Gender-based Analysis Plus

JUNE 2022

Project

15-25 Eddy, Les Terrasses de la Chaudière, Gatineau

Profile: Balanced
Space solution: 5 671 m2
Target occupancy: 473 FTE
Year of planning: 2019
Years of construction: 2020-2021

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GBA+ is an analytical process that provides a rigorous method for the assessment of systemic inequalities, as well as a means to assess how diverse groups of women, men, and gender diverse people may experience policies, programs and initiatives. The "plus" in GBA+ acknowledges that GBA+ is not just about differences between biological (sexes) and socio-cultural (genders)... GBA+ considers many other identity factors such as race, ethnicity, religion, age, and mental or physical disability, and how the interaction between these factors influences the way we might experience government policies and initiatives.

Women Gender Equality Canada

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Gender-based Analysis Plus

A GBA+ was conducted to inform GCworkplace, focusing on the impact of workplace design in the Canadian Public Service and on employees and individuals occupying government workplaces. The following identity factors were studied in this analysis: visible minorities, age, people with disabilities, Indigenous people and gender. The methodology used for this analysis consisted of a review of existing industry and academic research, which was further examined by comparing demographic trends with data from Statistics Canada and the Public Service Employee Survey results. The major findings were then categorized into the following four themes: autonomy, privacy, group dynamics, and wellbeing. For each theme, research findings were explored to determine the impacts of workplace design on members of various identity groups, with the goal of identifying any areas of inequity so that design solutions could be recommended to improve the workplace experience for all employees.

This concept guide will provide further guidance on concrete workplace strategies and design solutions to include into fit-up projects based on the four themes. It will highlight the benefits for the targeted groups. Then, a list of general best practices will be presented as well as a floor plan with some annotations highlighting optimal design solutions that meet the elements of the GBA+.

A comprehensive GBA+ on the GCworkplace concept and design can be found here.

Key findings

AUTONOMY
- Promoting autonomy via flexible and remote working contributes to many benefits for employee especially individual who suffer from anxiety and other mental disorders, independent workers, caregivers and Indigenous people
- Choice-rich environments leads to greater autonomy and more engaged employees especially people with disabilities, terms employees, members of other marginalized groups, individuals with different abilities, individual with various body shapes and sizes, Indigenous people and people with environmental sensitivities
- Technology can support autonomy as an enabler of virtual presence. It is beneficial especially to caregivers and younger generations

GROUP DYNAMICS
- Positive group dynamics are supported by the right ratio of individual and collective space to suit the organizational needs
- Diverse team structures present new challenges to maintaining positive group dynamics
- Collaboration is essential to organizational growth and innovation. It benefits a multi-generational workforce, part-time workers, caregivers and Indigenous people as they feel more included and have opportunities to share their knowledge

PRIVACY
- Visual and acoustic privacy are critical to supporting focus work especially for older generations
- The workplace must support personal privacy and confidentiality especially for women and neurodiverse

WELLBEING
- A cohesive workplace culture supports employee wellbeing across gender, generation and physical and psychological ability
- Creating an environment of psychological safety contributes to workplace mental health
- Workplaces that provide opportunities for stress reduction can further enhance employee wellbeing across all identity group
- Women feel particularly observed in the workplace especially pregnant women and visible minority women
- Lack of predictability in the workplace can be stressful for some people especially those with disability and those who suffer anxiety disorders

GCworkplace and GBA+

GCworkplace promotes a shared and inclusive work environment that offers several benefits to all employees, and presents some advantages for those who identify with specific identity groups. By leveraging activity-based working, GCworkplace can respond to various work preference, recognizing that these may have cultural drivers, and thus supports the needs of a diverse workforce including visible minorities and Indigenous employees.

By applying GCworkplace design principles and best practices, each workplace will include three distinct zones (Quiet, Interactive and Transitional), which are important to provide a variety of work environments required to have a welcoming workplace for a multi-generational workforce. A key component is providing a wide variety of work setting options in a choice-rich workplace environment. By providing a variety of workpoints, open and enclosed, the workplace becomes a flexible, participative, open, and inclusive work environment respectful of differences. This variety supports greater diversity by providing choices that suit the needs and preferences of people with disabilities, menopause, environmental sensitivities, cognitive differences or neurodiverse needs, varying body shapes and sizes, and different levels of mobility throughout the space. Technology plays an important role by enabling virtual communication and connectivity to resources from various locations, thereby empowering employees to maintain a level of professional performance that may otherwise be challenging without the flexibility that technology allows.

Therefore, the cumulative benefits to employees who work in an environment that embraces diversity and inclusion are many, from autonomy to wellbeing. GCworkplace is a shared environment that may contribute to a more equitable and inclusive work dynamic.

General best practices

Following are some best practice that can be applied to ensure an inclusive work environment:
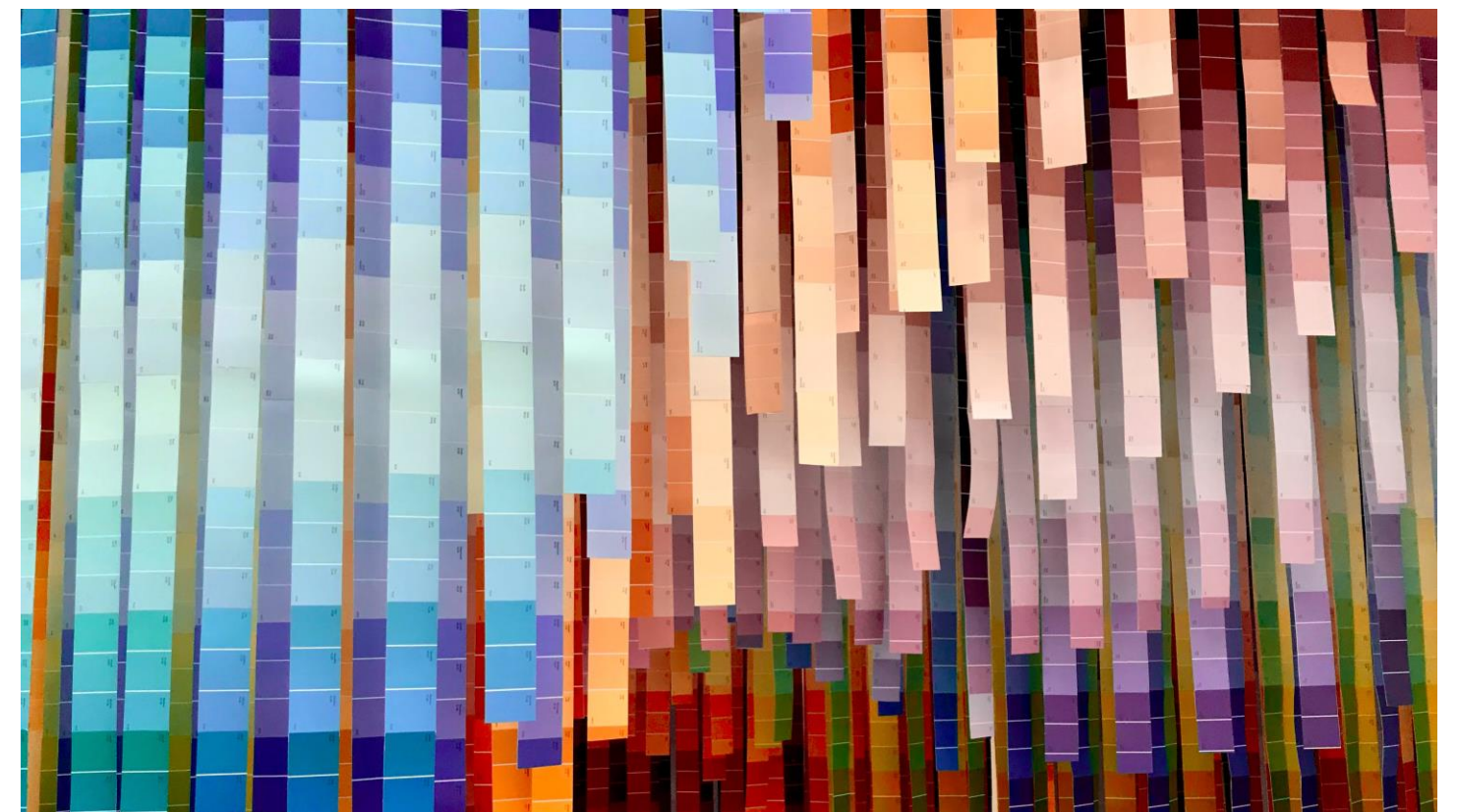
- Follow the five GCworkplace key design principles: User-centric design, promote equal access, design for activities, zone by function and plan for flexibility

- Create a welcoming space to gather and socialize to build an attachment to the office (kitchenette, teaming area, meeting room, entrance, etc.)

- Include configurations that promote socialization between employees among different teams, cultures, and backgrounds (circle are preferred by Indigenous people and face-to-face seating by older worker)

- Increase visual and acoustic privacy by establishing a behavior code in order to have an effective quiet zone

- Include modesty panels especially in open space, bar heigh tables and face-to-face sit-stand desk settings

- Specify some level of frosting on glass panels to increase visual privacy and reduce distractions in enclosed room

- Plan an effective study to ensure a controlled quiet space especially for occupants who are hypersentitive

- Minimize sound disruption in the quiet zone by including acoustic panels in the open area, dividers between workstations and specifying work pods and focus pods with surrounding panels

- Distinguish the quiet zone by highlighting key architectural elements, by using different forms and volumes that define the space, or by using decorative elements or colour as well as signage

- Promote wellbeing by including some biophilic design principles such as access to natural light, outdoor view and greening

- Include technology that supports virtual presence in as many workpoints possible

- Design a semi-private space such as secluded focus pods with high panels, enclosed rooms with visual privacy and wellness rooms

> " Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA+) is part of the Government of Canada's commitment to promoting diversity and inclusion across the public service.
>
> Canada School of Public Service "

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15-25 Eddy, Gatineau by PSPC NCR team

Good variety in terms of orientation, configuration and setting of Workstations

Panels to increase privacy in Quiet zone

Clear and intuitive circulation path

Many possibilities to indicate a change of zone using architectural elements

Overall good variety in terms of configuration and setting of workpoint types as well as distribution across the floor

Enclosed rooms are set back from the perimeter allowing access to natural light and outdoor views

Several semi-private spaces

Grouping of Workstations that promote collaboration in the Transitional zone

Effective grouping of Lounge Pods

Use of unique furniture at the main entrance

Good gathering space design

Effective grouping of Work Pods

Good Study layout to improve visual privacy

Variety of layouts in Medium Meeting Rooms such as training setting

Good Touchdown layout that suits ideation and collaboration

Variety of layout in Large Meeting Rooms such as square and rectangular table

* This is a schematic plan for example only

QUIET ZONE   **TRANSITIONAL ZONE**   **INTERACTIVE ZONE**