

**DWF
briefing
paper:**

September 13



dwf Digital
Workplace
Forum



Digital workplace fundamentals: the integrated approach

1 Introduction

Since its launch, the Digital Workplace Group's (DWG) research programme has taken a forensic analysis of early digital workplace initiatives to help its membership understand key enablers for success.

In 2012, DWG started with the business case for the digital workplace. Next, we examined ways of managing risk in the digital workplace. Then we looked at designing a user experience for a more mobile workforce.

In our latest report, "Digital workplace fundamentals: the integrated approach", author Steve Bynghall suggests a blueprint for launching a successful digital workplace initiative anchored on two key prerequisites, namely scope (what is included) and approach (how it is delivered).

Although we are making this report available publicly, DWG members are generally given exclusive access to our findings. In fact, we are already working on our next two member-exclusive reports, a series of in-person field visits and workshops, along with a rolling programme of online knowledge exchanges.

Among the key takeaways highlighted in this report are:

- The digital workplace permeates all aspects of working life. It affects technology, physical workplaces and people. Changes made in one area may result in changes in another.
- Cross-functional teams increase the chances of a project successfully meeting its outcomes.
- The benefits of a cross-functional delivery team include access to expert knowledge, discovery of project-critical information and better ways of working going forwards.
- While most organizations involve senior leaders as stakeholders in their digital programmes, as well as IT, HR and Marketing, Real Estate functions tend to be under-represented.
- Many organizations do not have representation from key stakeholders on the delivery team itself.

This report draws upon:

- Conversations with many organizations involved in digital workplace initiatives, including DWF partners and associates, and IBF members.
- Four detailed case studies based on interviews with digital workplace executives from leading organizations (Unilever, USPTO, Stora Enso and Wiltshire Council).
- A specially commissioned survey about digital workplace approach and scope.
- Other publicly available research.

We hope you find this taste of DWG's research programme useful. Our in-depth research is meant to serve as a basis for decision-making, a source of new ideas and insights, and a catalyst for rich member interactions.

Best,




The world of work is changing. Why journey alone, without a map?

Participate with leading organizations in DWF to explore, expand and mobilize your digital workplace through a unique mix of research, interaction and measurement.

To learn more about membership in the Digital Workplace Group, contact:

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2 Executive summary

Digital workplace initiatives, or the introduction of technology to improve the way employees interact and carry out tasks, can transform organizations and the ways in which people work. Cost savings, increased productivity, process improvement and a happier workforce are all potential outcomes from a successful digital project.

Examples of leading organizations on this trajectory and featured in this report include:

- Unilever, architects of a leading-edge co-ordinated Agile Working programme that is optimizing office space around the needs of employees, and delivering tools and training to enable employees to work from anywhere.
- The US Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), which has one of the most admired telework programmes in America, positioning them as an employer of choice.
- Stora Enso, which has built a world-class digital workplace platform on SharePoint 2013, on which it can continue to build in order to meet evolving business needs.
- Wiltshire Council, which has saved millions of UK taxpayers' money, while also allowing staff to work more flexibly.

However, not all organizations are experiencing success. All too often digital projects are not strategically focused and may have a tendency to concentrate too much on the technology rather than on the people using the systems.

The result of this can be that opportunities are missed and many initiatives fail to meet their original objectives, delivering a digital workplace with a fragmented or underwhelming user experience.

One of the reasons organizations such as Unilever and USPTO have been successful is because they have taken a cross-functional and holistic view of their digital workplace, in terms of *scope* (what is included) and *approach* (how it is delivered).

Scope

In order to reap fully the benefits that can arise from the digital workplace, organizations need to take a widescreen and holistic view of the scope of any digital work project. Ideally, the scope should:

- be enterprise-wide and touch a significant proportion of the workforce
- aim to change the way people actually work
- extend the choice of workplace location to individuals.

Projects with a scope that touches both how and where people work require input from those in the organization responsible for:

- overall company strategy
- technology
- physical workplaces and buildings
- people-related policies
- change management and training.

Therefore, with an expansive scope, it is important to ensure that digital workplace initiatives include a cross-section of related functions representing senior leaders, HR, IT and Real Estate as key project stakeholders and in governance structures.

Approach

Project delivery teams need cross-functional representation to ensure that specialist knowledge is leveraged for better solution design and ongoing support once the digital workplace becomes “business as usual”.

People-centred functions around HR and Communications should also be involved in order to focus change management efforts and help embed new ways of working.

A cross-functional approach helps to deliver better solutions that are less likely to fail. The experience of working together develops strong relationships and encourages the cross-fertilization of specialist knowledge, which in turn will underpin the success of future initiatives.

3 Scope

Key takeaways:

- In order to reap the most benefits, organizations need to take a holistic view of the scope of any digital work initiatives, encompassing people, place and technology, as well as elements critical for the success for any project, such as leadership, process and policy.
- While most organizations involve senior leaders as stakeholders in their digital programmes, as well as IT, HR and Marketing, Real Estate functions tend to be under-represented.

Valuable outcomes from digital workplace initiatives

Most digital projects have a variety of specific benefits and aims, for example:

- process improvements
- associated cost savings
- improved communications and collaboration
- better customer and client service
- the removal of “pain points” for users
- technical improvements (better performance, platform support, improved security, etc.).

Larger digital workplace initiatives with a wider scope, usually implemented at an enterprise level, can have the potential for even broader and often transformational changes. (Note that when we talk about the scope of an “initiative” this may actually be a programme of smaller projects, as many studies suggest that small projects are more likely to succeed than larger ones.)

In our 2012 report “Digital Workplace Business Case: What is the financial value of investing in digital working?” we concluded that there were a number of areas where organizations have been able to show measurable positive outcomes. These are:

- real estate reductions (more efficient use of space with a range of associated cost reductions)
- increased productivity (better ways of working, process improvement and more productivity from flexible working patterns)
- declines in absenteeism (reduction of sick days for employees due to increased choice of where they work)
- a decrease in staff turnover (more satisfied employees)
- enhanced operational continuity (under extraordinary circumstances)
- environmental gains (due to a reduction in travel improving the carbon footprint).

In addition, there are a number of softer benefits that are much harder to measure, such as engagement, collaboration, communication and innovation, around which there is general agreement the digital workplace can make a significant contribution.



What is the business case for allocating substantial resources to the digital workplace? How should we answer the essential question from the CFO: “So we need to spend x – but what is the return on that investment?” This free briefing paper from the Digital Workplace Forum (DWF) collects the known and proven hard financial benefits that flow from investing in the digital workplace. For more information and to download the report please visit: <http://www.dwforum.com/whats-new/download-research/report-excerpt-digital-workplace-business-case>

Our case studies have shown, or started to show, some of these enterprise-wide transformational outcomes:

- Wiltshire Council saved £5 million per year by reducing 98 locational offices to three hubs.
- Unilever is saving €95 million and preventing 123,000 tonnes of carbon emissions by using video-conferencing.
- USPTO has become the fifth best place to work amongst 242 US Government Federal Agencies with examiner turnover reduced to record low levels.
- Stora Enso has the first iteration of a digital workplace platform to change the way their global workforce collaborates and communicates.

A prerequisite for creating these types of highly positive outcome is that the scope of the digital initiative has to be wide enough to:

- include a broad proportion of the workforce in order to ensure that the gains are significant and fully leverage the digital investment
- fundamentally change the way employees work, so that the benefits realized are significant in terms of process improvement and associated behaviours are embedded
- extend individual choice of where and how employees work in order to result in improved employee engagement and reductions in travel.

The initiative may also involve the reorganization or optimization of office space. This has the ability to deliver potentially high reductions in costs and also to support new ways of working.

In summary, organizations need to take a widescreen and holistic view of the scope of digital workplace initiatives, which covers technology, people and the places where they work. By narrowing the scope, organizations may miss an opportunity to reap multiple benefits.

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Are organizations taking a holistic view on the scope of digital workplace initiatives?

There is some evidence to show that organizations are indeed taking a holistic view of scope in two ways:

- technology is usually part of strategic transformation programmes
- digital initiatives are aligned with organizational strategy through the involvement of leadership functions.

In Jane McConnell’s latest “Digital Workplace Trends” survey she finds that 28% of companies either have a strategic digital workplace initiative or it is part of a higher organization-wide change programme. A further 36% of organizations have a digital workplace initiative aligned to strategic values and goals.¹

In our own specially commissioned survey we asked respondents in digital workplace programmes which internal functions were involved as key stakeholders at either a strategic or ownership level. The results are as follows:

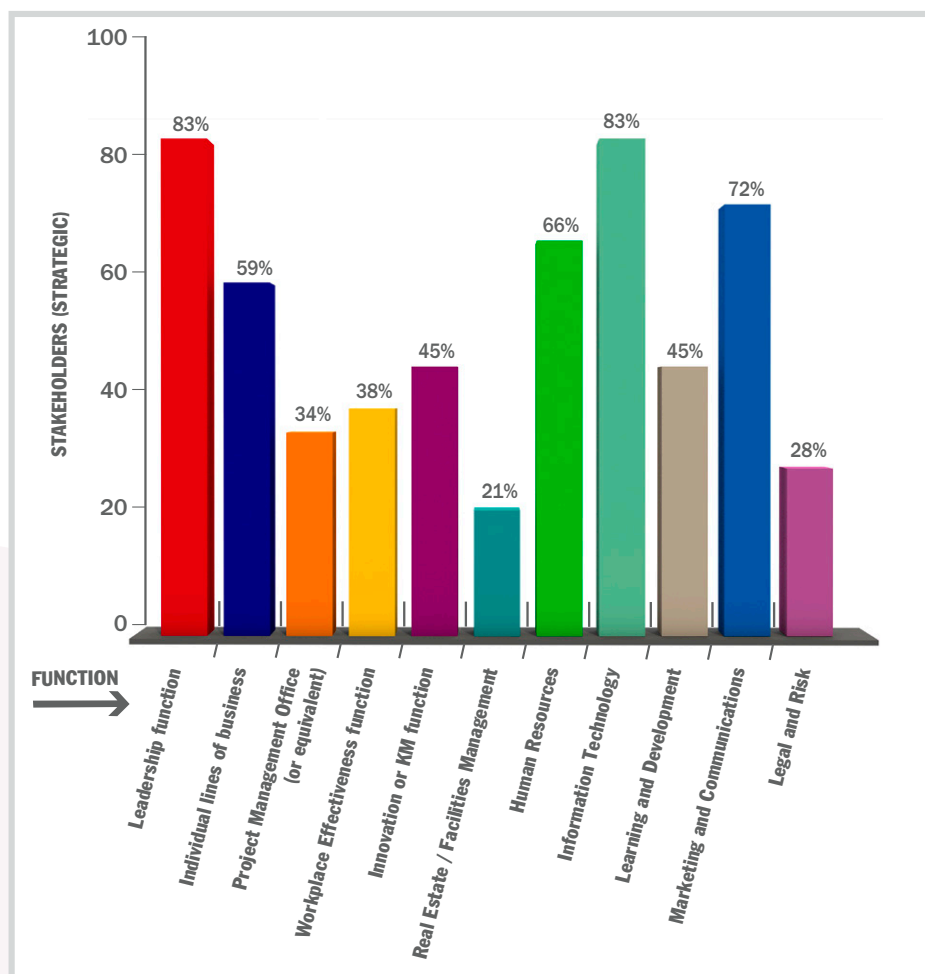


Figure 1: Functions represented as key stakeholders at a strategic or ownership level.

1. McConnell, Jane (2013). *Digital Workplace Trends Report 2013*. <http://www.digital-workplace-trends.com/about-digital-workplace-trends> [accessed 08.09.2013].

With 82% of organizations involving their leadership functions as a key stakeholder, it suggests that digital initiatives are either likely to be broad in scope or have strategic level importance.

There is also a relatively high proportion of people-centred functions (66% HR, 45% Learning & Development) involved as stakeholders, suggesting that organizations are recognizing that digital working changes the ways in which people work, and therefore requires strategic input on training and HR policy.

Our survey shows a relatively low level of input from Real Estate functions. This is reflected in the descriptions that respondents give of their digital workplace initiatives, many of which focus on social networking, collaboration or communications platforms. While it is perhaps not expected that Real Estate functions would be stakeholders in these projects, it seems that opportunities to align digital and workspace strategies are being missed.

Other studies too suggest that some types of digital working initiatives lack the right scope. For example, Gartner predicts that by 2015 80% of social business efforts involving enterprise social networks will not achieve their intended benefits and that this is due to “inadequate leadership and an overemphasis on technology”.²

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2. Gartner (2013). *Gartner Says 80 percent of social business efforts will not achieve intended benefits through 2015.*
<http://www.gartner.com/newsroom/id/2319215> [accessed 08.09.2013].

4 Approach

Key takeaways:

- Cross-functional teams increase the chances of a project successfully meeting its outcomes.
- Many organizations do not have representation from key stakeholders on the delivery team itself.
- Benefits from having a cross-functional delivery team include access to expert knowledge, discovery of project-critical information and better ways of working going forwards.

The need for cross-functional delivery teams

Technology projects have a high risk of failing to meet their original objectives. For example, a McKinsey study carried out with the University of Oxford found that large IT projects “run 45 percent over budget and 7 percent over time, while delivering 56 percent less value than predicted.”³

The study found four key ways to avoid these problems, three of which touch upon having a cross-functional approach to technology implementation, including:

- effectively managing projects with reference to business strategy and stakeholders
- mastering technology and content with the right experts on board
- building effective teams with a common vision, processes and a “high performance culture”.

For a digital workplace project, having functional representation on the project delivery team from non-IT stakeholders is particularly important in order to avoid failure. This not only helps ensure that the right experts are on board but also makes it more likely the project will reference strategy and the needs of stakeholders.

Are delivery teams cross-functional?

In our survey, we also asked respondents which functions were represented as members of the project delivery team. Respondents could choose more than one answer. The results are presented below, with representation at stakeholder level also shown for easy comparison:

3. Bloch, Michael, et al. (2012). *Delivering large-scale IT projects on time, on budget, and on value*. McKinsey & Co: http://www.mckinsey.com/insights/business_technology/delivering_large-scale_it_projects_on_time_on_budget_and_on_value [accessed 08.09.2013].

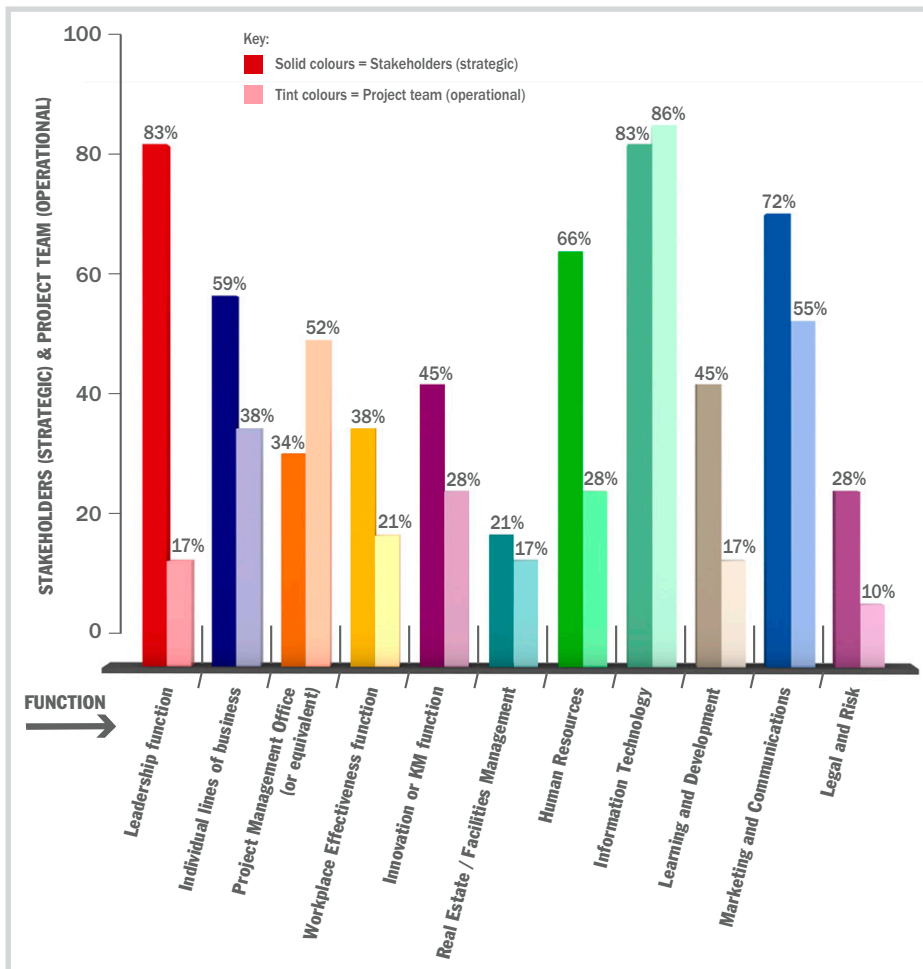


Figure 2: Functions represented as members of the project delivery team.

The results show an under-representation of non-IT and Project Management roles in delivery teams across the board despite involvement at the stakeholder level. This is slightly less significant for the Marketing and Communications function, probably because they often have ownership of the intranet, a key channel within the digital workplace.

This disconnection between stakeholders and project team composition may be partly down to the scope of projects and the way governance is structured. For example, an HR stakeholder may sit on a digital steering committee and, for smaller projects, this involvement may be sufficient.

However, it may also be down to a traditional dominance of IT in project delivery, while other support functions, often tightly resourced, may be reluctant to release headcount.

In all our case studies from successful digital workplace initiatives, delivery teams are cross-functional.

- At Unilever the delivery team is made up of people from HR, IT and Workplace Solutions.
- At Stora Enso, IT and Communications partnered to build their new digital workplace, and even established joint project managers.

- At Wiltshire Council there was close co-operation between a range of functions, including leadership.
- At USPTO there has been enterprise-wide resourcing for their teleworking programme, with a central advisor helping to co-ordinate activity, and various cross-functional structures and committees.

Benefits of cross-functional delivery teams

Having cross-functional teams has a range of clear benefits. In our survey we asked respondents about the outcomes they had experienced from working together. Respondents could select more than one option.

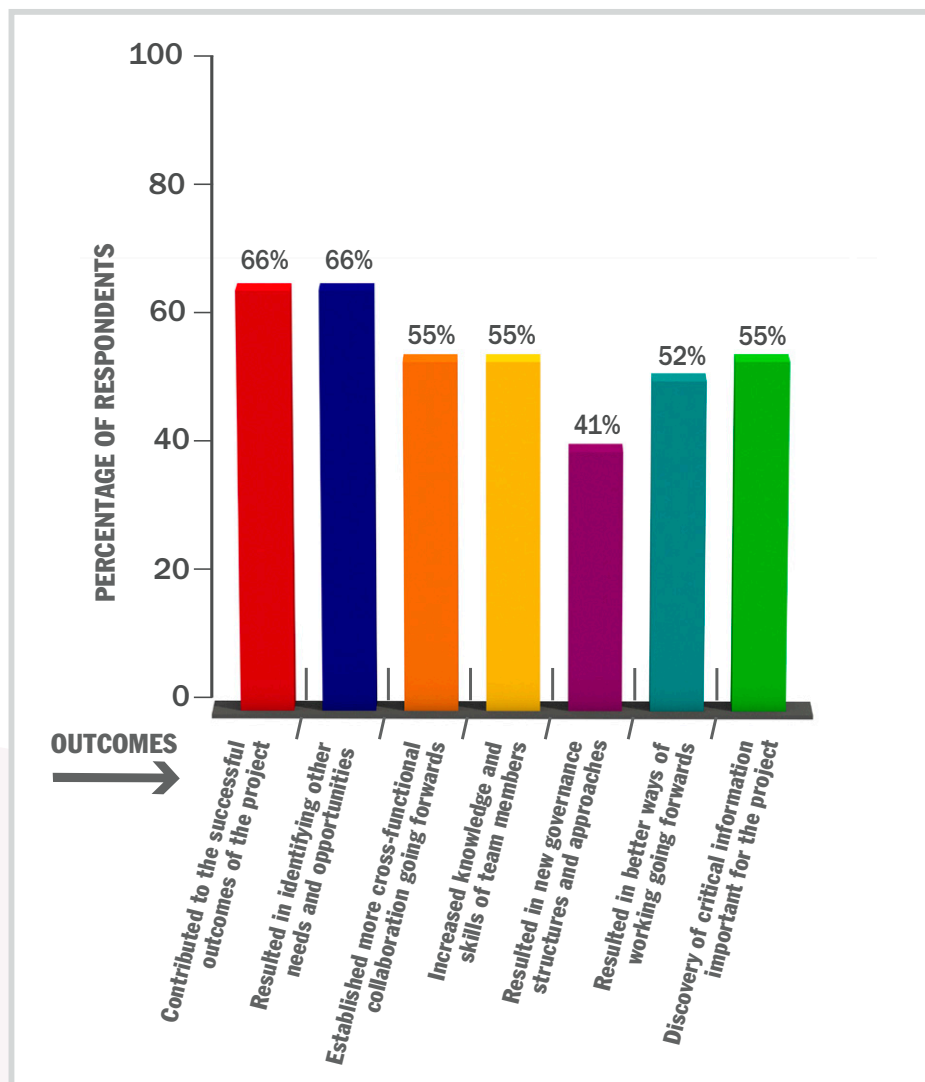


Figure 3: Successful outcomes from working across different functions.

Apart from new governance structures, a majority of respondents indicated positive outcomes for all choices, showing that the cross-functional approach was very important for that particular project.

Cross-functional delivery teams also help to build foundations for better project work through the upskilling of team members and the experience of working together. These findings are reflected in our case studies:

- Unilever recognizes the importance of cross-functional alignment and employs a change manager to support this.
- At USPTO close collaboration is regarded as “critical” for success.
- At Wiltshire Council strong relationships have helped to shape future change programmes.
- At Stora Enso working together between IT, Communications and HR led to a much better understanding of requirements.

Moreover, including cross-functional teams also means that non-IT functions are likely to have a stronger sense of ownership, which may become important when different systems become “business as usual”.

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5 Case studies

Unilever is saving €95 million and preventing 123,000 tonnes of carbon emissions by using video-conferencing.

The Agile Working programme at Unilever

Unilever is a multinational consumer goods company with over 170,000 employees. The company has over 400 well-known brands focused on health and wellbeing. In any given day, 2 billion people all over the world use Unilever products.

Unilever's global Agile Working programme is regarded as an example of a leading-edge workplace transformation initiative. It takes a holistic and cross-functional approach, spanning people, places and technology.

Agile Working is more than just a flexible work or office reorganization programme. It seeks a deeper cultural change, removing artificial barriers around how work gets done and enabling employees to choose when and where they work, as long as the needs of the business are met.

Scope

Because Unilever takes an integrated view of Agile Working, the associated benefits are also wider in scope.

All new or renovated offices must be built to the Agile Working design specifications. The implementation of new technologies helps to drive collaboration while also reducing travel. Meanwhile, the combination of technology and workplace investment drives both cost and environmental savings; for example, last year through the use of premium video-conferencing alone, Unilever saved €95 million and prevented 123,000 tonnes of carbon emissions due to travel avoidance.

Perhaps most importantly, Agile Working is also improving Unilever's employment proposition – helping the company to attract and retain talent, as well as to drive employee engagement and vitality. Unilever CEO Paul Polman explains:

“Agile Working is strengthening our ability to attract and maintain a highly talented and diverse workforce. It is also helping all of us better manage our professional and personal demands, reduce our commuting time and other travel, and experience greater flexibility and choice than ever before around how, when and where we work.”

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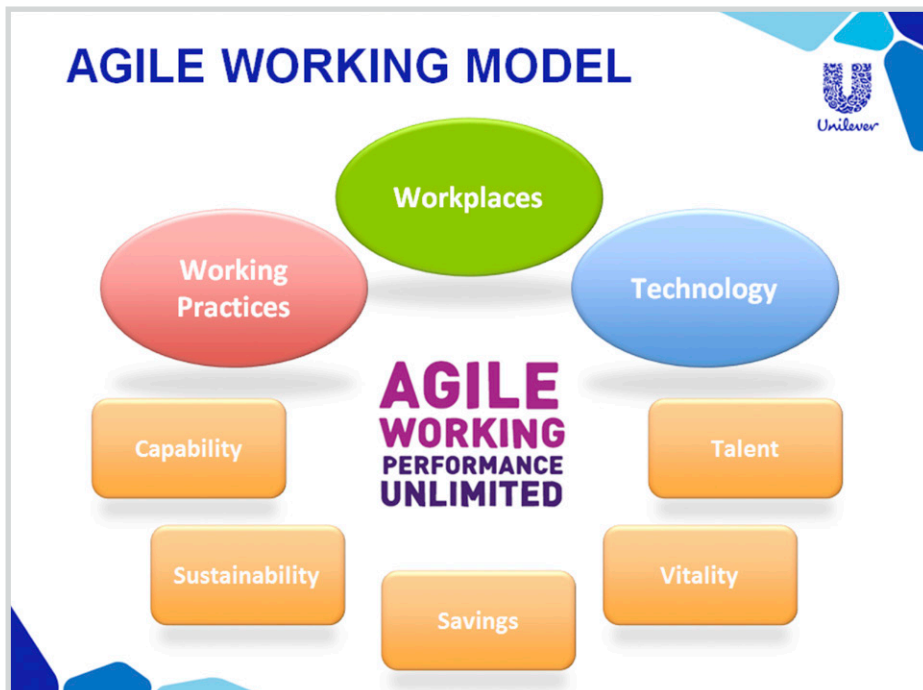


Figure 4: Unilever's Agile Working model, displaying the main pillars and outputs.

Overall, there are five benefits or outputs from the programme:

- Capability (enabling Unilever employees to do their jobs better)
- Savings (mainly from reductions in travel and real estate)
- Sustainability (environmental improvements)
- Vitality (work/life balance; increased employee engagement)
- Talent (increased retention and support for diversity).

To enable these benefits, the Agile Working programme has three main pillars:

- Working practices (“people can work anytime and anywhere as long as business needs are being met”)
- Workplaces (the physical office is “designed around activities, not individuals”)
- Technology (“advanced mobility and virtual collaboration”).

Working practices

The working practices pillar emphasizes the need to manage teams differently to support a culture of flexibility (how people use technology and the new workplace design), as well as for the different skills to remain visible, accountable and performance-focused.

To help cement this performance culture, formal processes are in place to keep people focused on results. These include a personal development plan linked to a reward structure, with agreed metrics to measure performance, as well as regular check-ins with a line manager to discuss any issues that arise. Managers are expected to support flexible working arrangements and are assessed on that very issue.

Training and support are available including an online portal with various Agile Working-related resources, training sessions on effective virtual working and also e-learning. The latter includes recognized “certification” on the firm’s Learning Management System signifying completion of the core training in the skills and technology relating to Agile Working.

Workspaces

To date, Unilever has completed or nearly completed turning 43 offices into “agile workspaces”. These are designed around activities, with the majority of employees using “free-address” desks. But, with a comfortable desk-sharing ratio and some great facilities available (Dove Spa, Tigi hair salon, gym, etc.), employees quickly get used to the new culture of shared space, and the self-reported employee engagement and productivity scores typically increase. The new design is up to 40% more space-efficient, resulting in a significant reduction in costs and greater support of Unilever’s sustainability. This is core to Unilever’s business ambition to double the size of the business while reducing its environmental impact.

Each agile workplace has special “zones” aimed at collaboration (“connect”), individual work (“focus”) and also a more relaxing and informal environment (“vitality”).

The firm has introduced a standard toolkit with design principles and related architectural specifications, which can help with the introduction of the agile workplace to each site, allowing for high standards and consistency globally.

There is also Agile Workplace certification which rates any Unilever workplace up to three stars, the highest being a world-class site. This helps each location to identify where they need improvement, creates a healthy sense of competition amongst offices and showcases sites that can act as examples to others.

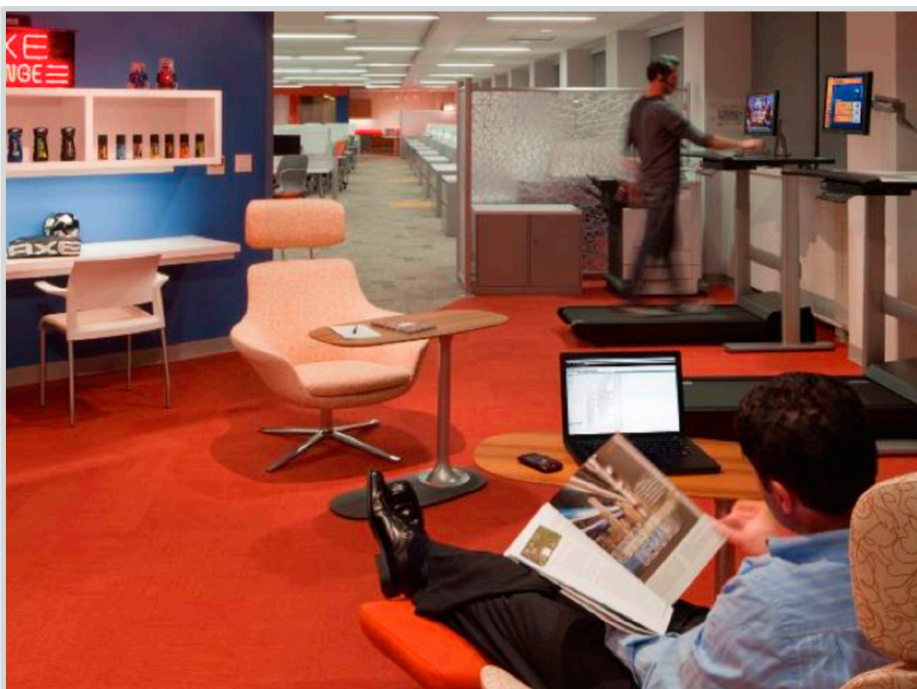


Figure 5: One of Unilever’s “Vitality” zones.

Technology

Technology is a key component of the programme and various elements are provided including:

- appropriate laptops and mobile devices
- 66 telepresence rooms and 300 video-conferencing facilities
- faster wi-fi
- collaboration technologies, including a SharePoint 2010 environment, LiveMeeting, the micro-blogging tool Chatter and desktop video-conferencing.

Structure

Given its cross-functional remit, the group responsible for delivering the Agile Working programme is made up of people from the three relevant functions – HR, IT and Workplace Services.

Organizationally, all three functions are represented on the Agile Working steering committee, which consists of:

- Chief HR Officer (overall sponsor)
- Senior Vice President, HR, Global Categories and R&D
- Chief Enterprise & Technology Officer (responsible for both IT and Workplace Services)
- Chief Information Officer.

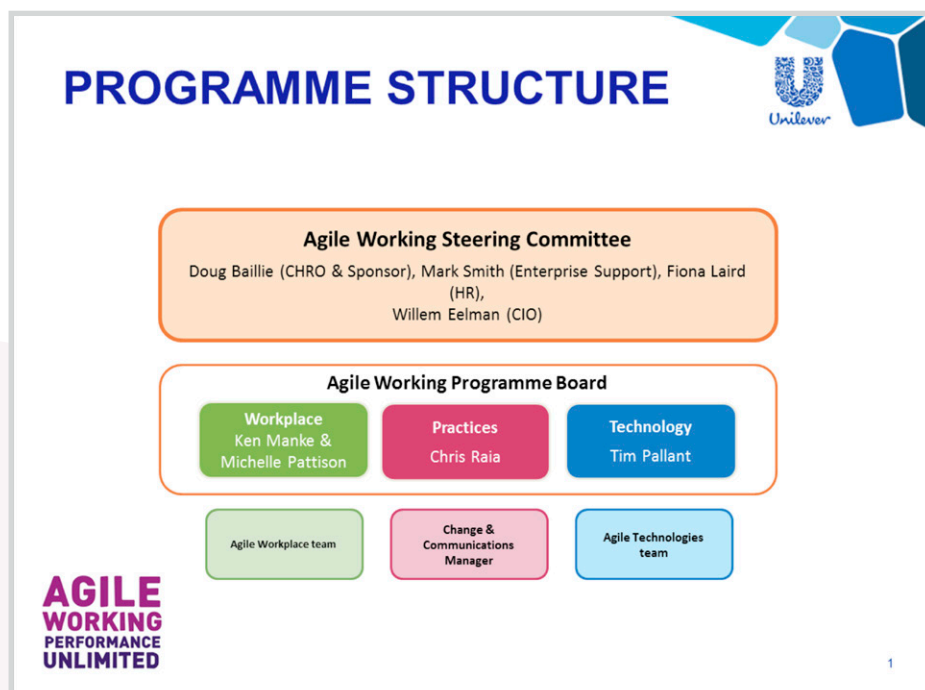


Figure 6: The structure for Unilever's Agile Working programme.

The steering committee meets at least quarterly, with extraordinary meetings called in between if necessary. Some decisions on non-contentious issues may be taken by email or other communication channels.

Beneath the steering committee a more operationally-focused working programme board also meets regularly, representing the workplace, practices and technology elements. Finally there are the actual teams involved and a change manager.

Although HR has ultimate responsibility for delivery, in reality, the lead function varies from geographical area to area, depending on the priorities for that market. Jacobina Plummer, Global Agile Working Change & Communications Manager, explains:

“Part of my job is to try and educate geographies for the need for equal involvement across all three functions... Getting cross-functional alignment is really important to successfully landing the culture change. For example, in Asia, IT has been very proactive but, as a result, Agile Working is perceived to be about technology. We are working really hard to ensure Workplace Services and HR engage too to ensure it isn't just seen as a tech programme by employees.”

Change management activities

There has been a series of change management activities to help embed the Agile Working programme throughout the organization. These include:

- 25 large-scale “Agile Activation” events in different offices, reaching more than 10,000 employees
- 200 Agile Working training drop-in sessions
- a global series of workshops conducted with HR business partners to help support them as facilitators for Agile Working
- the launch of a global branded engagement campaign called “Agile Working Unlimited”, customized for local needs and including translated material. The emphasis of the campaign is on how the programme “removes limits” across various different facets of work and life
- a toolkit for facilitators from HR, IT and Workplace Solutions
- the creation of an annual “Agile Working” report, including a contribution from the CEO, which focuses on progress, personal stories and wider business benefits such as supporting business continuity during Hurricane Sandy and the 2012 London Olympics.

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USPTO's Telework Program

The United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) is the federal agency for granting US patents and registering trademarks. It has approximately 11,500 employees, and is headquartered in Alexandria, Virginia. It has an additional satellite office in Detroit.

USPTO is generally regarded as having the leading telework programme of any federal agency. In 2012, the Washington Post described it as having the “gold-standard” for a “government work-at-home program”.⁴

Agency-wide, USPTO now has 7,565 employees working from home between one and five days a week, equating to 86.24% of eligible positions that are teleworking. Overall, around two-thirds of agency staff telework in some form or another.

Benefits

Overall benefits have included significant cost savings and avoidances, primarily gained through avoiding the need to acquire additional real estate when bringing in new hires. Other measurable outcomes include increased productivity (as a result of fewer distractions) and enabling continuity of operations planning.

Additionally, telework has helped position the agency as an employer of choice. In 2012, the agency was named fifth (out of 242) in an annual survey of the US Federal Government's “Best Places to Work”. The survey is based on feedback from employees. The agency's Acting Under-Secretary Teresa Stanek Rea, has said:

“One large component of this success is our hugely successful Telework Program... the improved flexibility in work location for more than 64 percent of our workforce has reduced examiner turnover to historically low levels, increased examiner productivity, and saved the agency millions each year in overhead costs.”⁵

In 2012 the Washington Post described USPTO as having the “gold-standard” for a “government work-at-home program”.

4. Rein, Lisa (2012). *Telework guru takes phoning it to new levels at patent office*. The Washington Post: http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2012-09-10/local/35494462_1_telework-patent-trademark-office [accessed 08.09.2013].
5. USPTO (2012). *USPTO named one of Federal Government's best places to work*. http://www.uspto.gov/blog/director/entry/uspto_named_one_of_federal [accessed 08.09.2013].

Vision and scope

USPTO was an early adopter of telework. As early as 1997, the USPTO's trademark organization initiated a small but successful telework pilot. This longevity means that the programme is now effectively hard-baked into the organization's strategy, enjoying wide support and acceptance.

Another important reason for the Telework Program's success is its holistic scope and vision, which covers both cost savings and employee benefits.

According to Danette Campbell, Senior Advisor, Telework, USPTO, "The USPTO's vision of telework is to provide a balanced work-life programme for its employees while simultaneously advancing agency goals in productivity, efficiency and space planning. Telework options are available to eligible positions in all USPTO business units."

Management support

The programme has also been strongly supported by senior management, who regard it as a means to deliver on USPTO's strategic goals. This means that enterprise-wide resourcing has been made available for the programme, rather than being confined to either a division or a function.

Campbell explains: "Leadership that is committed to making telework part of its business strategy is key to building a successful telework program. Telework must be embraced by agency leaders and woven into the fabric of the strategic goals and mission of the agency."

"At USPTO, support from agency leadership and close collaboration and cooperation between all of our business units has proved to be critical."

"Successful telework programs are also designed and deployed by incorporating the necessary enterprise-wide resources. USPTO's program involves the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO), the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer (OCAO), and the individual business units in the agency, who have provided the necessary support to design and implement the program."

Technology

Danette Campbell also believes that having the right technology in place is critical.

"To support uninterrupted collaboration, telework programs require a carefully designed IT infrastructure. The OCIO implemented a project to fix system constraints and upgrade the agency's network infrastructure to include the entire backbone and every switch, router and firewall."

"In addition, the OCIO has provided each employee with upgraded tools, including a state-of-the-art universal laptop, collaboration tools including video-conferencing, and voice-over-internet phones (VOIP) that ride on the network without constraint."

"The in-bound internet pipe into the campus was expanded from 350 MB to 3 GB, and a shift to a secure virtual private network (VPN) connection provided more stability and reduced dropped network connections."

Overall, these improvements allowed the OCIO to remove a Remote Desktop Protocol (RDP) solution, resulting in significant cost savings. Investing in a laptop and related equipment costs \$2,400 per person rather than \$14,000 per seat needed for the RDP solution.

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Change management

To help embed new ways of working, the Telework Program has been backed-up by communication efforts. Danette Campbell explains that a key element of the change management effort involves “demonstrating the quantitative benefits of telework to include a positive impact on real estate, trademark and patent production, the environment, employee attrition, and transit subsidies.”

There is also support and training. USPTO has a dedicated intranet site which includes USPTO’s telework policy, business unit guidelines, information about ergonomics for the home office, FAQs, organizational and IT points of contact for telework issues, asset management, telework case studies, research and media coverage about telework.



Figure 7: USPTO’s Telework microsite available on the intranet.

Training is also provided for both participants and managers. For example, within the Trademarks division, the focus of one of the annual management conferences was how to manage virtual teams.⁶

Having a dedicated (and full-time) Senior Advisor for Telework has also been important. Danette Campbell has been tasked with overseeing the whole enterprise-wide programme, and is the primary point of contact for all issues. She also acts as an expert resource and prepares any necessary reporting.

6. USPTO (2011). 2011 Telework Annual Report. <http://www.uspto.gov/about/offices/cao/TeleworkAnnualReport2011-508.pdf> [accessed 08.09.2013].

Stora Enso has the first iteration of a digital workplace platform to change the way their global workforce collaborates and communicates.

Stora Enso's new digital workplace

Stora Enso is a global leader producing paper, biomaterials, wood products and packaging. Headquartered in Helsinki, with 28,000 employees in 35 countries, the company is dedicated to innovative solutions and approaches. A key motto of the company is "Rethink".

Stora Enso has just launched a brand new digital workplace environment based on SharePoint 2013. This is the coming together of two completely separate platforms, a traditional content-heavy intranet and a collaboration platform, which had suffered from a lack of governance. Increasingly there had been overlapping functions between the two and users were getting confused.

The joint project managers, Charlotte Sperling and Ulrika MacGregor describe the new digital workplace as "an everyday working tool, providing both a profiled and personalized experience. It aggregates and surfaces data from other systems, supports collaboration and knowledge-sharing, and helps employees to get their job done more efficiently."

A collaborative approach

Although it is still "work-in-progress", so far the digital workplace has had very good feedback internally, as well as receiving attention externally. The project team believes that one of the reasons for its success has been the collaborative approach taken by different functions.

Sperling and MacGregor explain: "IT owned the collaboration platform and Communications owned the intranet. Combining these two functions in the ownership of the project has been a major success factor. IT and Communications came from different worlds, with different priorities. If one of the units had run this project alone, we would definitely have missed important aspects."

The cross-functional and collaborative approach was reflected in two ways. Firstly, the project was underpinned by a steering committee with representation from all divisions and selected group functions, including IT, Communications and HR.

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has just launched
a brand new
**digital
workplace**
environment based
on SharePoint
2013.

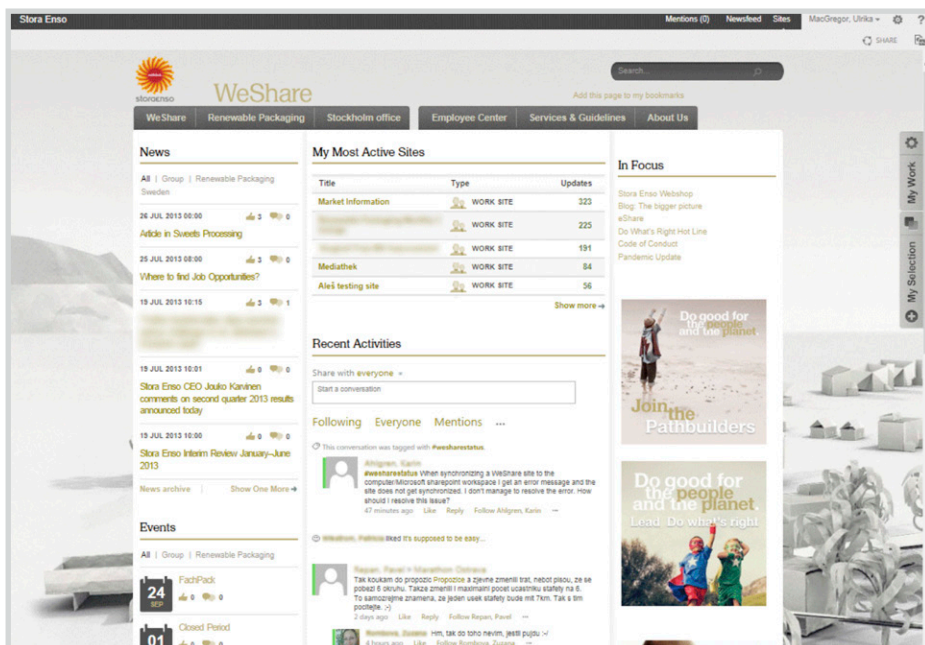


Figure 8: Stora Enso's new digital workplace – a combined intranet and collaboration platform, also acting as a gateway to other applications.

Secondly there were joint project managers on the project from both IT and Communications. “Sharing the project manager role actually turned out to be a threshold in terms of project processes and templates; there is usually one single line for the Project Manager’s name. To us, it was important to not “give in” to those pressures of conforming and putting one of our names on the line. Our closest managers support this shared leadership.”

Increased understanding

Having strong involvement from both functions ensured that there was a better understanding of mutual priorities for requirements, some of which were often very detailed.

Charlotte Sperling from IT explains: “Many of the details that are important to the editorial community relating to news articles or information pages were to me a low priority and could be lived with as long as the main functionality is in place. If Ulrika had not forced me to accept those change requests, I would have a whole frustrated editorial community at my back right now.”

Likewise, it was also important for Communications to have IT input to explain some of the more technical aspects of the project. Ulrika MacGregor from Communications comments: “When it comes to the technical details like infrastructure, proxy settings and what not – that is just Greek to me! We have an extremely complex architectural setup that requires technical expertise, and if Charlotte hadn’t been by my side, these issues would have taken much more of my efforts.”

Working closely together also helped to avoid any misunderstandings, some of which can be quite subtle. Sperling explains: “We tend to mean different things when we use the same words, like ‘language versions’ where we were quite close to a catastrophe before we realized we were talking about two different things!”

Having strong involvement from IT and Communications ensured there was a **better understanding** of mutual priorities for requirements.

Involving HR

Although the project was jointly run by IT and Communications, it was also important to bring in Stora Enso's HR function. With hindsight, Sperling and MacGregor would have involved them earlier.

"HR owns much of the personal data that is the base for our profiling features. This data has not been in a conformed shape, which has made the profiling difficult. Having them on board earlier, they could have identified and sorted out the processes around this data earlier. The second reason is that HR is a driver of knowledge sharing and the digital workplace can be a fantastic tool for this. But a tool is just a tool until it is being used in the correct way by the users."

Joy doubled, sorrow halved!

Overall, the Stora Enso team believes there were many wins from having cross-functional co-operation, above and beyond a successful implementation. These include having a sounding board for ideas, being able to reach out to a wider network within the company, and the ability to combine competencies in different areas. Perhaps above all they found that it led to "joy shared, joy doubled" as well as "sorrow shared, sorrow halved."

And do they have any advice for other companies undertaking a digital workplace programme? "Make sure you assign project resources that share the same vision. Sharing a project like this will mean intense co-operation with both ups and downs. Respect each other and remember to have fun!"

**Wiltshire Council
saved £5 million per year
by reducing 98 locational
offices to three hubs.**

The Workplace Transformation Programme at Wiltshire Council

Wiltshire Council is a local authority based in the South-West of England. It provides a series of local amenities to around half a million people. It has over 5,000 employees.

In 2009, the Council embarked on a single “Workplace Transformation Programme”, which set out to implement new ways of working for staff and to reduce the number of council offices and buildings inherited following the merger of four districts and one county council. The impetus for the programme was driven by the opportunities arising from the creation of a new unitary local authority in Wiltshire.

With the introduction of laptops for all staff and other technology, which enabled both mobility (follow-me printers, work-anywhere VOIP) and collaboration (Office 365, including Lync etc.), 2,500 previously deskbound employees can now work flexibly from more or less any location. The number of offices has been rationalized from 98 sites to three main hubs, with the desk ratio for staff reduced to 2:1.

This has delivered savings of approximately £5 million per year after the borrowing, technology, building and refurbishment costs are taken into account. There has also been a 40% reduction in the Council’s carbon footprint, while newly refurbished buildings are now modern, efficient and fit for purpose, reflecting the Council’s aims for the future.

The original aim of the programme was not just about cost savings, but also about driving culture change and improving the way people work. Mark Stone, Transformation Director at Wiltshire Council, believes that having this integrated view of the programme was “vital” to its success and is what ensured the buy-in achieved across all areas of the organization.

The Council’s
Workplace
Transformation
Programme
has resulted in savings of **£5m**
approximately **per year**
and a 40% reduction
in its carbon
footprint.

“The key point about the programme was that we didn’t see it as being just about property rationalization or new ways of working. It was always an integrated programme that would modernize the council and meet customer requirements, whilst delivering sustainable savings that could, and have been, reinvested into key frontline services.”



Figure 9: The atrium at Wiltshire Council’s County Hall.

Change management

With 2,900 workers moving to new office space and over 300 staff from partner agencies, such as Wiltshire Police and Her Majesty’s Revenue and Customs, considerable effort was put into the change management programme. Measures included:

- relevant workshops and forums for staff
- ensuring the corporate directors moved to the same open plan and flexible working environment as all staff
- having members of the transformation team available to listen to employees’ concerns and to answer questions whenever required, not just at the convenience of the programme
- aligning the Council’s wider change programme to the specific Workplace Transformation Programme
- appointing more than 120 change champions in frontline teams, with inspirational people selected for their attitude and behaviour regarding change and improvements.

The investment in technology also helped to manage the change effectively. Stone explains: “Technology was a key enabler and added a ‘wow’ factor prior to the buildings being completed. Kit that enables staff to work better also helps them feel valued. In fact, we originally aimed for a 3:2 desk ratio for staff, but it was clear that staff really rated the IT and trusted it to support flexible and home-working, so we have moved to a 2:1 desk ratio.”

Delivery

The programme involved close cooperation between different functions within the organization, including ICT (technology function), property services, HR, finance, the corporate leadership team (the corporate directors) and the cabinet (the executive branch of the Council).

For Stone, strong leadership helped them to overcome any problems: “There are always issues to some degree; change is about balancing these, and we were changing the office location for more than 2,900 people. In the end it comes down to leadership and communication. The programme was very clearly led and from day one the senior elected members were unequivocal in their support and requirements.”

The experience of working together has also been very positive. “The sheer scale and time together on this project created strong inter-personal relationships that have helped to deliver future change programmes and created a default style of collaboration, rather than service-driven change in isolation.”

Strong working relationships are also helping the Council to make progress in the wider programme, including expanding joint working with the police and creating 18 community campuses for the Council’s services and operations, a similar approach to the hubs built for office-based workers.

Advice

When asked if he has any advice for other organizations undertaking a change programme, Stone returns to the theme of having an holistic scope and approach.

“Understand that it isn’t about buildings or technology, it’s about people; how they work and the tools and locations they need to deliver outcomes for customers. Don’t do this as a half measure, and don’t ever run a programme as a range of separate initiatives run from various departments. Only do it with the full and unequivocal support of the organization’s leadership, and in the case of the public sector, your elected members.”

Acknowledgements

About the author: Steve Bynghall is a research associate, benchmarker and consultant at the Digital Workplace Group. He is also a Director of Two Hives Ltd (www.twohives.co.uk). He has written numerous reports and articles relating to intranets and the wider digital workplace, and also project manages the Intranet Innovation Awards for Step Two Designs. Steve spent 13 years at BDO, where he managed the firm’s global extranet programme.

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