

Note: This is a summary of an article published in 2000. The space discussed below has since been demolished, but some of what was learned from this pilot was used in the development of the new GSA Mid-Atlantic Region offices in Philadelphia. The article serves as a record of the project and the workplace solutions that were utilized.

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## **Integrated Workplace Pilot Moves Ahead**

*(by Rob Obenreder, [rob.obenreder@gsa.gov](mailto:rob.obenreder@gsa.gov))*

New technology? Tailored workspace? Maximized productivity? What has all this and more? The new pilot office space project for GSA's Mid-Atlantic Region, that's what! It's located in downtown Philadelphia, Pennsylvania at the GSA Regional Headquarters offices in the historic Wanamaker Building. The new office space, using the integrated workplace process, was developed with maximum participation of all stakeholders, including the occupants. It is designed to provide the necessary space and tools for the organization and be tailored to the individual, and allows quick and inexpensive adjustments to help maximize productivity and user satisfaction.

Development of the space started with an examination of existing daily activities over a five-month period using questionnaires, logs, and discussion groups. Once the key business processes and challenges were identified, the group discussed ways to improve them. The project teams identified seven workplace settings common to the organization:

**Collaborative activity area:** Includes a computer, telephone, a rolling file cart, large work surface for two people, and a mobile work surface. This space provides a casual openness for interaction and increased space for plan review or training.

**Analytical activity area:** Includes a wide work surface, computer, a rolling file cart, telephone, sliding door for visual privacy, and access to all shared information. This area offers the privacy needed for individual work, with space to spread out documents and minimal disruptions for work requiring concentration.

**Touchdown area:** Includes three comfortable, high-backed chairs with a side table. It offers a place for impromptu collaboration and socialization, encouraging communication in a casual environment.

**Team activity area:** Includes lounge chairs, modular tables, rolling file carts, and freestanding white boards. Offers a place for informal team meetings and idea exchange in a relaxed, flexible atmosphere conducive to creativity.

**Team privacy area:** Includes teleconferencing equipment, laptop computer, telephone, and a modular table. This conference room space offers visual and audible privacy for formal or informal meetings that would be disruptive in open space, or require confidentiality, such as conference call meetings or contract negotiations.

**Processing activity area:** Includes a work surface, facsimile machine, copier, computer and telephone. Provides common office tools needed for administrative work co-located in one area for ease of access.

**Privacy activity area:** Consists of a work surface, telephone, two chairs, two rolling file carts, laptop hookup, and a sliding door. Offers a Integrated Workplace private

area for individual work or one-on-one interaction for work requiring concentration, privacy, or confidentiality.

Each team member has a “home base” workstation in either an analytical or collaborative activity area. All occupants have access to the various types of workstations available. The project team also developed protocols for work practices, office use, and staff interaction, with a focus on encouraging collaboration and fostering and adapting to change. The IW Pilot Project is also testing new technology that is appropriate for the organizations needs. Some of the current technology tools used include a raised floor system, hands-free cordless telephones, state-ofthe- art teleconferencing equipment, an electronic calendar system, use of laptop computers, and a shared database for sharing information across the organization. All technology is based on providing maximum flexibility and effectiveness. Stay tuned for further developments at this new laboratory for cutting edge integrated workplace ideas. Redesigning your space? For more information on the Integrated Workplace process, contact Rob Obenreder at (202) 208-1824 or [rob.obenreder@gsa.gov](mailto:rob.obenreder@gsa.gov) and be part of the future!