

Watlow: Data Drives Design

Leaders at Watlow, a global innovator in the design and manufacturing of thermal systems, knew they wanted to renovate the company's global headquarters (50,000 square feet), but also knew that they needed to approach the design process carefully and thoughtfully.

Renovating its global headquarters was a critical part of Watlow's company strategy. It was a decision that needed to address both physical facility needs like space utilization, and more nuanced, intangible needs like employee reaction to change.

Because the leaders at Watlow recognize that their people are a huge asset, they focused on finding ways to better connect teams and encourage collaboration. However, this would require a substantial real estate cost.

How did Watlow resolve this tricky balancing act? The company first identified three main challenges with their old space and used Haworth's workplace knowledge, tools, and strategy as its blueprint for the future.

Challenges with Old Space:

- High internal silos and communications barriers
- Poor space utilization
- Outdated and uninspiring environment

Getting to a Solution

Haworth's Workplace Strategy team started by analyzing the three challenges with our LENS™ Workplace Assessment Tools and doing observational research. After combining findings from both, Watlow and Haworth formed a workplace solution that addressed both employee apprehension about change and the practical space, real estate, and cost implications of the renovation.

Three different LENS tools analyzed Watlow's "personality":

- **CultureLENS™** showed that Watlow was a primarily a Collaborate culture, focused on doing things together—almost family-like. Current furniture and interior spaces were not supporting that group-oriented dynamic.
- **OfficeLENS™** showed the building itself was lacking in many areas. However, the biggest downfall was that employees couldn't readily find spaces or opportunities to connect with their teams in meaningful ways. They also did not have access to natural daylight or exterior views. Low employee satisfaction and engagement levels were an issue.
- **WorkstyleLENS™** showed focused work was still critical and technical resources, such as engineering books, were still needed for daily reference. Access to this information was a key to maximizing team functionality and productivity.

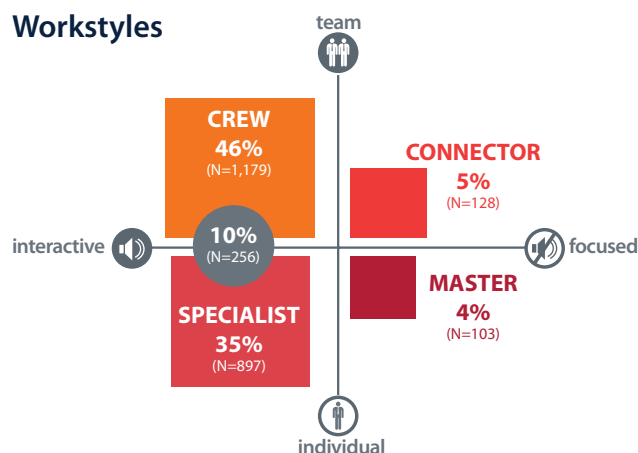
Haworth strategists also used survey data and onsite observations to validate their findings. Follow-up workshops were held to discuss those findings, and tie solutions to actual business outcomes. We wanted to ensure a variety of opinions and productive conversations, so a wide range of participants were involved, including Watlow's leadership, design team, and various employee groups.

"We were surprised how inclusive the Haworth team was and how they wanted to make sure our design ideas and business vision manifested itself in a complete solution. It did not matter if it was through the architecture, interior design, or a furniture solution."

—Chris Gaffney, Director of Information Technology

Our LENS tools and the associated data revealed critical information about Watlow's culture, its spaces, and its employees' workstyles; each one shaped the final result. We found that most people fell into the crew or specialist categories, with 10% straddling the two workstyles. The crew employees needed support for performing more collaborative teamwork, while specialists required more space for performing individual tasks. However, both groups needed to be able to easily interact with one another.

Workstyles



Connectors: People who often work in groups to generate new ideas and connect them to strategy.

Specialists: People who mostly work alone focused on specific tasks and deliverables.

Masters: Subject matter experts who primarily work alone to develop and hone strategic objectives.

Crew: Individuals who work in teams focused on tactical objectives and deliverables.

End Results

Watlow ultimately chose a design centered around a large living café. All corridors terminated at this social space to encourage its use during any time of day, and a glass facade flooded the space with natural light. A new workplace furniture standard, based on a "kit-of-parts" approach, was adopted, as well.

Change begins and ends with people. The success of this project can be largely attributed to the involvement of Watlow's employees. With interviews, surveys, and workshops, as well as observations and the use of the LENS tools, Haworth was able to help Watlow implement an affordable, flexible, and adaptable furniture solution that maximized outcomes and minimized disruption.

"The light is a natural draw and encourages our people to get up and take meetings to the café. We are now connecting and communicating in ways that we never expected, and our people feel more energized, inspired, and engaged."

—Peter Desloge, CEO, Watlow



Contributor

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Brad is an architect who specializes in high-performance workplace strategies. He is a key link in leading global clients through research data interpretation and analysis, to help shape and give form to viable strategies and design solutions. He provides transformational change and works with clients to translate their organizations' cultures and business visions into overall space concept strategies, and to align project teams toward a common vision.

Haworth Workplace Strategists connect links between workspace design and human behavior, health, performance, and the quality of the user experience. We share and apply what we learn to inform product development and help our customers shape their work environments. To learn more about this topic or other research resources that Haworth provides, visit www.haworth.com.