

STRATEGIC BLUEPRINT: FLEXIBLE SUPPORT FOR DYNAMIC WORKSTYLES

If a workspace can help reduce turnover or increase productivity, the positive impact on the bottom line can be substantial. After all, over ten years, employee salaries and benefits amount to five to 13 times the costs of construction, furniture, equipment, and building operations.

For today's organizations, responding to unfolding market developments requires a nimble organizational structure arrayed around empowered functional units rather than a rigid hierarchy. This places a great demand on technology-ready workspaces that can adapt to changing needs with minimal cost and downtime.

Elements for a Fluid Team Environment

- Inspiration and renewal areas — Providing visual and acoustic variety and external views
- Meditation and focus areas — Like inspiration and renewal areas, with more restricted boundaries
- Techno-pits — Providing interactive technology support
- Farmer's markets — Allowing idea immersion through large displays and multi-media support
- Home bases — For personal control and identity, small and open on one or two sides

Functional areas would be arranged around an organization's behavioral function chart.

The behavioral function chart should be informed by detailed observation of the corporate areas involved, an accurate understanding of work processes, styles, and functions, and corporate strategy.

Ideally, office environments should include a kit of parts and work tools that can evolve at the level of individual workers and cross-functional teams to accommodate their changing interests and priorities. With flexibility built into spaces, fewer moves, adds, and changes would be necessary. Evolving teams and workstyles could all be supported cost effectively, without constantly reconfiguring office layouts and floorplans.

References

Brand, J.L. (1999). Strategic Blueprint: Balancing Cost-Effectiveness with Support for Corporate Change and Flexibility.

Behavioral Function Chart

