 respondents indicated that they had structured telework programs in place with a written policy.



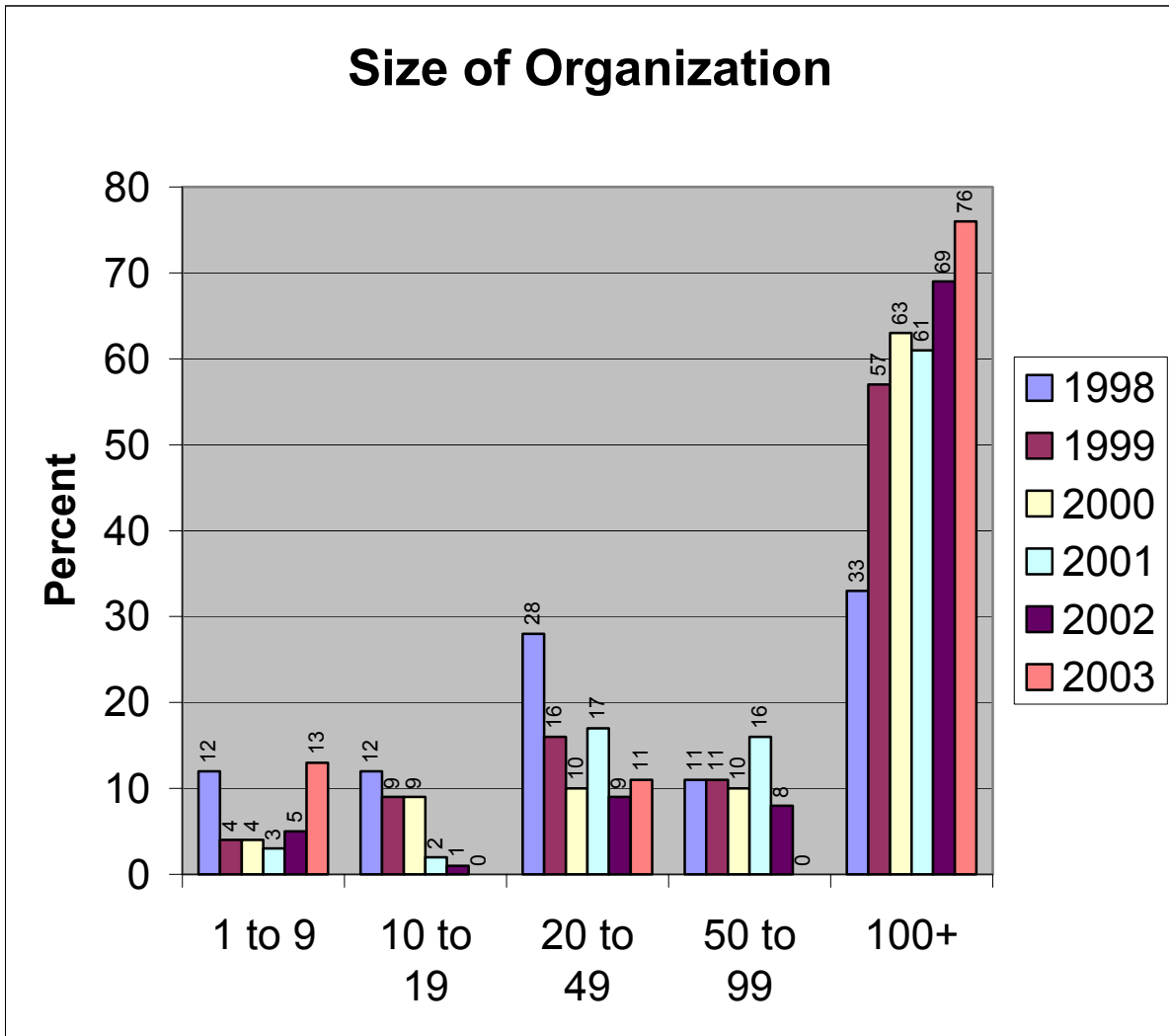
7. Short-Term Outlook

As in previous years, the majority of respondents indicated it was likely they would be starting or expanding a telework program within the next six months.



8. Size of Organization:

For the past five years, the majority of attendees have come from organizations with 100 or more employees; however, the percentage of representatives with 100+ employees has increased significantly from 33 percent in FY 1998 to 76 percent in FY 2003.



9. What information was the most useful and the least useful?

Attendees provided the following comments when asked what information was the most and least useful. Respondents gave the seminar notebook, guest speakers, and seminar leader very high praise. Following are the quotes from the seminar attendees:

Most Useful:

All of it, but most of all defining telework program objectives.

Facilitator and panelists were excellent. Practical & common sense approaches were provided. The worksheets/templates were well designed. Clear and comprehensive presentation of the issue.

Real world examples that can be directly applied to my needs. Forms will also prove useful.

The discussion about evaluation. It is important to know what things should be reviewed and measured.

Understanding the necessary steps to establishing a telework program.

Morning session, general discussion, panel discussion. IT needs & preparation of policies. Excellent manual. Room, slides and lighting were all very good as well.

Overall action plan, steps to implementation. It made me realize all aspects (legal, safety, policies, etc...)

5 step approach to telecommuting. A lot of valuable information that can easily be incorporated in to a program which is in line with our (organization). I found all aspects of the seminar to be extremely relevant. I am confident that I can use the info/tools that I acquired today in developing/implementing our company program.

All- overall perspective.

Forms, action plans, examples to go back with

ALL. To gain the overall view of teleworking plans.

What it takes "real time" to make it work. Training emphasis.

Discussion and resource binder. Always good to learn what other organizations are doing and to network. Resources are good to take back & use at the office.

Policy- because our office has to develop policy.

What to include in the policy. My organization is just at the beginning stages of developing a policy.

Resources

Focus on need & methodologies for training. Both for managers and employees.

All. I really wish I had this seminar months ago when we re-started this program.

Panelists were great!

Hearing about how other government agencies have built their telework programs. "Lessons learned" and forms.

Action plans/contacts.

Info on making a business case to establish/use a telework program

Samples of forms/policies. Need concrete examples to convince my superiors.

All information was of great value.

All were good. Very informative.

Input from panelists was valuable

The material distributed. The manual with action plans & forms is excellent
Very comprehensive, easy to follow, action plans good
The morning portion was the most relevant
The IT aspect of it. My agency uses Citrix and I was told we could not use it at home.
So I can take this back as a yes!
The 5 step action plan was most useful. I feel comfortable approaching management
about starting a telework pilot program.
Identifying what employees are eligible to participate in telework based on job
function. Because of employee morale. Some are not happy with telework. Some
employees get to participate, some do not.
Beginning to end. Agency is new to teleworking arena
Policy section.
Technology solutions.
Information binders and panelists.
Forms are helpful as examples.

Least Useful:

Exercises were not helpful except for learning how others would have implemented
telework
More sharing with attendees would be helpful
Technology needs information. Because our company already has the technology.
Implementation of program. Not my responsibility or under my influence.
Hearing specifics about IT.
The afternoon portion was the least relevant.
Solutions to government agencies. Interesting but not relevant to my needs.

VI. Conclusions

The average number of attendees at the employer telework seminars has remained relatively constant over the past four years and participants have consistently given the seminars very high praise. However, while participant remarks were exemplary, attendance declined this year and the average number of participants per seminar has dropped dramatically. This can be attributed to a variety of factors such as current economic conditions and the evolving level of education regarding teleworking among the business community. Employer representatives continue to remark that the seminars are beneficial in starting, evaluating, or expanding their organization's telework programs.

The employer telework seminars will be conducted again in FY 2004. Based on the FY 2003 evaluation forms, changes will be made in the seminar content. Additionally, changing the scheduling of these seminars to one per quarter is being considered. COG staff and the contractor will work to identify guest speakers who can provide first-hand experience with technology solutions in a non-technical manner as well as employers who have initiated Telework programs with demonstrated longevity.