

Aligning Space & Creating Culture for the Future

Haworth's Workplace Strategy team was approached by a professional organization whose mission is to support its individual members and collect, distribute, and exchange technical knowledge concerning the exploration, development, and production of oil and gas resources. The organization needed help creating a design strategy for a remodel of their existing headquarters facility, and turned to Haworth to help them quantifiably pinpoint which areas of the organization needed to be addressed with change management strategies to support the goals of:

- Getting all of its employees under one roof;
- Shifting the organizational culture to support new business needs;
- Creating a space that all employees, members, and visitors can enjoy.

Haworth's Workplace Strategy team provided a framework for measuring and quantifying decisions, reassuring our client's leadership they were making sound decisions employees would respect, while also maintaining accountability with professional constituents. In addition, the discovery workshop created a key link to the employees, allowing their voices to be heard.

Pinpointing Opportunities with Proprietary Tools

Comprehensive surveys and workplace analysis tools were used to provide insight and clarity about this professional organization. Three aspects of the workplace were analyzed: culture, facility performance, and work styles.

- **CultureLENS™** discovered the organization's employees saw the current culture as based on hierarchy and control. Its future culture needed to be based on collaboration, team problem-solving, team innovation, and transparency. The shift would require a different physical environment to support the new direction.
- **OfficeLENS™** focused on key aspects of the organization's business to provide a deep understanding of the existing building's opportunities and obstacles. Being aware of the

positive and negative aspects of the space enabled the design team to develop concepts to counteract the negatives and emphasize the positives.

- **WorkstyleLENS™** surveys revealed most employees considered their work highly-focused, individual, autonomous, and as needing significant visual and acoustic privacy. This baseline allowed the organization to start adjusting workstyles toward the new goal of increased interaction, collaboration, and departmental transparency.

Survey assessments amplified and clarified the different employee voices. By connecting and linking varying viewpoints, Haworth's Workplace Strategy team and the professional organization established a new work model that became the driver for all project and leadership decisions.

Using Data for Design

Translation of the data and a hands-on change workshop with key stakeholders illuminated the business drivers necessary to achieve a unified vision and direction. The organization's leadership established three drivers going well beyond only spatial and furniture implications:

- **Connectedness** – Connect employees through a feeling of unity at organizational, group, and individual levels.
- **Transparency** – Break down barriers blocking interaction and encourage information sharing among employees.
- **Appropriateness** – Support different work styles via a variety of spaces appropriate to each work style and task.

Connecting to Employees Through Change Management

The professional organization's employees were being asked to reduce their real-estate footprint, with many coming out of private offices into an open work environment. Haworth's Workplace Strategy team created a change management program focused around training the organization's Leadership Team to communicate openly and honestly about upcoming changes and the reasons driving them. However, this was just the start of the communication plan. The organization chose to keep its employees involved and informed by creating internal blogs, allowing project walk-throughs at key points during construction, and providing a furniture mockup, enabling users to experience proposed solutions. The feedback gathered from employees during these events provided insights that ultimately assisted Haworth's Workplace Strategy team in fine-tuning the furniture solutions to better match employees' workstyles.

Design Implications that Perform

The Haworth Workplace Strategy team used the information compiled during workshops to develop a high-level design concept balancing human, organizational, and facility needs. Upon synthesizing and prioritizing the data from site observations, workshops, and guiding principles, a clear direction emerged:

- **Access to Exterior Views** – Solutions needed to offer views of the wooded creek beyond the building to connect employees to daylight and nature.
- **Transparency Between Departments** – Open plan concepts would break down silos between departments and encourage information sharing between teams.

- **Collaboration and Innovation** – Collaboration needed to occur both in enclosed rooms and in open spaces. Open team concepts were incorporated around key social spaces like cafés and coffee bars to ensure maximum exposure and use.
- **Celebrate Future-State Culture through Space and Furniture** – The new collaborative culture needed to be reflected in every aspect of the space, from layout to the physical furniture itself.

Results

Although systems and controls helped ensure the highest-quality processes inside the organization, the end goal was a culture encouraging and supporting new and innovative ideas through an open and collaborative space. To accomplish this, Haworth's Workplace Strategy team guided the organization in aligning the space's design to support new behaviors and new ways of thinking.

Connecting the Dots to Provide a Holistic Strategy

The Haworth Workplace Strategy team's work with other stakeholders and the understanding of critical change criteria unlocked the organization's true potential. The architects and designers were also key parts of the solution. Being involved in all aspects of the Haworth process allowed the project team to quickly rally behind important concepts and offer feedback regarding what might help shift organizational culture in the right direction. The power of information and collaboration ensured deeper understanding of the organization's unique needs and helped Haworth's Workplace Strategists provide the best change strategy.

Making these types of changes is never easy. Aligning the space to support new behaviors makes the transition much easier. Feedback on this specific project indicated that the professional organization's employees were excited about the changes and the future.

“Everyone from the Haworth team really became our trusted partner. They were professional, knowledgeable, and presented the material in a way that everyone could understand. The information provided far exceeded all of our expectations and went a long way in helping us achieve our goal of having everyone in the same building, shifting our culture, and creating a space that we all enjoy being in!”

—Senior Manager, Organizational Development

Using the Haworth tools, and working together with the Haworth Workplace Strategy team, this professional organization could understand their culture and key business issues—and were able to align culture, space, and furniture to support a bright future.



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.