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NEW JOBS TARGETING RURAL NEBRASKA

We are living in a time with a homesourcing job trend and rural areas in Nebraska are being targeted for new part-time job opportunities. Whether you are retired, a stay at home mom or dad or college student, hiring home based agents is becoming more popular for Fortune 500 companies. Some of these companies, in the past, have chosen to outsource their telephone services overseas. Instead, the new trend is called homeshoring or hiring calling agents right from their own home and no better place than hard working people in the Midwest.

The old way of thinking was a community or town would try to get a brick and mortar call center to add employment on Main Street. That strategy has changed around as the employees can be working out of their homes taking inbound calls. Most of us have called for customer support at one time or another and used the advice of a home agent without even realizing it.

An example of the new wave of employment is right here in Nebraska. The West Corporation has thousands of telecommunications employees located throughout North America, Europe and Asia, and now is a leading provider of outsourced communications solutions through their West at Home Division in Omaha. Companies like West are routing inbound phone traffic to trained home agents. They recently explained to a group of UNL Extension Educators, they wish to employ 1,500 new, quality home agents, preferably in Nebraska.

Training is conducted via the Internet, typically with minimum wage pay, during the training process. Some skills don't take very long while other skills take longer. Besides having the necessary phone, computer and Internet connection, there is very little investment needed to become a Home agent. West at Home also provides a Performance Assessment Liaison which is the point of contact for training and call processing.

When looking at opportunities from any work from home businesses there are several Pro's and Con's to consider. Some Pro's are as follows: Some skills have incentives for higher pay. You can structure your day to suit your personal needs including when to spend time with the kids, doing a volunteer job, or the ability to attend a class. Home agents are able to set their own hours in small increments to work around their individual daily schedules. Even though you may be in your pj's in front of a computer screen and phone, professionalism and accountability is expected and required. Flexibility when you work, no expensive gas bills, no dress code, medical and dental benefits offered from an outside provider, tax benefits for home based business, low start-up cost (depends) and working from the privacy of your home are real positives for this kind of work.

There are also several Con's. One obstacle for new applicants in rural areas are the previous stories of people who spend cash up front to apply for an Internet work at home job and their pay check never came. A second obstacle for work at home job applicants in rural areas is having an Internet connection with DSL speed. Computer Internet speed has changed a lot for the most part in rural Saline County.



Some skills are low pay jobs and this kind of job is not for everyone. Some people could have conflict between the home business and personal lives and family. Let's face it, social interaction is poor and there is a strong need for self-discipline. It can be difficult to motivate yourself when you're working from home. There are household chores to be done, plenty of distractions (such as the television) and you can be alone for hours. Do you have the self-discipline required to get your work done despite all this? These issues can increase pressure or some people simply try to do too much.

Later this month I will have an opportunity to take a tour of West in Omaha to learn how this company is reaching out to rural Nebraska and how technology is implemented from a control center. To learn more go to <http://www.apply.westathome.com>.

The mention of a single company is not an endorsement but rather its use is for educational purposes in an emerging job area for rural Nebraska. No criticism intended for other home agent companies in or outside of Nebraska not mentioned.

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