

Hi, Fred Nelson for Community Comment,

Today, cordless phones are common in most homes. You can buy them singly or in multiple sets if you have a large home. You then locate them for your convenience and, if you desire, you can clip one on your belt or place it in your pocket when stepping out into the yard or a part of the house that is not covered. Many businesses now have portable phones available to an employee that might be on the move within a building. So! You say, what's the big deal? If you ever had to work in a large building that had one or two stationary phones, it was a very big deal. If you were in a part of a building where no phone was located you had to drop everything and make your way to answer the call or page, stopping or slowing productivity! I remember clearly the large workroom at the local post office with one or two stationary phones located at the desks in the workroom. When the first cordless phones started to appear, I heard of a local pet shop owner who recognized the value of owning one. With the stationary phone located up front, he could now clip the portable to his belt and freely move around his store, stocking shelves and caring for the animals answering phone calls from where he stood. He was delighted. As Director of Customer Services at the local post office, I recognized the value of having such an instrument for the sake of the supervisors who were always being interrupted answering pages while trying to supervise on the workroom floor. Shortly after, I attended a meeting at the Postal Regional Office, located in the Bay area. I made it a point to talk with the Regional Director of Communications. The Director listened to what I had to say, but with little interest. I knew that the answer would be negative even before I finished my presentation. I don't remember his exact reply but he was not interested and saw no value in the suggestion. Disgusted, I went on my way. Not too long after that, I attended a meeting in Phoenix, Arizona. One afternoon, a number of us toured a large carrier station. One thing I noticed was the constant interruption of supervisors on the workroom floor as they answered telephone calls. I broached the subject to the Station Superintendent. He then told me of the productivity he was losing due to telephone calls. When I outlined the benefits of being able to clip a portable phone on one's belt, he was elated and had never given the subject any thought. He assured me that he would call the Region and encourage the Director. Nothing ever happened that I knew about. If he did make the call, I don't think the Director would have been able to fathom the work hour savings connected. So what's new?

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