When a global multi-level marketing company—the sixth largest in North America, with a very strong history and brand—set out to build a new manufacturing facility, its leadership asked Haworth for help. They needed to create a workplace strategy that supported their organization, people, and facility needs—and they needed it pronto.

As with most workspaces in a manufacturing facility, this company’s floorplate had evolved over 30+ years in an ad-hoc approach. As spaces freed up, teams would populate vacant spaces and make them work for any and all types of tasks. The challenge with this approach was that spaces rarely worked correctly to support the team’s organizational, people, or facility needs. Either it was too big, and the extra space became a storage area, or more people were crammed into the space with little regard for their needs. Employees didn’t benefit from well-being design principles, reduced auditory distractions, or access to exterior views.

In addition, the company’s teams weren’t physically aligned with its research and development workflow and collaborative organizational culture. People were wasting time searching for team members and wandering around the facility, seeking places to connect. These obstacles created disruption in key activities, such as brainstorming and collaborating, to bring new products to market.

Bridging Vision with Reality

Haworth’s Workplace Strategy team was engaged to develop the workplace strategy, and—more importantly—to bridge leadership’s vision for the new ground-up project with employee workstyles. In addition, it was key for the transition into the new environment to happen with as few disruptions and as little downtime as possible.

The Haworth team immediately knew that timing was tight, as the base building was already under construction. Employing our proprietary workplace strategy services helped develop and reveal opportunities that were previously undiscovered.

In a three-hour workshop, a group of 30 employees of varying ages and tenure met to map the company’s future workplace needs and reveal employee needs. The result was learning that employees had concerns about the new workplace design and furniture. In addition, rumors had been started and were identified as design opportunities to initiate the change management process and demonstrate how listening to employee concerns would ensure new solutions met their expectations and needs. This dynamic and inclusive process was implemented by the Haworth Workplace Strategy team, using the following workshops to facilitate a deep and meaningful discussion from which all could learn.
• **CultureMap (Culture Card Game and Exercise)** Is a fun and interactive way to explore culture types and the behaviors that are most prevalent in the workplace today.

• **WorkstylesMap** builds off the CultureMap exercises to map department workstyles.

• **Business Fingerprint Map** helps identify and map key project and business objectives based on three performance categories: Human, Facility, and Organizational.

**End Results**

At the end of the workshop process there was a big "aha moment" when the employees realized that some departments needed different furniture to support their needs, and that the workplace can be designed to be flexible and adapt over time.

In addition, employees realized that work is no longer only occurring at the desk or workstations. They are encouraged to move around the building and to use new collaboration spaces and amenities. The team quickly became excited about the opportunity to choose where they work, and to have spaces that supported diverse work and collaboration needs.

**Workshop Findings**

• **CultureMap** This gaming approach helped the team understand that not all cultures in the organization always align. They immediately related to the differences between the culture types and behaviors that would support their future state, and discussed the things holding them back from embracing it.

• **WorkstylesMap** This process identified department and employee needs for optimum performance, how often teams engage and collaborate with others, and how often people need to do focused work. These results shaped the work environment design and furniture required to support the identified workstyles.

• **Business Fingerprint Map** This process helped prioritize objectives and brought consensus to ensure the facilities and design teams understood the most important issues to tackle in support of the long-term business vision. In addition, modifications were made to the furniture mock-up based on the workshop discoveries.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Human</th>
<th>Facility</th>
<th>Organizational</th>
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<td>Well-Being</td>
<td>Space Utilization</td>
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<td>Flexibility/Adaptability</td>
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From this workshop our strategists used their expertise to quickly create a workspace strategy that defined the guiding principles for the project to support the human, facility, and organizational performances. They helped the company leadership set the vision for the project from which all decisions could be made. As their vision and business objective evolve, they can be confident that their people will have the space and furniture that will work today—and in the future—offering a win-win for everyone involved.

**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 haworth.com.

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