


## Change Management Case Study: Workforce Mobility



For one organization, a conservative approach proved to be the right solution to explore the benefits of workforce mobility. The senior leaders, struggling with conflicting business objectives, engaged Stegmeier Consulting Group to support the company's goal to balance cost reduction and performance improvement.

Reduce Costs		Improve Performance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Operate more productively with fewer resources.</li> <li>▪ Analyze workspace utilization and refine workplace strategy based on actual usage.</li> <li>▪ Establish business continuity strategy.</li> <li>▪ Offer low-cost employee perks to offset reduction in company-paid healthcare coverage.</li> <li>▪ Reduce energy consumption through corporate-wide Green initiative.</li> <li>▪ Enhance security and control to prevent costly compromise of data.</li> <li>▪ Implement productivity-enhancing technology and provide 24/7 support without increasing IT staff.</li> <li>▪ Eliminate up-front costs of purchasing hardware and installing software by adopting browser-based solutions.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increase productivity through teamwork and collaboration despite the location.</li> <li>▪ Improve employee morale.</li> <li>▪ Provide staff more choices and control to balance work-life.</li> <li>▪ Create a workplace to attract, inspire and retain talent.</li> <li>▪ Accommodate the needs of the multigenerational workforce.</li> <li>▪ Enhance employee access to company information where and when they need it.</li> <li>▪ Challenge managers and supervisors to focus on the results, rather than on the tasks of their direct reports.</li> <li>▪ Reinforce the corporate values of trust, teamwork and customer centricity.</li> </ul>

Our client's senior leaders knew the enterprise could benefit from enabling a greater level of workforce mobility, but were hesitant to jump headfirst into a new workplace strategy they felt could disrupt business operations and distract employees from their work. By developing and implementing a pilot mobility program, rather than starting out by instituting a major enterprise-wide initiative, the client could focus on clearly understanding how to best support a manageably-sized group of 67 mobile professionals, refining the model and reaching informed decisions prior to launching a more formalized flex work initiative and mobility program to other individuals within the company.

The workplace pilot would greatly increase the degree of worker mobility, and the appropriate technology was, without a doubt, essential to supporting employees' virtual work. While technology was identified as a key contributor to optimal employee performance, the culture of the business indicated a resistance to giving employees the autonomy to choose where they could work on a given day. Supervisors were concerned about performance management and how they would monitor direct reports who would be out of their lines of sight. It was anticipated that individual contributors may fear

that working remotely will result in stalled career advancement — a consequence of reduced visibility in the company. The senior leaders participated in a program introducing them to the 15 Critical Influences™ and how these elements can be enablers or barriers to successful workplace change. The leadership team learned that if these interrelated factors were managed poorly, they could create conflict over limited resources, causing loss of productivity, damage to morale and increased employee turnover. The executives were then led through a strategic planning process focused on addressing the company-specific concerns of the various stakeholders.

To prepare members of the workforce who were selected to participate in the pilot study, Stegmeier Consulting Group conducted a series of training sessions focused on company-specific issues and requirements called “From Resistance to Results: Guiding Business Leaders on Managing in the New Workplace™” (for senior managers and directors), “Mobile Workforce Management™” (for supervisors and managers) and “MobilityWorks™” (for individual contributors).

A conservative approach was also reflected in the amount of time people could work outside of the corporate facility. Individual contributors were given the flexibility to work remotely two-to-three days per workweek. Managers were given the option to do so two-to-three days as well. Supervisors, still hesitant in trusting their direct reports who were out of sight, helped set the pilot program guidelines for their own job category and committed to mobile work at least a half day per week. Senior managers and directors, who ordinarily traveled on company business three-to-four days per week, agreed to spend some of their non-travel time working in the open, collaborative spaces in the pilot work area.

Stegmeier Consulting Group conducted work-time studies prior to the initiation of the pilot mobility program to establish baseline metrics for employee productivity. We repeated the work-time studies approximately six months following the pilot launch and discovered strong improvements in several critical areas:

- The studies indicated a 37.6 percent reduction in the length of staff meetings.
- The results revealed that managers had an average decrease in interruptions of 43.2 percent.
- Individual contributors saved an average of 6.3 hours per week in commute time; in turn, they re-invested an average of 4.5 hours back into their work tasks.
- Supervisors logged an average increase of 90 minutes of planning, goal setting and strategizing per week.

While our client eased into a pilot mobility trial period, once the cost savings and performance improvements were evident, the senior leadership team had a high level of confidence to quickly expand the program to leverage the many benefits of workforce mobility. Within 18 months, the organization had nearly 250 people enrolled in its mobile work program.

In conclusion, many organizations are developing new workplace strategies to establish infrastructures to better support the increasingly mobile workforce. A strong mobility program can accomplish two important objectives: 1) reduce workplace costs and 2) increase workforce performance.

## **Benefits of Workforce Mobility**

- ↗ Creates a balance between reducing workplace costs and improving workforce performance
- ↗ Supports the organization's business continuity plan
- ↗ Reduces energy consumption
- ↗ Reinforces trust and accountability throughout the enterprise
- ↗ Contributes to the company's attraction and retention initiatives
- ↗ Provides employees more choices and control to balance work-life
- ↗ Develops a more adaptable workforce in preparation for the accelerating rate of change



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