



SWAGguide

Connecting every piece of workplace transformation to shape the workplace of today and tomorrow.

Strategic Workplace Advisory Group (SWAG) | Workplace and Sourcing Solutions (WSS)



Public Services and
Procurement Canada

Services publics et
Approvisionnement Canada

Canada

This guide was developed by the **Workplace Change Management National Centre of Expertise** at Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC). As part of the Real Property Services branch, our team brings specialized knowledge in workplace strategy and change management to support departments across government.

With experience advising hundreds of organizations, we help navigate transitions such as:

- ✓ unassigned seating
- ✓ GCworkplace implementation
- ✓ space optimization
- ✓ interdepartmental colocation

The content of this guide reflects our deep expertise, lessons learned, and best practices to support effective, people-centered workplace transformation.

 Visit our [GCXchange](#) page for more information!

The French version of this document is available here: [FR version](#)



First time opening the SWAG guide?

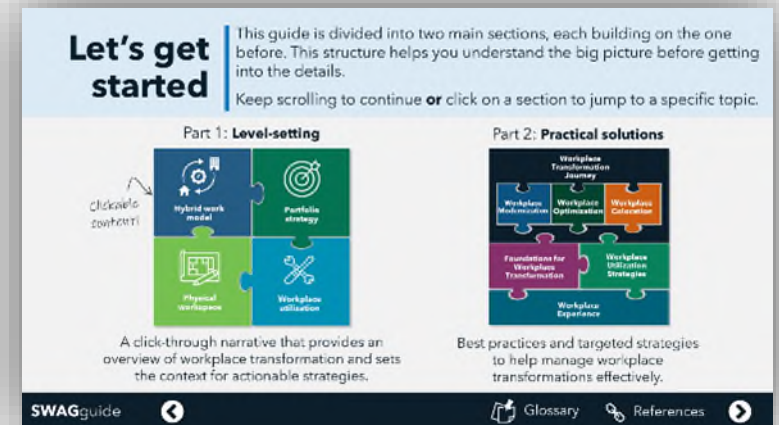
Continue to the next page to get some important context.



Already familiar with how the SWAG guide works?

If you're looking for specific content, continue to the [content overview page](#).

Click here to
go to page



 [Request a consultation](#) with a PSPC advisor as needed



? What is the SWAG guide

As a workplace leader, you help shape your organization's future work environment. The SWAG guide helps you rethink how to use space efficiently while still providing a ***desirable workplace experience***.

Who is this guide for?

This tool was created to help accommodation teams with workplace transformations.

How will this guide help you?

By questioning old habits, you can create spaces that are effective, sustainable, and meet employees' needs. This guide gives you the tools, strategies, and insights to make positive changes for your organization and its people by defining the desired workplace experience.

The guide offers:

- ✓ Ideas and strategies for using the workplace efficiently
- ✓ Visuals for presentations to leadership to gain their support
- ✓ Practical tips and best practices for solving common workplace challenges
- ✓ Steps to create successful transformations





What is workplace transformation

Workplace transformation can range from a full modernization, relocation, co-location, or adopting unassigned seating. While physical space often drives the change, the real transformation happens when people adapt to new ways of working.

Rising to the challenge

These changes are complex and involve decisions at many levels of an organization. Perhaps the most challenging part is changing long-standing habits, both personal and business. **Defining the desired workplace experience is the key to success**—it's not just about designing a workspace; it's about helping people work well in it.

No matter where you are in the process, every step—big or small—should aim for a modern GCworkplace. Large changes take time and effort, but small improvements can also make a difference. At its core, workplace transformation is about **redefining the workplace experience**—it's the foundation for successful and lasting change.

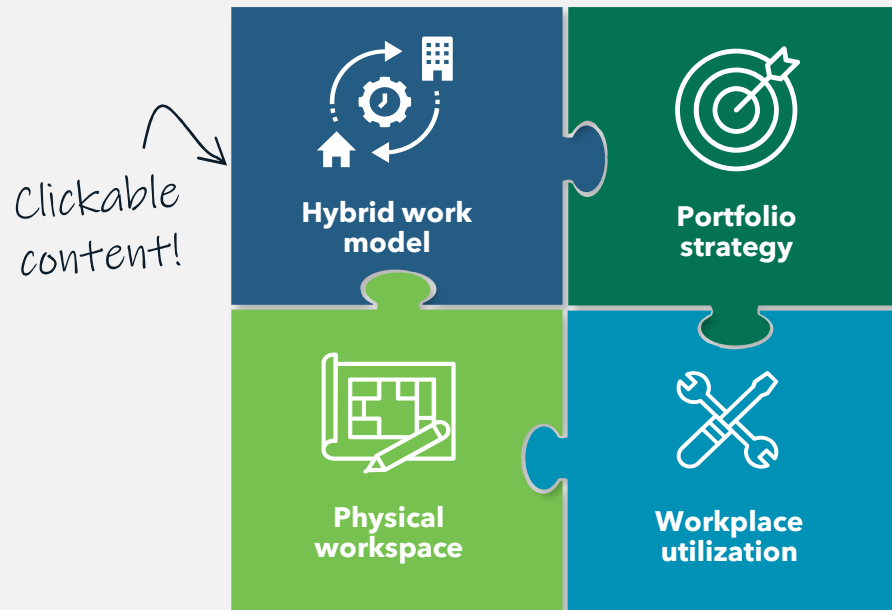


Let's get started

This guide is divided into two main sections, each building on the one before. This structure helps you understand the big picture before getting into the details.

Keep scrolling to continue **or** click on a section to jump to a specific topic.

Part 1: **Level-setting**



A click-through narrative that provides an overview of workplace transformation and sets the context for actionable strategies.

Part 2: **Practical solutions**



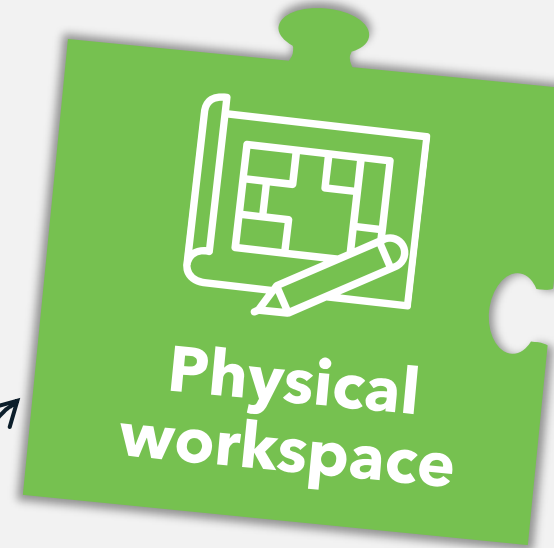
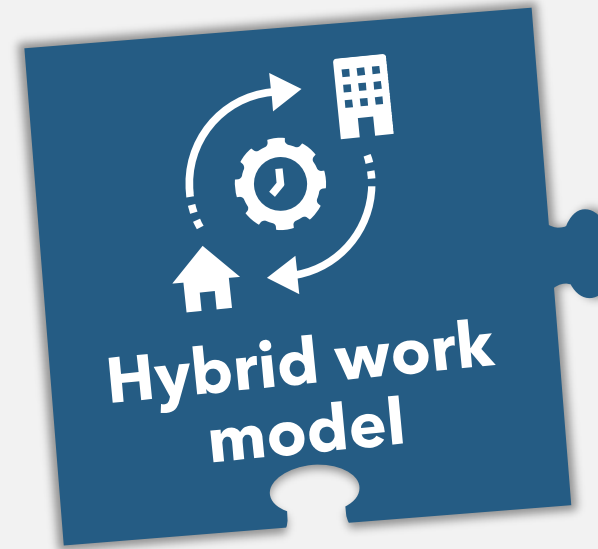
Best practices and targeted strategies to help manage workplace transformations effectively.

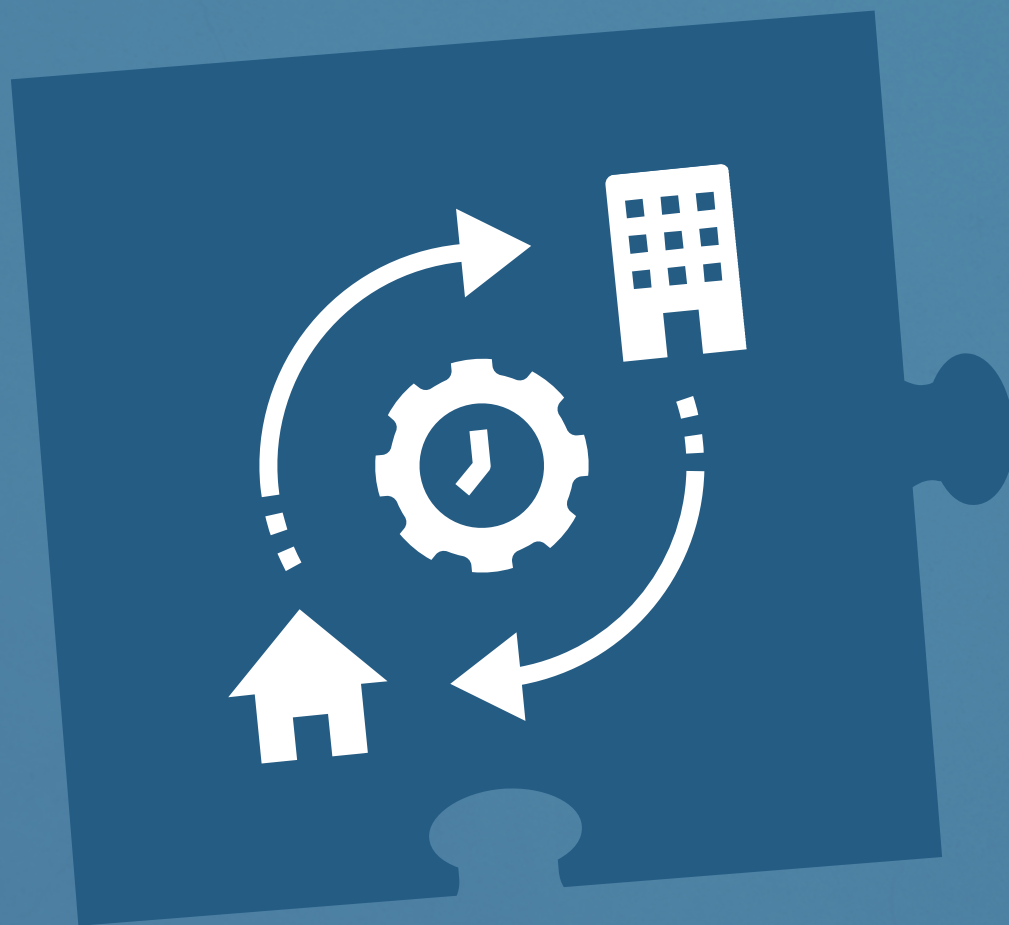
Level-setting

Workplace transformation is about enabling a modern **way** of working.

There are four crucial pieces required to make sense of this puzzle.

Clickable content! 





Hybrid work model

Defining a clear hybrid work model is vital to manage the impacts it will have on the space and the people using it.





Hybrid work model



Why is this important

While a hybrid work model is **defined by the organization**, it will have a significant impact on both the space and the people using it. A well-defined hybrid work model will help answer these questions:

SPACE

How much space is truly required?

Which spaces are best suited?

Which space should be prioritized for modernization?

Can we / should we still use traditional office space?

Can we / should we release space?

PEOPLE

How will employees be impacted?

How is their work now different from before?

What should be communicated, to whom, and when?

What changes will need to be managed?

How will these changes be managed?



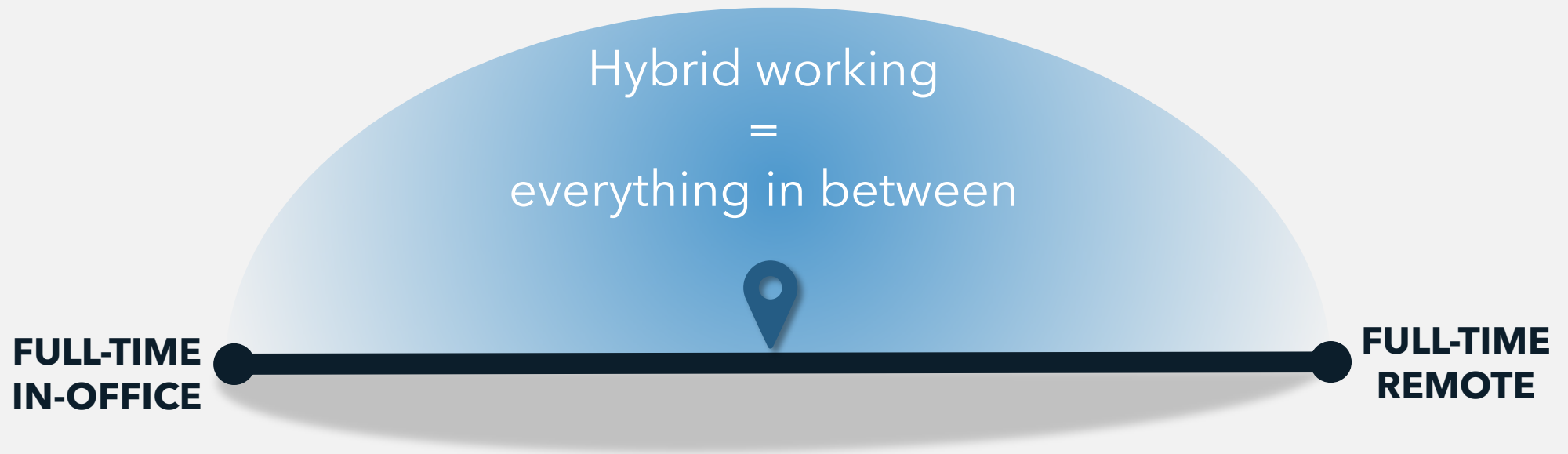


Hybrid work
model



What is hybrid working

Hybrid working is a flexible work model that provides a spectrum of work locations and arrangements, typically a balance between the office and remote work locations.



Most people have experienced a version of this over the last few years. However, a hybrid work model is **more than just working from different locations** on any given day.





Hybrid work model

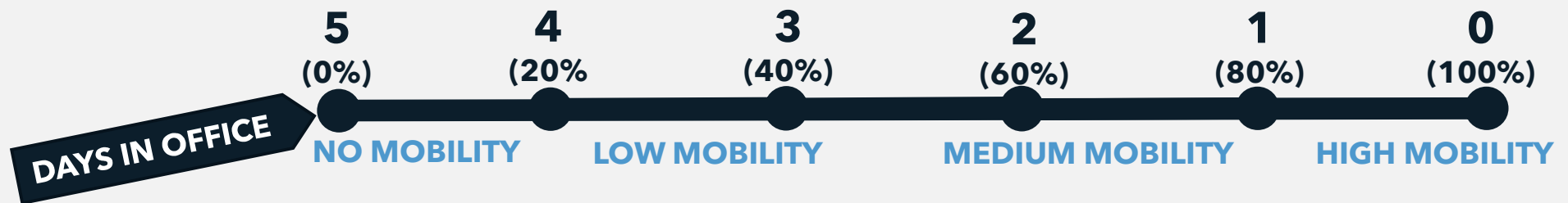
? What defines a hybrid work model

(1 of 3)

There are two major factors that define a hybrid work model. The first being the **level of external mobility**. This refers to the movement between someone's primary workplace and any alternate work location. Simply put, this means **days in office** vs. **days working remotely**.

EXAMPLE: 1000 employees with a 40% external mobility rate means +/- 600 people onsite every weekday.

EXAMPLE: 1000 employees with a 60% external mobility rate means +/- 400 people onsite every weekday.



External mobility will determine the percentage of employees that need to be accommodated in office space on any given day.

Not factored into these numbers is the percentage of regular daily vacancy (leave, field work, vacation, etc.)





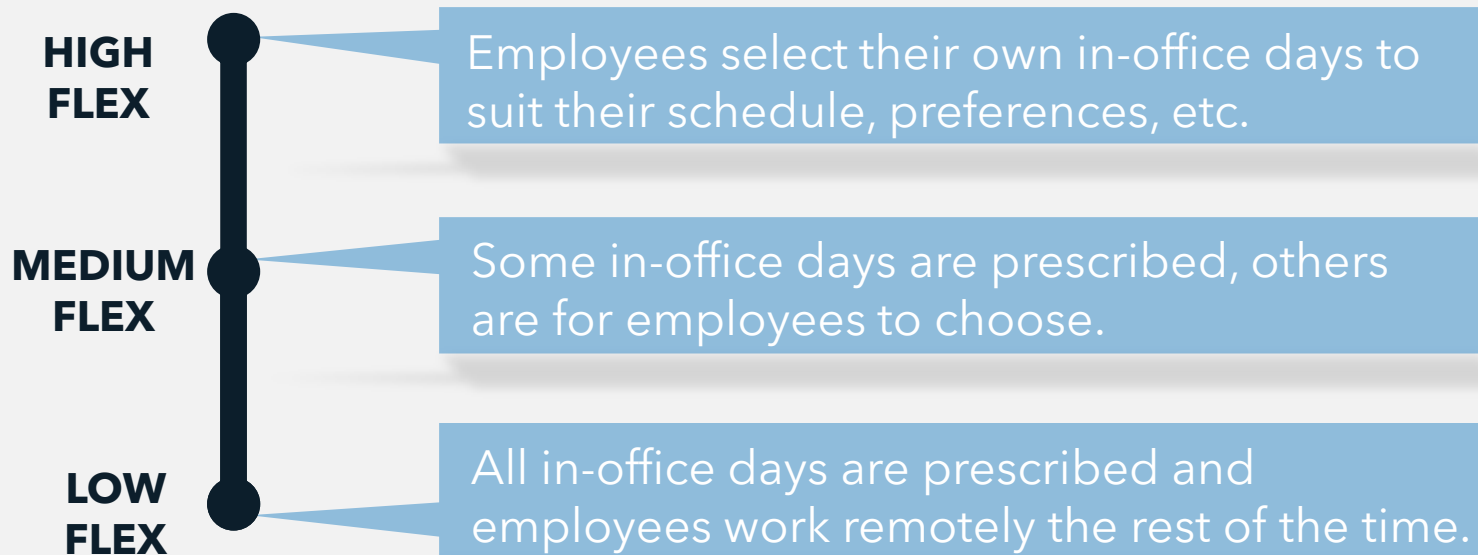
Hybrid work model



What defines a hybrid work model

(2 of 3)

The second factor to be considered is the **level of flexibility**. This refers to the choice an employee may or may not have to self-select the specific days on which they work from the office.



Although predictability can be helpful for managing the space requirements & occupancy levels, flexibility empowers employees to plan their own meaningful interactions which then contribute to a more positive workplace experience.

While certain in-office days of the week may be more popular at first, availability of workpoints, mixed with personal preferences for quiet in the office, will help level out utilization patterns over time



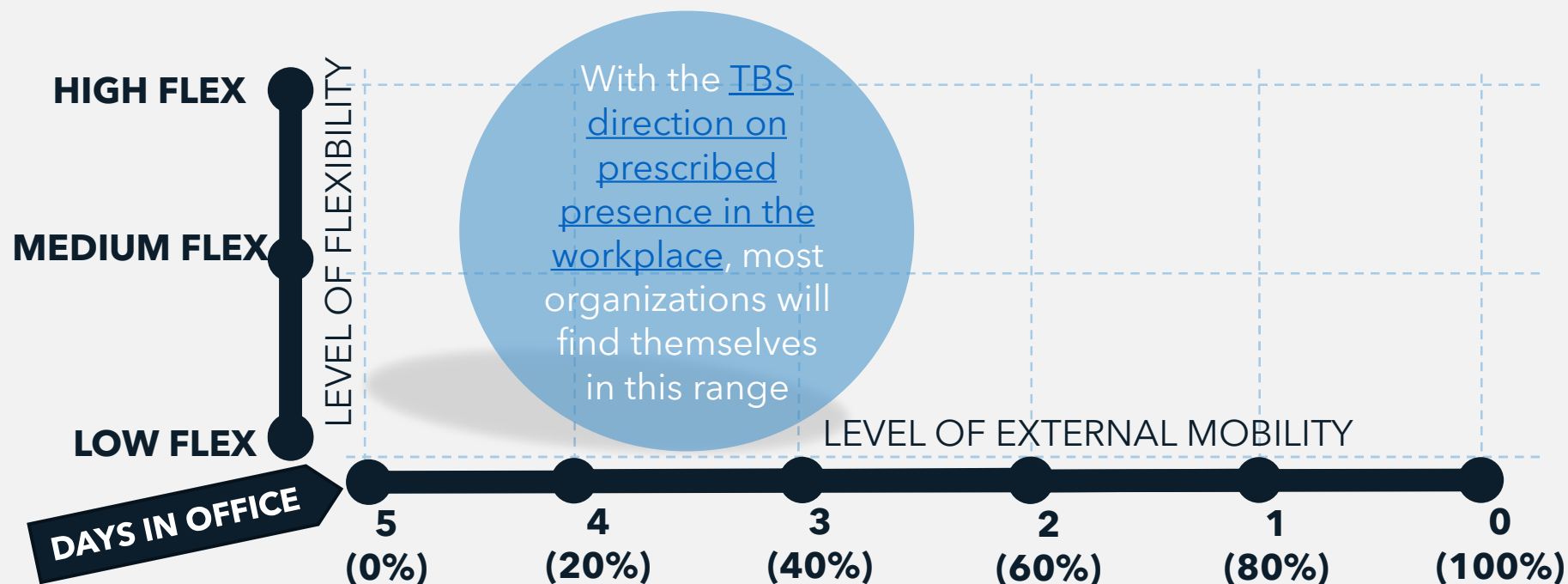


Hybrid work model

? What defines a hybrid work model

(3 of 3)

When both factors are combined, a hybrid work model can be defined. A well-defined model can then be translated into more accurate space requirements.



A [Client Accommodations Service Advisor \(CASA\) or Accommodation Manager](#) will determine space requirements relative to any hybrid work model. Here is a link to the [Accommodation Management Resource Centre](#), where you can find direct links to the Space Assessment App.





Hybrid work model

? How does hybrid work benefit people

Hybrid Work for Employees

Employees want flexibility and autonomy over the way they work. A hybrid work model can provide flexibility in the “*where*” and “*when*” of work, to support individuals’ and teams’ ability to make in-office time purposeful. To further enhance the experience, modern workplaces that are purposely designed to support hybrid working can provide flexibility for “*how*” someone chooses to use the workplace.

Hybrid Work for Leaders

Leaders know that promoting modern and flexible ways of working contribute to a positive workplace experience. More than ever, a modern workplace culture (and virtual culture!) is critical for attracting new talent, employee retention, and empowering a high performing workforce. With a culture of trust, modern workplaces purposely designed to support flexible and mobile ways of working, can greatly contribute to productivity and overall performance as well as a positive workplace culture.

Hybrid work is still in evolution, but most agree that it is here to stay!



Portfolio Strategy

No matter what hybrid model is defined by an organization, it will have a major impact on the overall portfolio strategy.





Portfolio strategy

? Why is it important

In response to the government-wide shift from 'office-first' to a hybrid work model, the federal workplace portfolio must be right-sized to ensure responsible and efficient use of space. It must support modern and flexible ways of working, as well as anticipated shifts in common practices, such as decentralized hiring.

A [PSPC Client Accommodation Service Advisor \(CASA\)](#) and/or [Accommodation Manager](#) can guide organizations in finding answers to questions like these



i Here is a link to the [Accommodation Management Resource Centre](#), where you can find direct links to the Space Assessment App and any relevant training.

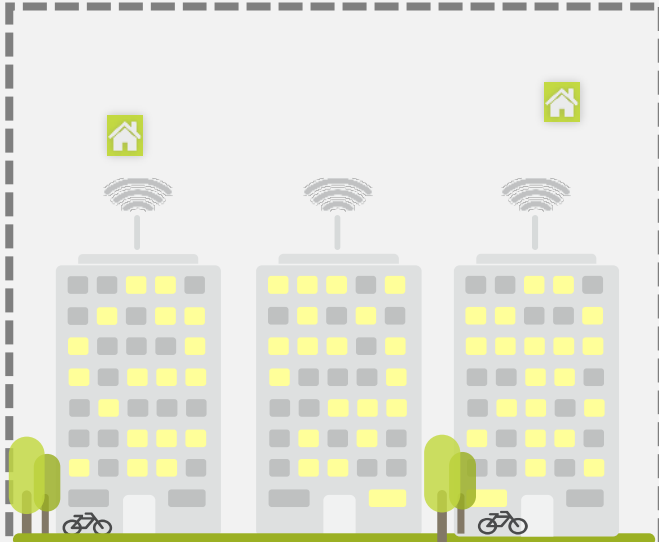
- ✓ How much space is needed for a hybrid workforce?
- ✓ Which spaces should be retained or released?
- ✓ How can interdepartmental colocation fit into a portfolio strategy?
- ✓ How can organizational growth be absorbed within the current portfolio?
- ✓ How can utilization data be leveraged for space assessment planning?



Portfolio strategy

? What is the future of federal office space

Where we **were**...



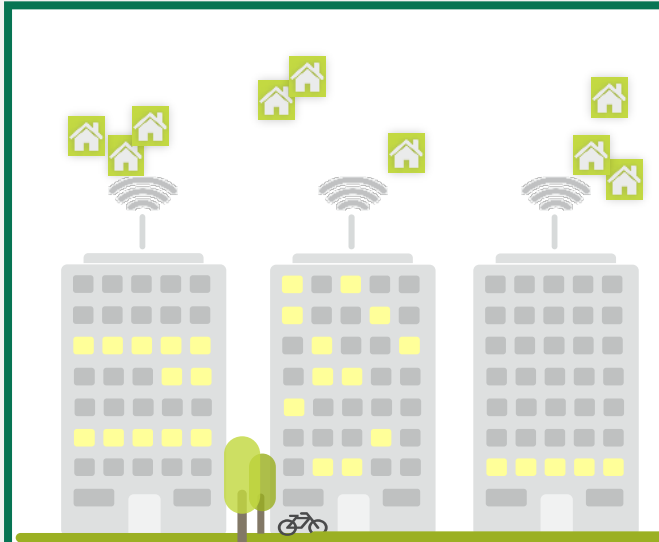
Everything is assigned

- ▶ Floors to departments
- ▶ Workstations to employees
- ▶ Static/individualistic workplaces

Little to no variety or flexibility

GCcoworking not yet available

Where we **are**...



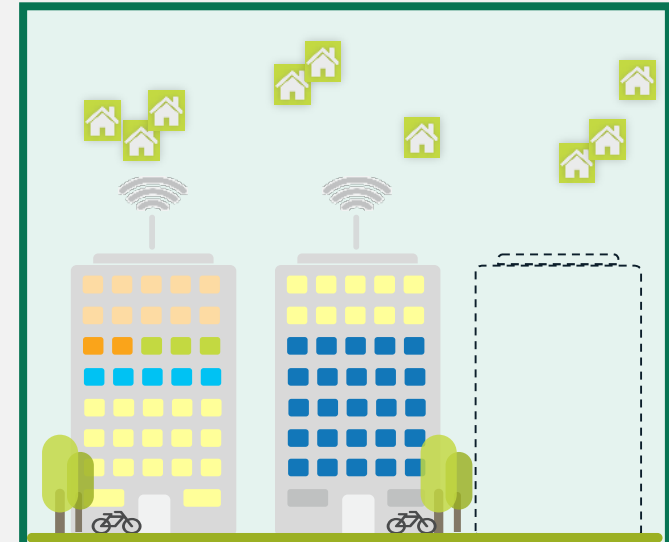
Return to Office

- ▶ Department's going unassigned
- ▶ Many consolidating/releasing space
- ▶ Consideration for some interdepartmental space

Some variety and flexibility

GCcoworking sites available nationally

Where we're **going**...



Office Long Term Plan

- ▶ Continue optimizing workplaces
- ▶ Right-sizing departmental space
- ▶ More interdepartmental space

More variety and flexibility

Leverage GCcoworking concepts to explore enterprise-wide shared spaces

i Visit the [Government of Canada's Office Portfolio Reduction Plan - GCpedia](#) page to find out more.

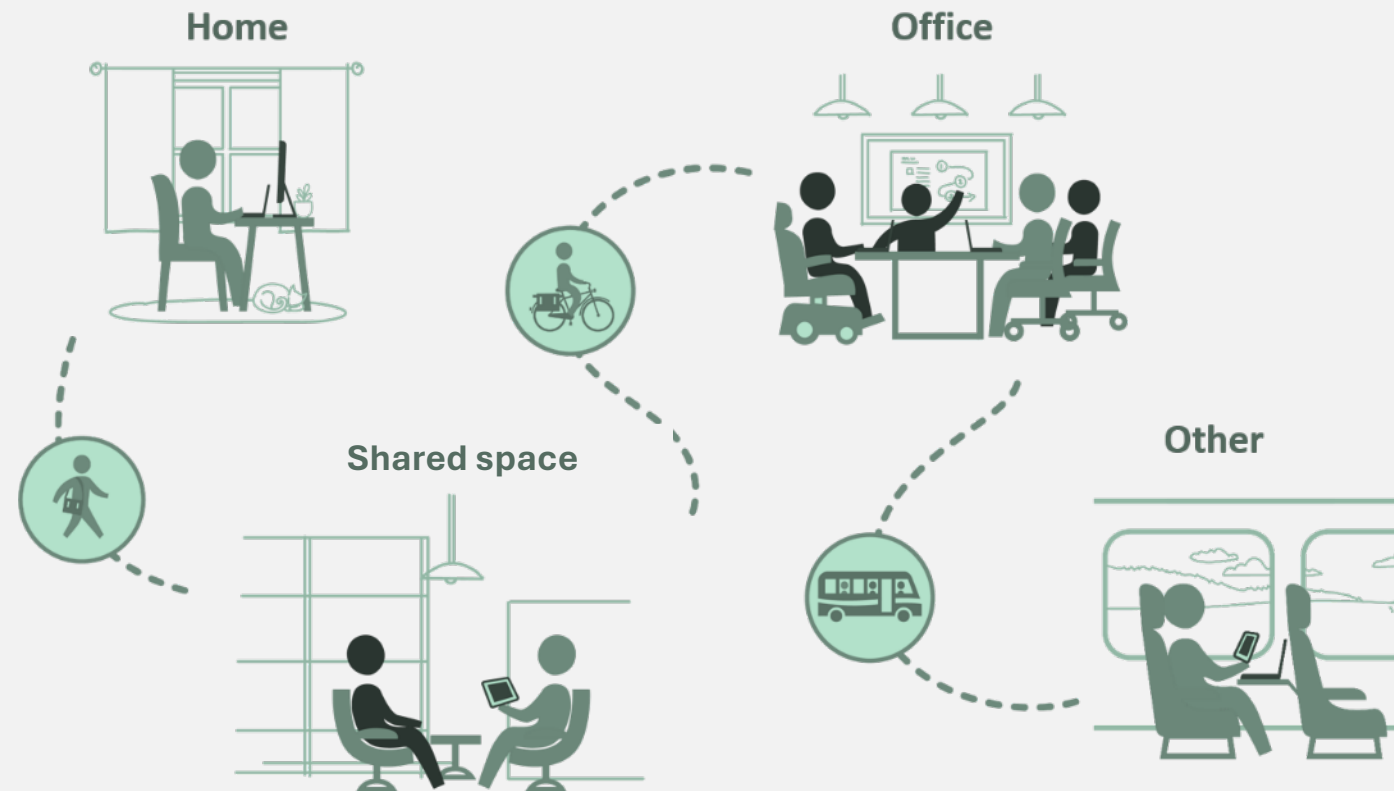




Portfolio strategy

? What are the benefits of variety and flexibility in the portfolio

With hybrid working, mobile technology and digitized work being the norm, employees can gain access to various work locations to support their work activities, schedules, needs and personal preferences. Along with a culture of trust and purposeful collaboration, this helps to enable a healthy, modern and productive workforce.





Portfolio
strategy

? What is meant by workplace modernization

Many departments are adopting an unassigned workplace strategy to ensure an efficient and responsible use of space for the new reality of hybrid working. While this strategy can work in any office space*, a workplace purposely designed to be unassigned will result in a better overall employee experience. This is why GCworkplace was developed to be flexible in design and utilization.



All Fit-Up Policies & Funding Accountabilities

As well as design standards for:

- Ministerial and Deputy Head
- Quasi-judicial
- Call/Contact Centre

► [GoC Workplace Fit-Up Standards](#)



Design standard for all GENERAL PURPOSE OFFICE SPACE

in effect since April 2019

► [GCworkplace Design Guide](#)

**Special Purpose
Space
(SPS)**

**Non-standard / non-recurring
space** not typically found in all
offices

- Labs
- Warehouses
- Clinics

► [SPS Guideline](#) ► [SPS Assessment Tool](#)

* Strategies for using traditional workplaces in an unassigned way will be covered later in this guide...



Physical Workspace

A modern portfolio strategy is further enabled by modern workplaces.  GCworkspace, the design standard for all general-purpose office space, is the ideal workplace design concept for a hybrid workforce.





Physical
workspace



Why is this important

Modernizing the **WAY** we work can be done in almost any office space, however the user experience is enhanced in a workplace that is purposely designed to support this flexible way of working*



Is designed to enable

Activity-Based Working (ABW)

Is the Government of Canada's General Purpose Office space design standard. It is a modern, efficient and inclusive workplace design strategy which supports a flexible way of working

Is a flexible way of working that offers all employees equal access to a variety of workpoints, and the autonomy to choose the optimal settings for their tasks and functions



[Short ABW Video](#)

*Check out these [survey results](#) from the inaugural phase of GCworkplace

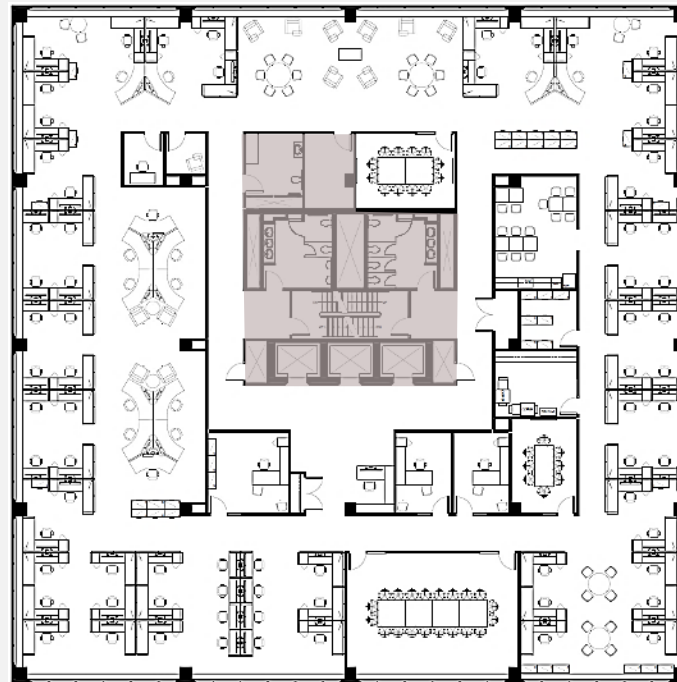




Physical
workspace

? What is different from traditional office design

GCworkplace is based on lessons learned from previous initiatives, like Workplace 2.0, and research on global workplace trends. Key differences include the introduction of **acoustical zones**, a **variety of workpoints**, and **centralized personal storage**, which all together create a **workplace ecosystem***

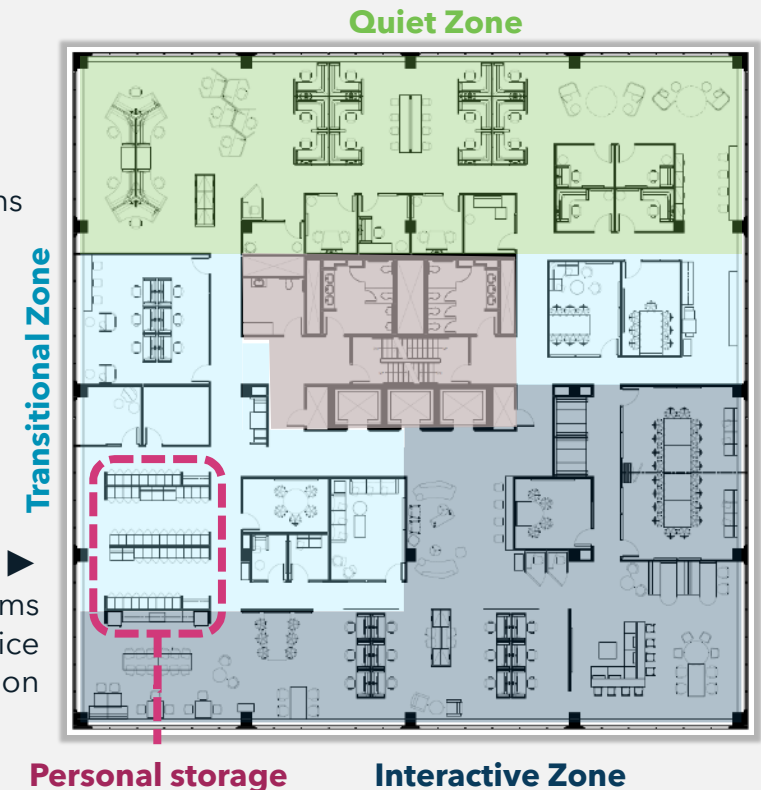


◀ Traditional Workspace

- ✗ Individualistic
- ✗ One size 'misfits' all
- ✗ Limited acoustical considerations

GCworkplace ▶

- ✓ Supports individuals & teams
- ✓ Provides variety and choice
- ✓ Acoustical & visual separation



*Check out the [GCworkplace Design Guide](#) for more information





Physical
workspace



What is meant by a workplace ecosystem

The ecosystem is a network of interconnected work settings, such as **workpoints**, **zones** and **other amenities**, that serve its population and their various activities. The ecosystem must remain intact for it to work effectively and provide flexibility and choice to users.

Acoustical Zones

Quiet
Transitional
Interactive

Support Spaces

Lockers
Kitchenette
Business centre



Workpoint variety

Enclosed individual
Enclosed collaborative
Open individual
Open collaborative

Example: assigning all focus rooms to specific individuals would remove access for everyone else to this type of individual acoustic/visual privacy

Each part works together in harmony to create an efficient and productive work environment for all occupants.





Physical
workspace

? What is a workpoint

GCworkspace offers a wide range of work settings, which support various workplace activities, to enable user flexibility. Workpoints are everything from an individual open workstation, to a seat in an enclosed project room. GCworkspace offers an almost 2:1 ratio of workpoints to occupants*



WORKPOINT

Any setting within a GCworkspace from where someone can work

vs.

WORKSTATION

One type of workpoint (open individual) within a GCworkspace

*The ideal quantity and distribution of workpoints are determined through functional programming & the GCworkspace Space Planning Workbook

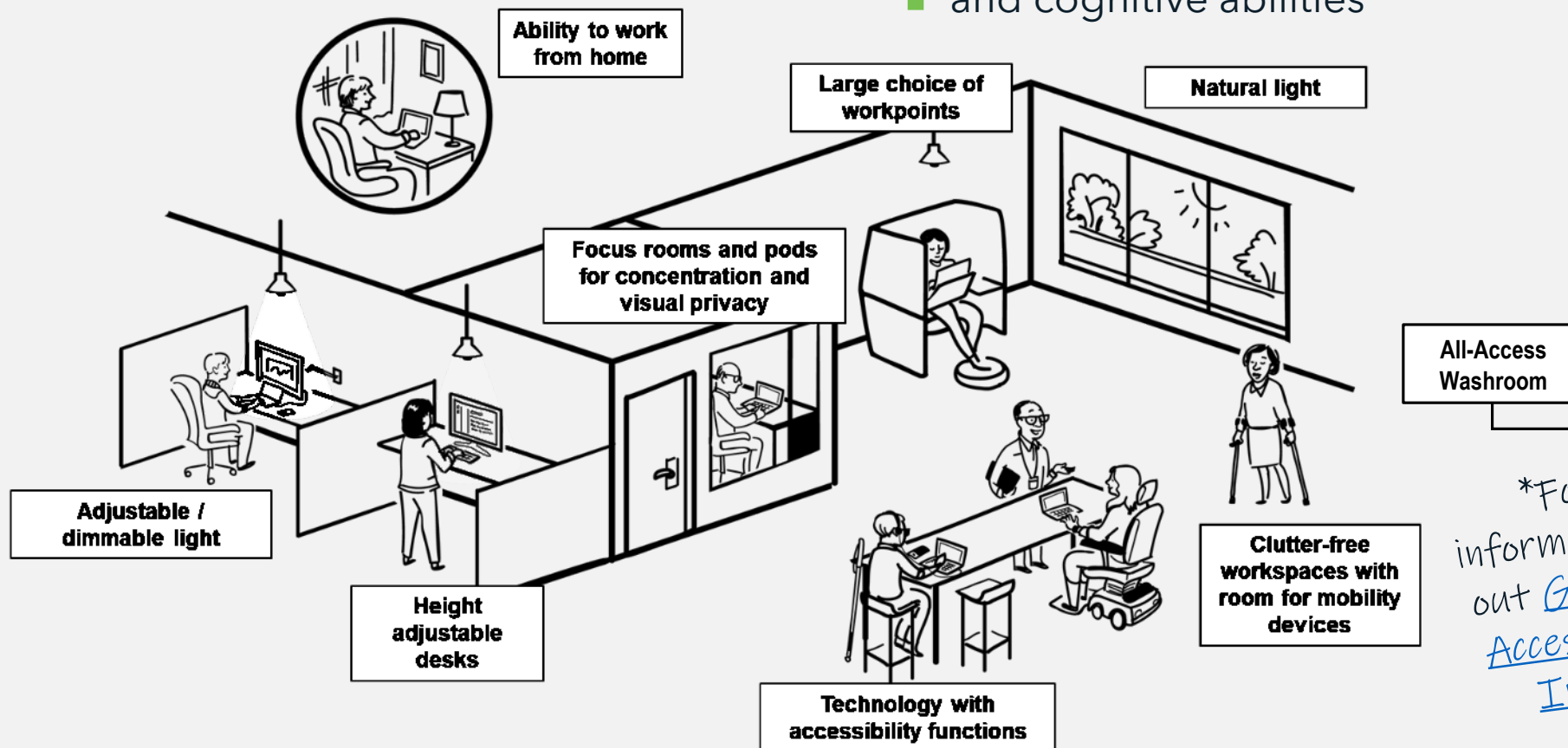


Physical
workspace



What makes GCworkspace accessible and inclusive

In addition to adhering to the latest accessibility built environment standards, GCworkspace offers its users **variety** & **choice** to support a wide range of physical and cognitive abilities*



*For more information, check out [GCworkspace Accessibility and Inclusivity](#)

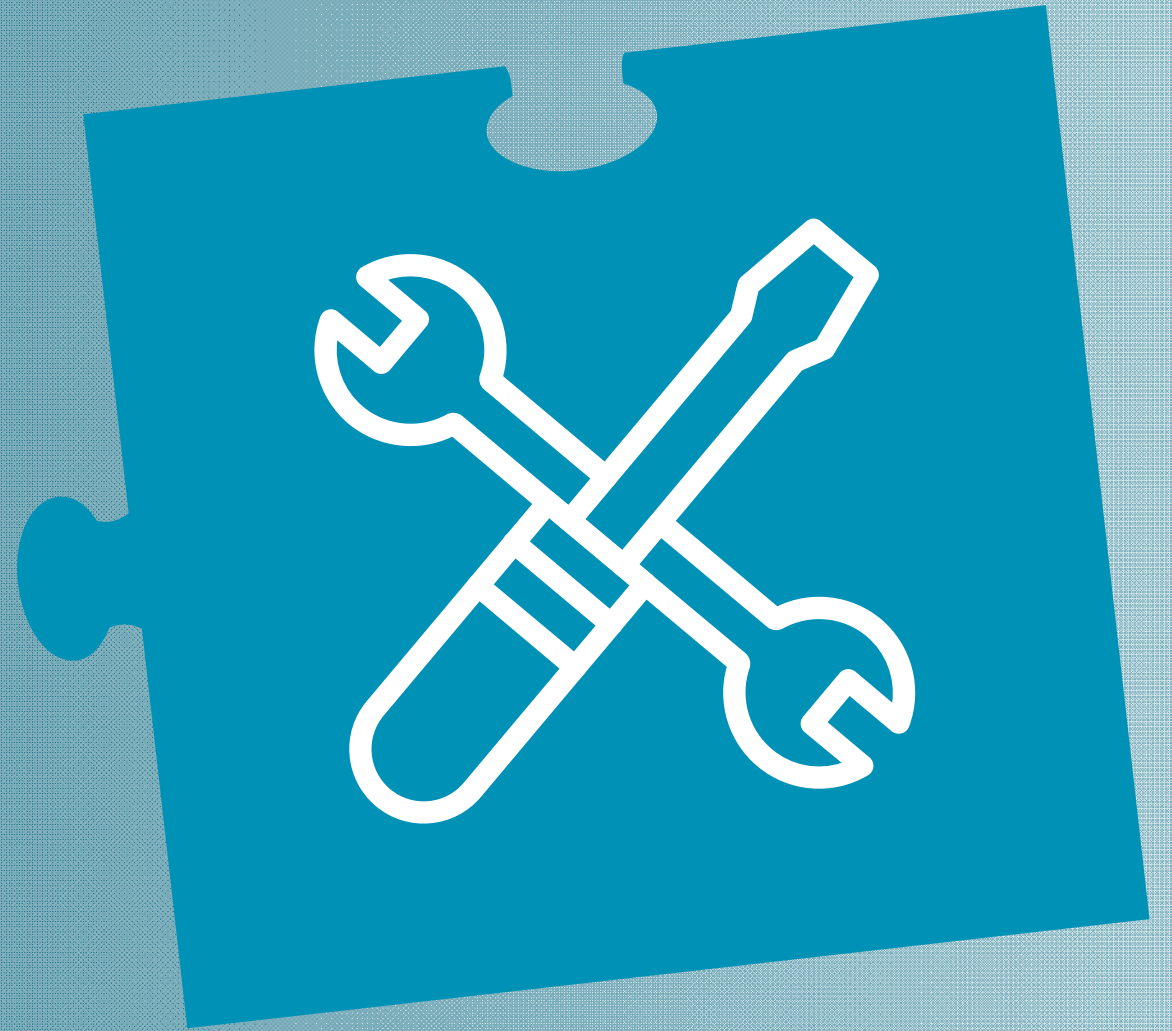


Take a look at the [GCworkspace Accessibility and Inclusivity Guide in the Built Environment](#).



Workplace Utilization

The last, and possibly the most misunderstood piece of the workplace modernization puzzle, is the way a  GCworkspace is intended to be used...





Workplace Utilization



Why is it important

The best results are achieved when the RIGHT tool is used the RIGHT way. Using a GCworkplace in an activity-based way is the **KEY** to successfully optimizing space utilization while promoting a positive workplace experience.



Keep in mind, activity-based working is a utilization strategy in which everyone has equal access to a wide variety of workpoints. Each person has the autonomy to self-select where and how they carry out their various daily activities based on their personal needs and preferences. Although this concept is often referred to as '*unassigned seating*', it is much more than just sharing workstations.



Workplace Utilization



Why is unassigned seating essential to GCworkplace

The word 'UNASSIGNED' has gotten a bad reputation with the focus being on employees losing their workstation or office when really, it is the **KEY** to freeing people from one imposed location, to then gain access to an entire workplace.

Now, with mobile technology and digitized work being the norm, employees are **empowered to choose** the work setting and environment that best suits their own activities, needs, abilities and personal preferences within the office, at any given time.

Traditional, assigned workplaces have their challenges...





Workplace Utilization



What are the benefits of activity based working (ABW)

With an equal access, unassigned use of space, as well as a 'one-workpoint-at-a-time' etiquette, GCworkplace provides almost 2:1 ratio of total workpoints to target onsite occupancy; meaning there will always be ample variety of available workpoints to be used throughout the day.



For employees...

- ✓ Choice and flexibility of where & how to work
- ✓ Adaptable to personal needs & preferences
- ✓ Access to a wide range of amenities and workpoints, both open and enclosed



For asset management...

- ✓ Design is adaptable to suit varying functional requirements
- ✓ Eliminates many common tenant service requests
- ✓ Significant reduction in custom modifications for Duty to accommodate (DTA) and ergonomic requirements



For the office portfolio...

- ✓ Optimizes use of space
- ✓ Enables departments to 'right-size' their office portfolio to reflect their updated requirements for a hybrid work model

One Region reported a 90% reduction in DTA cases when they moved to a Gcworkplace and adopted activity-based working





Workplace Utilization

...and how it relates to:

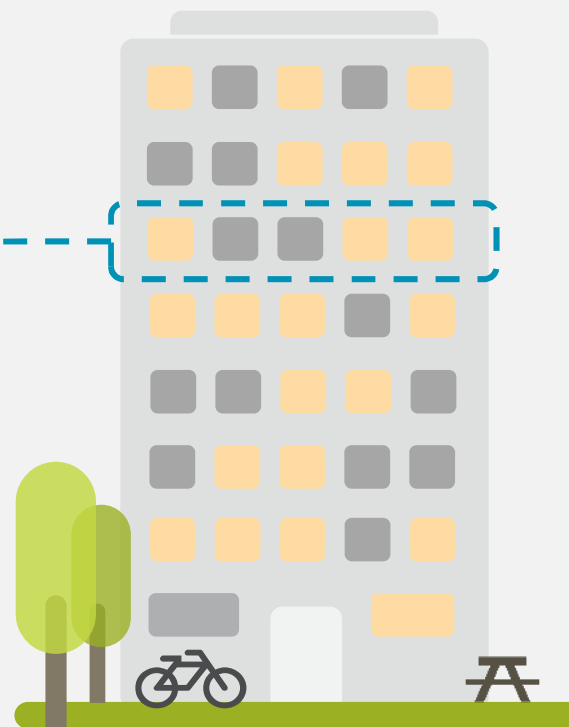
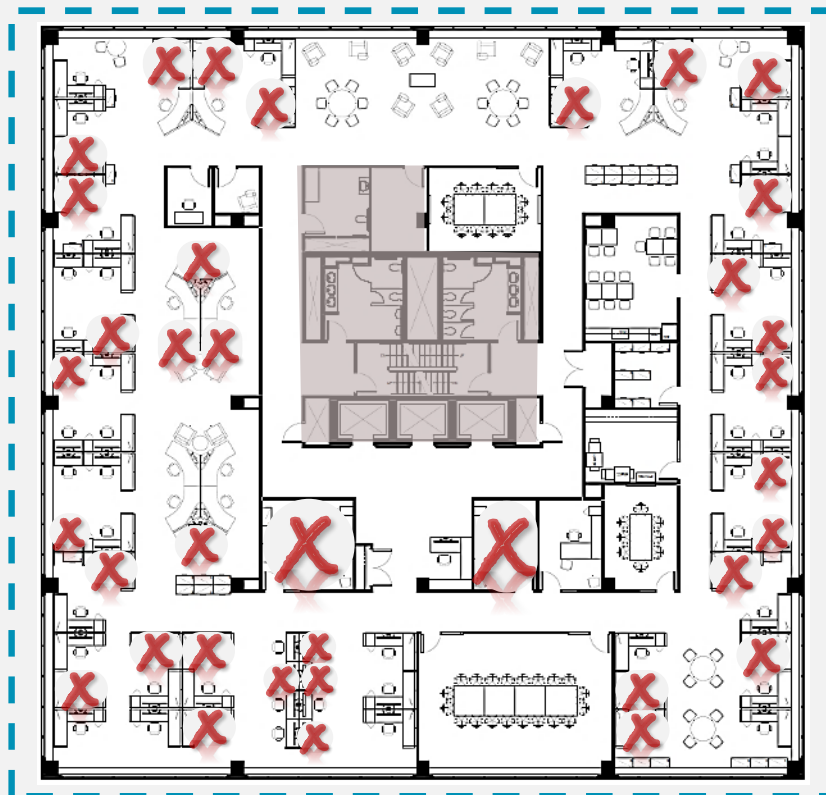


Physical workspace



Why is traditional office utilization no longer efficient

Pre-pandemic observations have revealed a 40% average vacancy rate in office utilization on any given day, at any given time. With a hybrid work model, this inefficient use of space - often referred to as the **swiss cheese effect** - is exacerbated.



Here's a [funny video](#) on inefficient space utilization.

These space inefficiencies are then multiplied over every floor of every building...



Workplace Utilization

...and how it relates to:

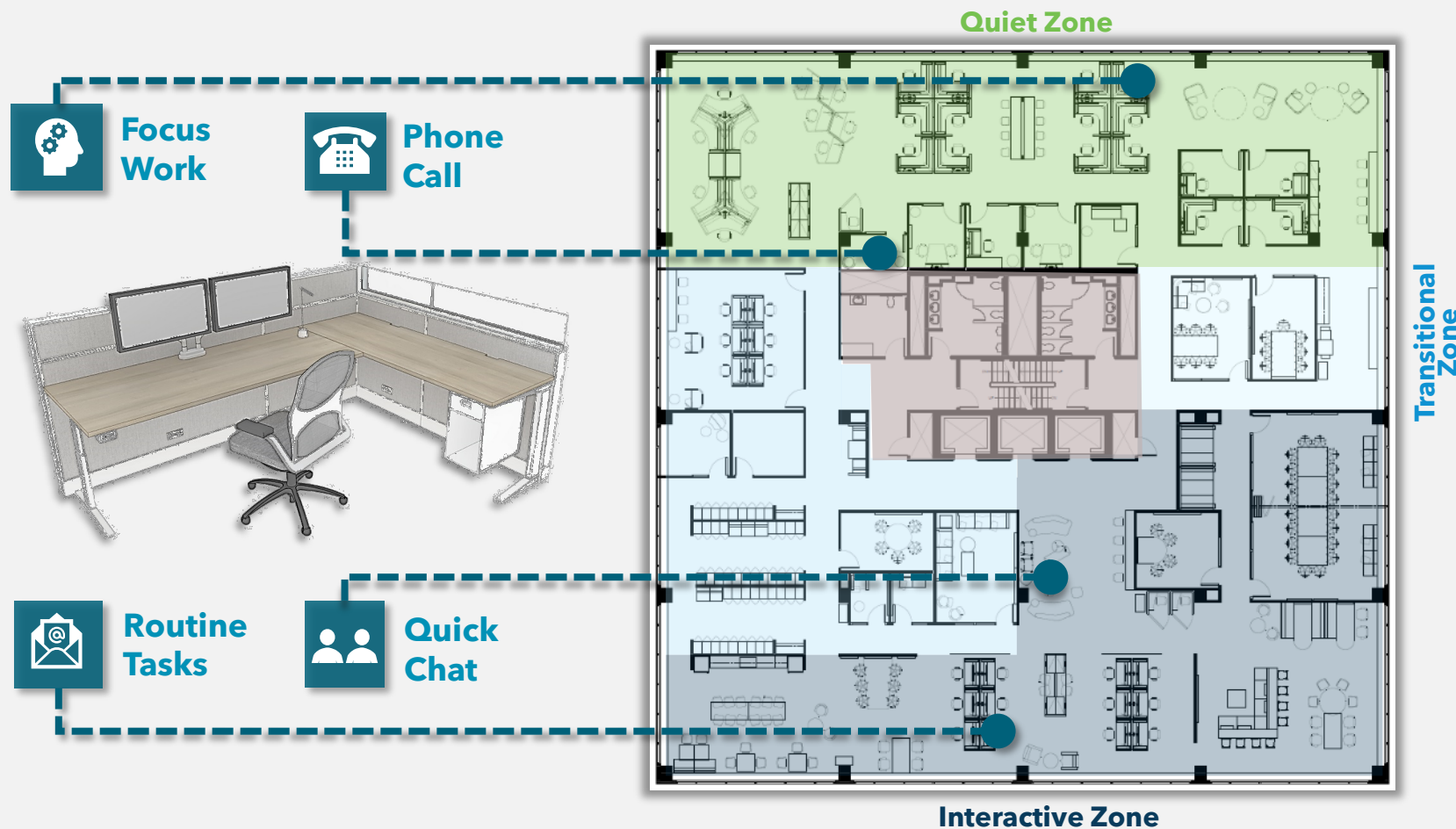


Physical workspace



How does activity-based working improve space utilization

With activity-based working, employees can untether from one specific spot and gain access to an entire **ecosystem** of work settings to find what best suits their functions, tasks, and personal preferences.



Remember...
GCworkplace
provides an
almost 2:1 ratio
of workpoints to
the number of
target onsite
occupants





Workplace Utilization

...and how it relates to:



Hybrid work model



How does activity-based working optimize workplace utilization

Optimizing is NOT about densifying space, it's understanding that with hybrid working, regular daily vacancies, and unassigned space utilization, GCworkplace can serve a larger **population** than its **onsite target occupancy**.



OCCUPANTS

The individuals physically in the workplace at any point in time

vs.

POPULATION

All individuals who have been given access and permission to use the workplace in question

Space optimization can also enable space 'over-programming'





Workplace Utilization

...and how it relates to:



Hybrid work model



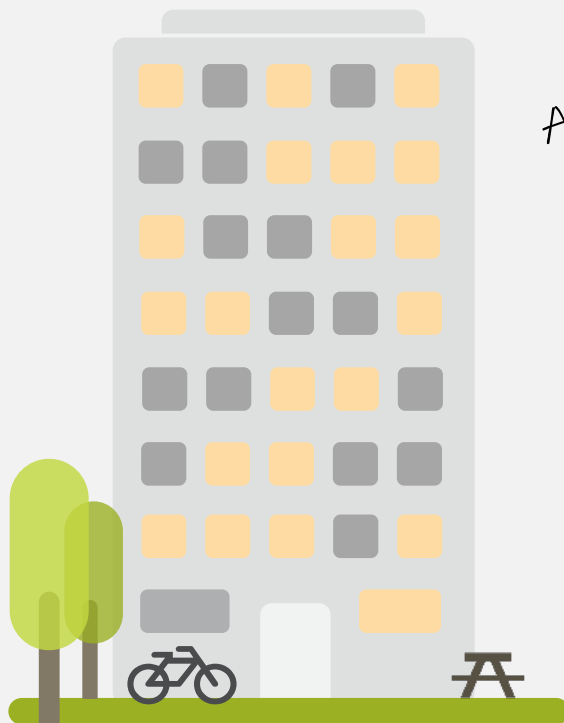
Portfolio strategy



How does this help to "right-size" the portfolio

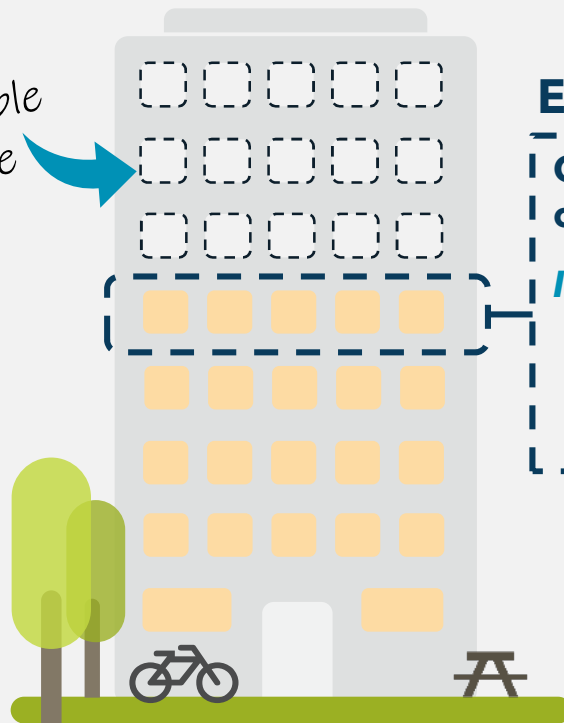
With the combination of **activity-based working** and a **hybrid work model**, where a percentage of employees are working remotely at any given time, the portfolio can be **optimized** (over-programmed), thus eliminating the 'Swiss cheese' effect on a large scale.

Assigned Utilization



Unassigned Utilization

Available space



Example:

GCworkplace floor for 100 onsite occupants:

Impact of different hybrid work models:

- NO remote work ▷ can serve 100 total population
- LOW remote work ▷ can serve 120 total population
- MED. remote work ▷ can serve 150 total population
- HIGH remote work ▷ can serve 180 total population

Remember... a PSPC CASA or Accommodation Manager can guide organizations in calculating their new space requirements





Workplace Utilization

...and how it relates to:



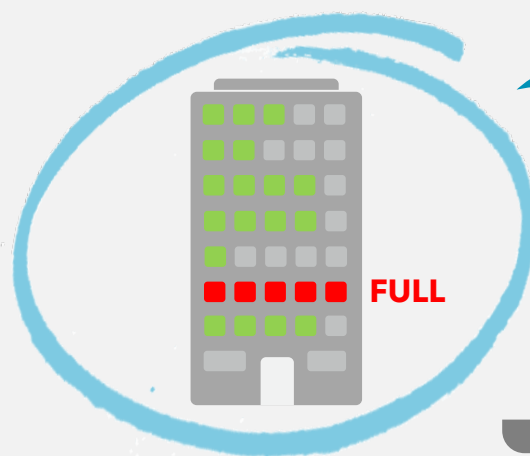
Portfolio strategy



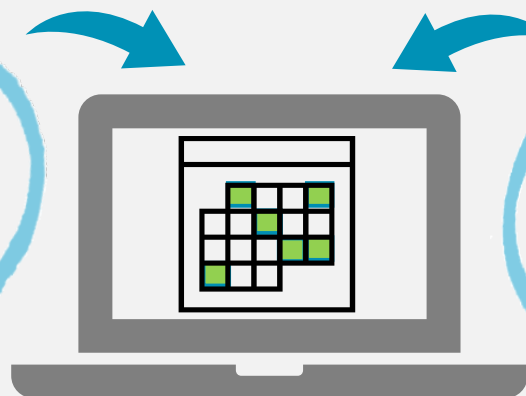
How are occupancy levels managed with over-programming

With so much flexibility and efficiency in space utilization, there are two major considerations, managing occupancy levels and employee experience. A **space booking tool** can enable both, but for it to be successful, it must align to the workplace's utilization intention - which in the case of Gcworkspace, is activity-based (unassigned).

Managing occupancy levels

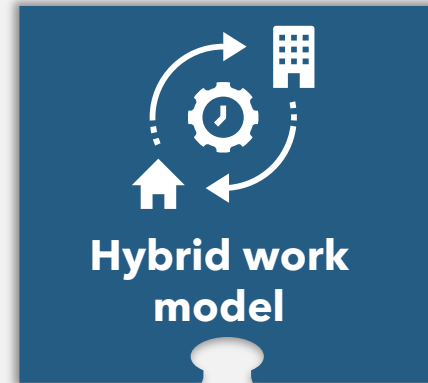


Employee Experience



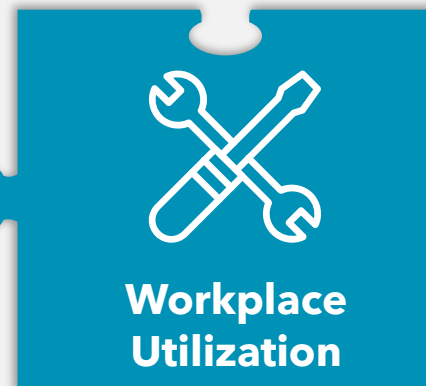
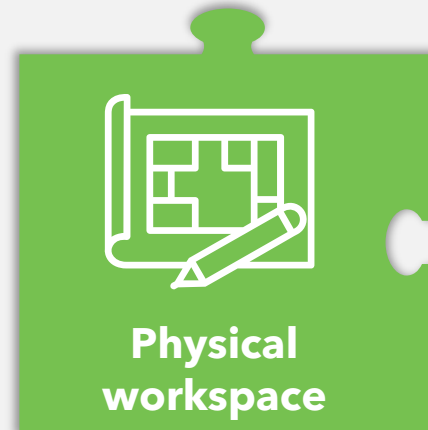
Conclusion

Defines the volume of employees expected on-site throughout the week



Supports the volume of employees expected on-site throughout the week

Supports a new, modern way of working in the workplace



Defines a new, modern way of working in the workplace

Part 2:

Practical Solutions

With all the big pieces in place, practical solutions and best practices can now be used to inform and enable workplace transformations.

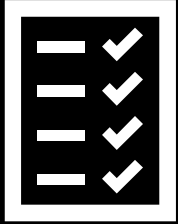
Clickable content!



Workplace Transformation Journey

Redesigning and optimizing office spaces and the **way they are used** to better support modern work practices, enhance efficiency, and improve the overall workplace experience.





Why is workplace transformation important?

Workplace transformation is about **enabling a modern way of working** by redefining how we use office spaces to align with current work practices, technological capabilities, and organizational needs. It's not just about designing spaces—**it's about enabling people to thrive in them.**

As federal departments, we also have to respond to government priorities.

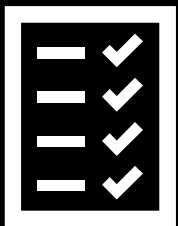
The current federal context

Government of Canada - Office Portfolio Reduction Plan (GC-OPRP):
aims to reduce the office footprint by **50%** in the next 10 years.

Key drivers:

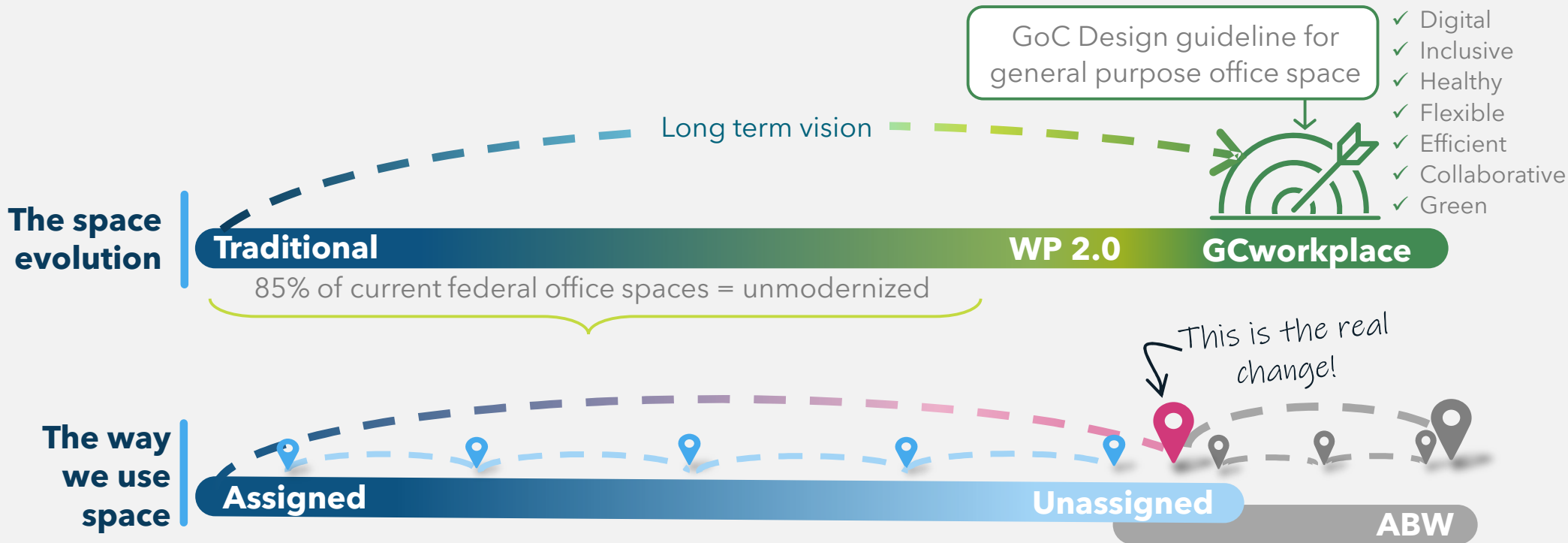
- ✓ cost reduction
- ✓ Fiscal stewardship
- ✓ emissions cut
- ✓ space optimization
- ✓ hybrid work model
- ✓ digital transformation

“ ***Budget 2024 proposes to provide \$1.1 billion over ten years ... to reduce its office portfolio by 50 per cent. ... Where applicable, the government will prioritize student and non-market housing in the unlocking of federal office properties.*** ”

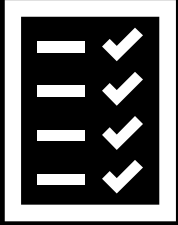


The Workplace evolution

With most federal office spaces still unmodernized, making the best use of existing space is a priority. The actual transformation is **moving from assigned seating to unassigned seating**. This shift is what unlocks efficiency, flexibility, and the path toward activity-based working (ABW).



With limited funds, a fully modern workplace isn't always an option. In fact, with 85% of current federal office space still in their traditional form, therefore this will be the reality for most departments. But small, thoughtful changes—like **quiet zones, personal storage, and ergonomic upgrades**—can make unassigned seating more functional and comfortable, even in a traditional environment.



The transformation journeys

Workplace transformation isn't a one-size-fits-all solution. It's a journey that looks different for every department, depending on budget, space constraints, and operational goals.

Most will focus on these journeys due to limited budgets and space reductions



Modernization

Comprehensive office updates to meet GCworkplace standards.

Best for:

- ✓ Organizations with significant upgrade budgets
- ✓ New space or relocations
- ✓ Full GCworkplace compliance requirements
- ✓ Long-term construction timelines



Optimization

Strategic improvements to existing spaces through unassigned seating and functional repurposing.

Best for:

- ✓ Limited budgets with improvement goals
- ✓ Unmodernized spaces needing efficiency gains
- ✓ Hybrid work accommodation in current space
- ✓ Space consolidation mandates



Co-location

Sharing spaces between departments to enhance collaboration and reduce the overall footprint.

Best for:

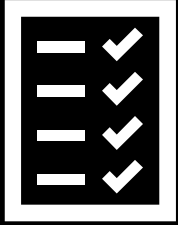
- ✓ Multi-department shared resource needs
- ✓ Real property footprint reduction mandates
- ✓ Cross-departmental collaboration goals
- ✓ Complementary operational synergies

Different journeys, same destination...

All journeys aim to **shift from fixed assigned seating to flexible unassigned seating**, supported by technology, hybrid work, and the need for greater efficiency and sustainability.

Workplace
Transformation
journey





The 5-step process

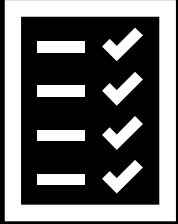
Different journeys, same destination: whether modernization, optimization, or co-location, all lead to the same change – **moving from assigned to unassigned seating**. This shift can be achieved by following a simple step by step process.

One destination, one process.



Workplace
Transformation
journey





Workplace modernization journey

What is workplace modernization?

Workplace modernization upgrades office spaces to  GCworkplace standards creating flexible, collaborative environments that enable employees to choose the right space for their work activities while supporting hybrid work models.

Full fit-up

Best for: Comprehensive transformation

Timeline: 18-36 months

Investment: High

Large-scale projects involving major building upgrades and reconstruction. These complex projects require substantial financial investment and extended timelines but deliver complete workspaces aligned with modern standards.

Furniture first

Best for: Faster delivery with moderate investment

Timeline: 6-18 months

Investment: Moderate

Repurpose existing building infrastructure while using furniture systems to create diverse workpoint options. This approach minimizes construction costs and accelerates delivery by leveraging modular furniture to create variety in the space.

Partial Improvement

Best for: Limited budgets and targeted needs

Timeline: 2-6 months

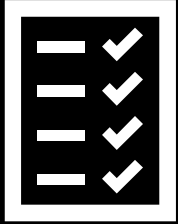
Investment: Low to moderate

Small-scale projects focused on specific areas or elements within existing spaces. Such as upgrading task chairs or adding collaborative workpoints. These flexible projects can be planned around available budgets with minimal disruption.



Modernization addresses technology upgrades, digital tools, and operational changes to support hybrid work. Success depends on coordination with IT, IM, Security and OHS to support unassigned seating, mobile work, and employee readiness.





Focus areas for modernization

Although modern workplaces are designed to support flexibility and efficiency, the following actions ensure alignment with long-term government priorities and employee experience goals.

Key focus areas:

1. Define utilization strategies

Establish neighborhoods, special access, acoustical zoning, locker and booking strategies to enable unassigned seating.

2. Depersonalize

Conduct an office wide cleanup of personal and business assets and adopt clean desk policy for all workstations and offices.

3. Manage the change

Invest in change management and engagement strategies to help employees adopt new ways of working and thrive in modern settings.

4. Integrate Inclusive Design

Ensure all spaces meet accessibility standards and support diverse needs through universal design principles.

5. Enable Seamless Technology

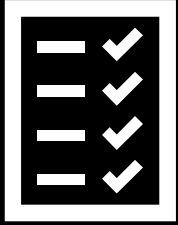
Deploy digital tools and infrastructure that support hybrid work, virtual collaboration, and secure remote access.

6. Embed Sustainability Features

Integrate energy-efficient systems, sustainable materials, and green building standards to meet federal environmental goals.

These strategies help create a modern, inclusive, and sustainable workplace built for long-term impact.





Workplace modernization journey

Best Practices for modernization

Modernization is about more than new furniture or technology. It's about creating flexible, sustainable, and inclusive spaces that support people today and prepare for the future. Here are some best practices to help get you there.



Prioritize flexible furniture and technology to support evolving service delivery models



Allow for an extended transition period and adjust project timelines accordingly



Plan for scalable space to adapt to workforce fluctuations and shifting program needs over time



Offer support through workplace coordinators and peer networks for ongoing employee assistance



Incorporate sustainability initiatives aligned with federal environmental mandates and targets



Address individual and collective needs balancing operational effectiveness with employee wellbeing



Enhance wellness by integrating natural light, improved air quality, and biophilic design elements



Use data to track and monitor utilization, satisfaction, and workplace performance



Ensure all workpoints meet government accessibility and inclusivity standards



Integrate technology seamlessly with current IT infrastructure and security protocols



Invest in change management to support adoption of new work models with communication and engagement

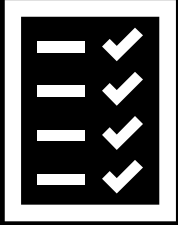


Provide strong technical support to reduce disruption and enhance adoption



Modernization represents the most comprehensive transformation journey, requiring significant investment but delivering the greatest long-term benefits in terms of space efficiency, employee satisfaction, and organizational agility.





Workplace Optimization Journey

What is workplace optimization?

Workplace optimization improves the function and efficiency of existing office space. This is achieved by focusing on the implementation of unassigned seating, repurposing space, and making targeted improvements to support hybrid work and better space utilization in traditional environments.

Targeted Improvements

Best for: Low-disruption upgrades in existing spaces

Investment: Low to moderate

Small-scale projects that enhance comfort and flexibility, such as ergonomic furniture upgrades, new collaboration zones, or quiet areas. Ideal for maximizing functionality within current layouts.

Unassigned Seating Implementation

Best for: Improving space efficiency in unmodernized offices

Investment: Low

Reclaims underused desks and enables flexible use of space. Supported by shared storage, clear protocols, and booking tools. Helps teams adapt to hybrid work without extensive changes to the space.

Space Repurposing

Best for: Adapting to new work patterns

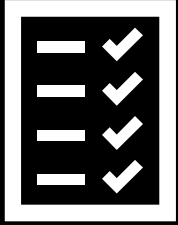
Investment: Low to moderate

Converts private offices or low-use areas into shared meeting rooms, focus rooms, or touchdown areas using existing infrastructure and repurposing furniture already in inventory.



Optimization requires operational, technological, and cultural shifts. Success depends on coordination with IT, IM, Security and OHS to support unassigned seating, mobile work, and employee readiness.





Workplace Optimization Journey

Focus areas for optimizing a traditional space

Although the employee experience is enhanced in a modern workplace, the following actions can improve the overall experience in an unmodernized space.

Key focus areas:

1. Define utilization strategies

Establish neighborhoods, special access, acoustical zoning, locker and booking strategies to enable unassigned seating.

2. Depersonalize

Conduct an office wide cleanup of personal and business assets and adopt clean desk policy for all workstations and offices.

3. Manage the change

Invest in change management and engagement strategies to help employees adopt new ways of working.

4. Centralize personal storage

When possible, remove storage towers from workstations and centralize to encourage unassigned use.

5. Repurpose space

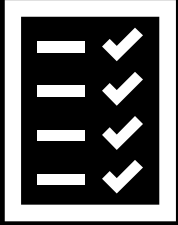
Large offices can become small meeting spaces, and smaller rooms can become phone booths or focus rooms.

6. Upgrade Furniture & Technology

Upgrade task chairs and height adjustability of workstation surfaces to enhance ergonomics and flexibility. Upgrade workpoint technology to allow any user to easily connect their tools.

These actions are a step in the right direction to embrace a flexible and modern way of working.





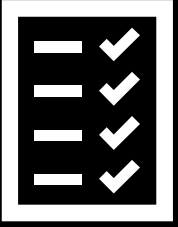
Best Practices for optimizing traditional space

To ensure efficient use of office space for a hybrid work model, or to absorb any growth, unassigned seating is possible in any space. Here are some key lessons learned from previous projects and return to office initiatives.

- ✓ work with your CASA to determine how much space is required based on your hybrid work model
- ✓ properly identify quiet zones on all floors and establish proper [etiquette](#) for each zone
- ✓ prioritize the most modern spaces, and supplement as needed with traditional spaces
- ✓ identify where adjustable workstations are in workplaces that have a limited quantity
- ✓ be clear with employees about which spaces are temporary solutions vs. modernized GCworkplaces
- ✓ use the right [booking strategy](#) for the type of workplace
- ✓ provide equal access to a wide variety of enclosed and open spaces
- ✓ consider a workplace coordinator role to support the overall workplace experience
- ✓ consider a floor-by-floor neighbourhood strategy without creating micro-neighbourhoods
- ✓ make sure employees are aware of the changes and have the knowledge to adopt the changes
- ✓ provide variety in types of [personal storage](#), and provide utilization options
- ✓ Allow employees to provide feedback and suggestions for improvement

Optimization delivers meaningful improvements within existing constraints while building organizational capability for future modernization. It's about making the best use of what you have while preparing for what's next.





Workplace Colocation Journey



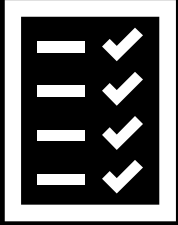
Coming soon



Foundations for Workplace Transformation

Whether through modernization, relocation, co-location, or unassigned seating, establishing key foundational elements will maximize success and enable a smooth transition.





Foundations for workplace transformation

Foundation for success

Regardless of the scale or type of project, the foundational elements of a successful transformation remain the same. To maximize your chances of success, minimize risks, and achieve the desired outcomes, these three core elements need to be established early in the planning phase.



Leadership commitment

Active and visible sponsorship is the single greatest contributor to the success of a project. Leaders must champion the initiative with unwavering dedication.



Workplace Vision

An end state must be defined at the beginning of a project to achieve the desired results. A clear, compelling vision guides all decisions and actions.

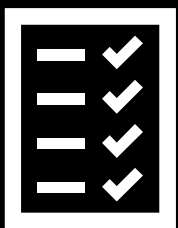


Integrated project team

A core team of people who will bring the vision to life and ensure it is executed successfully. The right mix of skills experience, and dedication.

The complexity and level of effort for each element will vary depending on the scope of the workplace transformation.





Foundations for workplace transformation

Leadership Commitment

The decision to undertake workplace transformation and everything that it entails is an important one and is usually a decision taken at the highest executive level. **Leaders need to be on board with the initiative for it to be a success.**



Active and visible

Participation throughout the project with regular communication and engagement



Build a coalition

Create a strong network of support across all organizational levels



Communicate directly

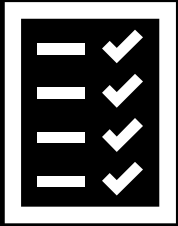
Maintain transparent, honest dialogue with employees throughout the process

Supporting resources

- > [Sponsorship Commitment and Responsibilities](#) : A presentation to engage leaders for a project
- > [Sponsor support guide](#) : A tool to help change managers in their dealings with sponsors

An engaged project sponsor and executive sponsor have proven to be a major success factor in a workplace transformation.





Workplace Experience Vision

Successful transformations require a clear vision. **How can you get there if you don't know where you are heading?** The vision is a brief statement that summarizes the initiative, its desired outcome and the elements that will be implemented to achieve them. To be meaningful, it must be simple, concise and tangible. It will guide decision-making during the project and will serve as the basis for employee communication.

Foundations for workplace transformation

Example 1 : Collective Contribution

We are transitioning to an unassigned seating environment to help our organization contribute to the government's effort to reduce the office footprint. By making better use of our existing workspace, we will continue to support hybrid work, meet operational needs, and free up space for other national priorities.

Example 2 : Practical Change

To align with the government-wide shift toward efficient use of space, our workplace will move to an unassigned seating model. This change allows us to optimize the space and furniture we already have, reduce underused areas, and support a flexible, hybrid work model that meets today's operational realities.

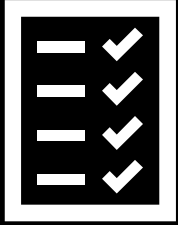
Example 3: Employee Transition

We are implementing unassigned seating to reflect how we work in a hybrid model. With fewer people in the office each day, this shift will help us use our space more efficiently and avoid unnecessary reinvestment. We are committed to supporting employees through this transition and making the workplace experience clear, consistent, and functional.

"Shaping our future together, with flexibility and collaboration."

All three examples explain what is happening (aka: going unassigned) and why it is happening (aka: to align with government priorities for space reduction).

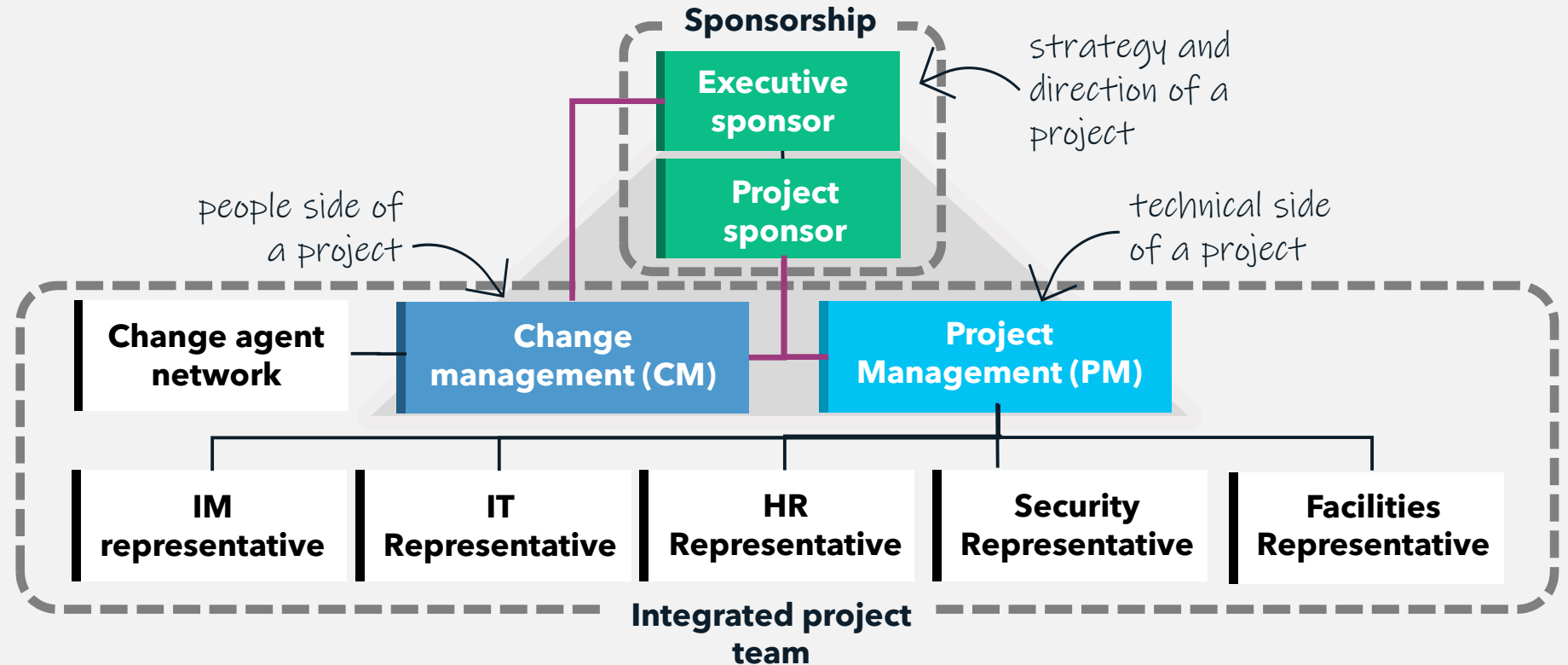




Integrated Project Team

Workplace transformation is about adapting the WAY we work in a space. Meaning that it will likely result in a series of small projects (or initiatives) in each of the enabling sectors. Having the **necessary resources at the early stages of a project** is essential to its success. The team will ensure a timely and integrated project delivery and user-centric solutions.

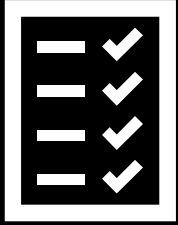
Foundations
for workplace
transformation



A **direct line of communications** with sponsorship is essential to provide guidance and coaching for key employee engagements and communications.

This tool can help identify the key players of your integrated project team





Foundations for workplace transformation

Enabling Sectors

Workplace transformation is often be the catalyst for several changes that will be led by enabling sectors. The project manager and change manager will need to consult with all the sectors to support the larger workplace transformation project.

Information technology

- Secret/classified network access
- Print-on-demand
- Audio-visual equipment
- Booking system
- Wi-Fi: private and/or public

Facilities management

Defining workplace utilization strategies for unassigned seating or ABW:

- Neighborhoods
- Special access
- Acoustical zoning
- Lockers
- Booking system

Ergonomics, accessibility and inclusivity in all workpoints

Removal of personal and business assets*

Human resources / OHS

Policies and directives to define the hybrid model (if different from TBS mandate)

Community norms / team charters

Assignment of first aiders

Interim work agreement / telework agreement

Duty to accommodate solutions

Information management

Digitization (paper storage space reduction)

Imaging services

Implementation of an information management system

Digitization of processes

Removal of personal and business assets*

Security

Emergency procedures

Access card system

Working with protected/confidential information

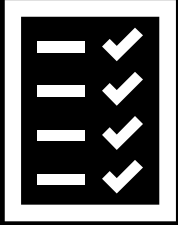
Assignment of Fire Warden role



**shared responsibility between Facilities management and Information management*

Here is a [tool](#) that can help prepare and track these initiatives





Change Management for Workplace Transformations

The importance of change management cannot be underestimated in any project. **If there's a change, it needs to be managed.** But let's be clear, a change can only be managed once it's defined. The change definition is created in the project vision.

Foundations for workplace transformation



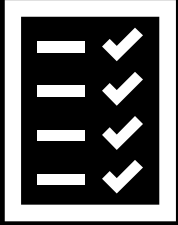
i Change Management does not DEFINE change but rather manages any change that results from a defined workplace transformation vision.

Visit the [home page](#) for the Workplace Change Management National Centre of Expertise to access several guidance documents and tools.

Workplace Utilization Strategies

Defining clear utilization strategies will maximize space efficiency and establish how the desired workplace experience will be achieved.





Workplace Utilization Strategies

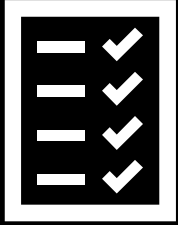
Strategies for Workplace Functionality

The success of your workplace will depend heavily on the following utilization strategies. These have been observed to play a significant role in the employee workplace experience and can greatly impact the workplace functionality.



As each decision impacts the next, try focusing on the above strategies sequentially, and as early as possible since they will have an impact on how you design your space.



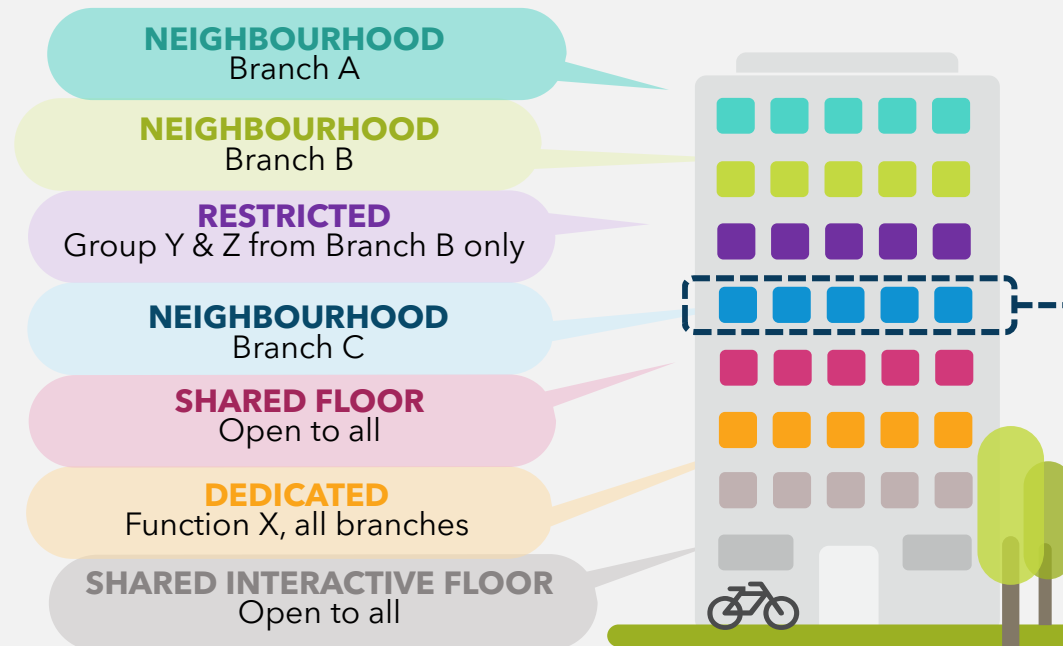


Workplace Utilization Strategies

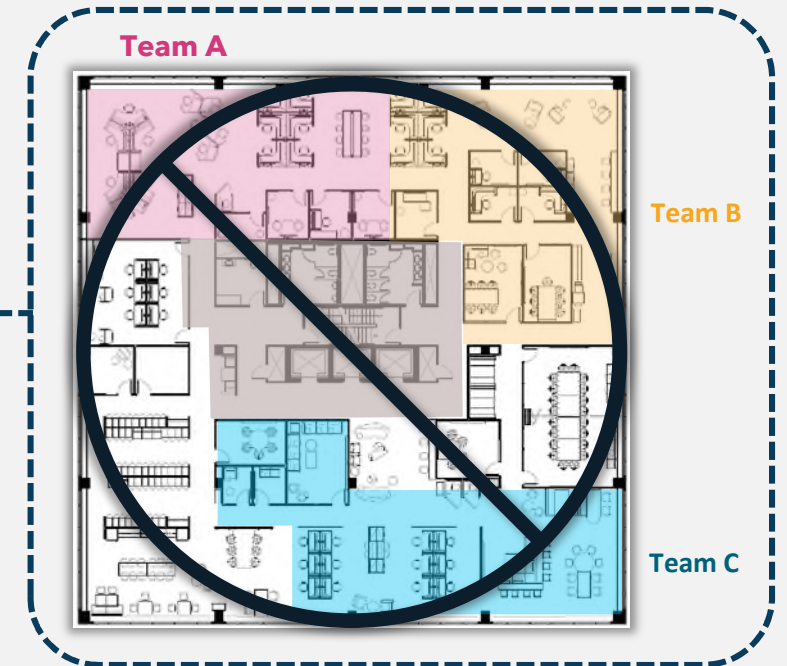
Neighbourhood Strategy (1 of 3)

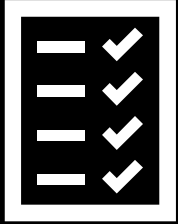
While choice and flexibility are great, too much choice in location can lead to losing a sense of belonging, especially for someone's primary workplace. Implementing a neighbourhood strategy promotes team cohesion and creates a sense of familiarity, while still providing ample variety and choice.

Neighbourhoods by floor



Micro-neighbourhoods not recommended





Workplace Utilization Strategies

Neighbourhood Strategy (2 of 3)

✓ Floor wide Neighbourhoods

An ideal strategy for space utilization where an entire floor is assigned to specific branches or sectors as an anchoring space. This approach promotes team cohesion and creates a sense of familiarity, while still providing ample variety and choice to employees.

⚠ All shared

When any employee can use any space at any time. There are no restrictions or anchoring space assignments for branches or directorates, ultimately providing maximum flexibility.

Risks:

- overwhelming choice
- feeling of disconnection in the workplace

⚠ Micro-Neighbourhoods

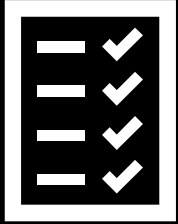
When specific teams are assigned a specific area on a floor. This concept is not recommended as it compromises the ecosystem's functionality.

Risks:

- less efficiency in utilization
- less flexibility
- zoning becomes impossible

Note: in some smaller spaces such as regional offices it is possible that some micro-neighborhoods are required.





Workplace Utilization Strategies

Neighbourhood Strategy (3 of 3)

Know your people:

- Consult an up-to-date organizational chart with accurate FTE counts for each branch or sector.
- Determine proper governance for approval of final stacking plan.
- Conduct interviews with each branch or sector to gain a sense of synergies or similarities between certain teams or groups for possible co-location.

Know your space:

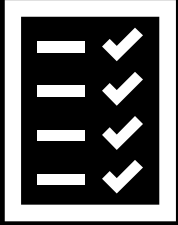
- Make a list of all available spaces and their types (GCworkplace, WP2.0, or Traditional)
- Make a list of the target occupancy for each available space. (CASA can help with calculations)
- Make a list of physical anchor points, such as existing SPS or wired network connections that are not easy to relocate.

1. Using the physical anchor points as a starting point, assign the groups that require access to the anchor points to the floors they are located on.
2. If the floors with anchor points can accommodate more than the group that will use the anchor points, start matching groups with synergies to complete the floor assignments.
3. If there are no anchor points, you can use the target occupancy of the floor and the FTE counts by sector to determine the best logical place for each group.
4. Present the proposed stacking plan to project steering committee for endorsement.

BEST PRACTICE:

- ❖ If you have a mix of modern and unmodernized spaces, consider making the modernized spaces available to all employees promoting equal access to space and to allow everyone the chance to adapt to the future way of working.





Workplace Utilization Strategies

Special Access Strategy (1 of 3)

In an activity-based workplace, all workpoints are to be **shared by default** for maximum flexibility for all users. However, certain circumstances based on specific activities or functions - not titles or levels - may require temporary/permanent* priority-use or dedicated access for teams or individuals.



SPECIAL EQUIPMENT / HARD LINES

ex: GCSI terminal

PRIORITY ACCESS

ex: priority use by senior executives

SPECIFIC FUNCTION

ex: workplace concierge

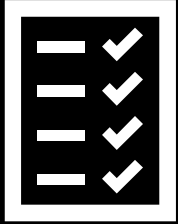
SECURE AREA

ex: secure suite within a secure floor



*Only permanent requirements should be identified in the requirements gathering phase of the design process (for new space projects). Temporary situations, such as someone recovering from an injury, can be accommodated as they arise by using an existing shared workpoint.





Workplace Utilization Strategies

Special Access Strategy (2 of 3)

✓ Shared Access

This is the default access for all employees with access to the workplace. All workpoints whether open or closed, individual or collaborative are available for all.

NOTE: workstations are equipped with ergonomic chairs and height adjustable surfaces to satisfy most ergonomic requirements.

⚠ Priority Access

Can be provided for team(s), individual(s) or function(s), but must remain available to all when not in use.

- ✓ Boardroom and/or enclosed office for senior leaders
- ✓ Special equipment for specific function/activity

⚠ Dedicated Access

Can be provided for team(s), individual(s), and function(s), but are NOT available to all when not in use.

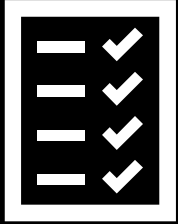
- ✓ Conflict resolution office
- ✓ Office of the Ombudsman
- ✓ On-site IT help desk
- ✓ Office coordinator
- ✓ Secure room or suite
- ✓ Secure network line (hard line)

Dedicated access is most commonly reserved for functions that require access to equipment or space that is not easily moved or relocated (SPS).

DTA requests and specific ergonomic requirements fall outside of priority/dedicated access.

All primary individual workpoints are designed to be ergonomically adjustable, eliminating most specific ergonomic requirements. Employees with additional requirements continue to be addressed on a case-by-case basis with the employee's manager and OHS representative.





Workplace Utilization Strategies

Special Access Strategy (3 of 3)

Know your people:

- Conduct interviews with each branch or sector to understand which positions, functions or roles that require priority access and dedicated access to a space.

Requirements for **priority access**:

- Sporadic need to access a specific workpoint type, or equipment on short notice.

**Space can remain available for use by others.*

Requirements for **dedicated access**:

- Special equipment or hard lines (not easily moved)
- Access to a secure space or suite
- Function that offers onsite services full-time

** Space is not available to others.*

Know your space:

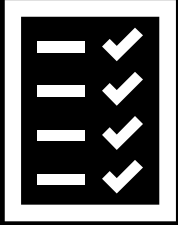
- Make a list of physical anchor points, such as existing SPS or wired network connections that are not easy to relocate.
- Make a list of neighborhood assignments.

1. Using the neighborhood assignments and physical anchor points as a starting point, assign the workpoints that require priority and dedicated access.
2. Consider assigning a variety of workpoint types to a specific function.
3. Maintain access to all workpoint types for all.

BEST PRACTICE:

- ❖ Focus on the functions of the job rather than individuals. Personal preference is not a reason to request priority or dedicated access to a workpoint type. In fact, those requests are often a symptom of resistance when ABW is misunderstood.





Workplace Utilization Strategies

Acoustical zoning (1 of 3)

Acoustical zones are meant to support different workstyles by managing noise levels in the workspace. They provide designated areas for quiet focused work and for collaborative or conversational activities. This helps reduce distractions, improve productivity, and enhance employee comfort in an unassigned seating environment.



Quiet Zone

Designed for tasks requiring deep focus and minimal distraction

Transitional Zone

Provides a balance between focus work and collaboration

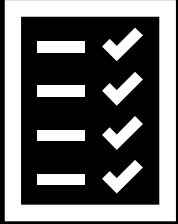
Interactive Zone

Supports active collaboration, team discussions, and social engagement



The way you decide to implement acoustical zoning will greatly impact the quality of the workplace experience for all employees.





Workplace Utilization Strategies

Acoustical zoning (2 of 3)

✓ Structured Acoustical Zoning

This approach consists of three primary zones (quiet, transitional, and interactive) to manage noise levels and accommodate different work activities. The zones help create a balanced workplace where employees can focus, collaborate, and transition between tasks without disruption.

⚠ Undefined Acoustical Zoning

This approach consists of no formal acoustical zoning.

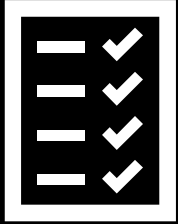
Risks:

- Increased noise levels throughout
- Increased DTA requests
- Inconsistent workplace experience (low satisfaction)
- Disruptions to focus work (reduced productivity)

Note: in some smaller spaces such as regional offices it is possible that acoustical zones are not possible.

Duty to Accommodate (DTA) requests can be supported through acoustical zoning by offering a range of work environments with different noise and lighting levels. However, each case must continue to be assessed on a case-by-case basis with the employee's manager and OHS representative.





Workplace Utilization Strategies

Acoustical zoning (3 of 3)

Know your people:

- Conduct interviews with each branch or sector to understand work patterns, preferences and noise sensitivity.

Know your space:

- Gather a list of neighborhood assignments and special access requirements by floor.
- Identify the high-traffic areas and common shared amenities that are naturally louder.
- Identify areas that are naturally darker (north side, or between buildings).

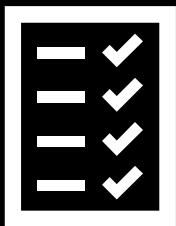
How to:

1. Determine the best area for quiet zones based on physical space constraints.
2. Determine the size of the quiet zone based on the employee requirements. A good starting point is around 25% of the space.
3. Develop clear signage and guidelines to establish expected behaviour in each zone.
4. Monitor the effectiveness of the zones, gather feedback and adjust as needed to enhance workplace functionality.

BEST PRACTICE:

- ❖ Several organizations are delamping portions of their quiet zones. This serves as a signal that the area is meant for quiet work and provides a more comfortable environment for people sensitive to bright light.
- ❖ Focus efforts on the quiet zone as it requires the users to adopt a specific behavior.

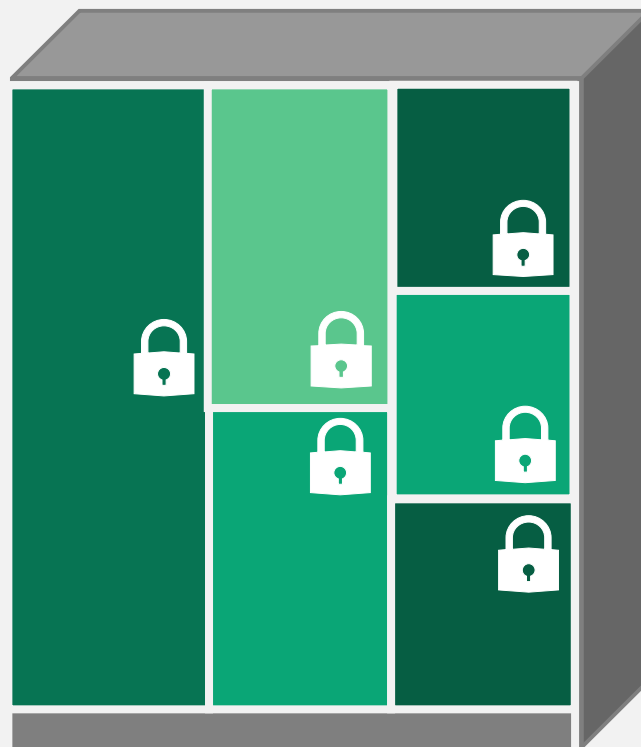




Workplace Utilization Strategies

Locker Strategy (1 of 3)

In an unassigned environment, lockers are designed to be **daily use by default**. However, individuals may require a dedicated locker based on personal or professional circumstances. A locker strategy will help confirm the quantity, size and assignment of the lockers, all of which must align with the [locker directive](#).



Size of
lockers

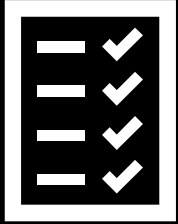
Quantity
of lockers

Assignment
of Lockers



Locker areas should always have enough lockers to accommodate the target occupancy of a floor. They should include coat closets with hanging rods and boot storage. Other storage spaces are available for things such as coffee, tea, mugs, plates, office supplies, etc.





Workplace Utilization Strategies

Locker Strategy (2 of 3)

✓ Day-use

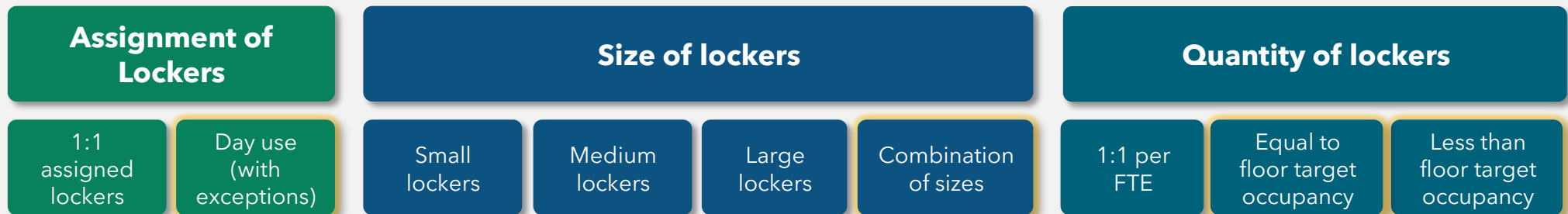
Similar to the workpoints, all lockers are unassigned by default and available for daily use.

⚠ Locker assignment:

Can be provided to employees under certain circumstances.

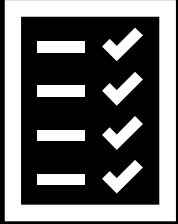
- ✓ Individuals working onsite for more than "X" days.
- ✓ Individuals with a DTA that requires them to have special equipment.
- ✓ Individuals with a DTA for an accessibility requirement.
- ✓ Individuals that use public transit or other alternative transportation methods (bike, walk, etc.)

The three factors that need to be determined as part of a locker strategy are:



Highlighted in yellow is the recommended scenario. However, your organization may prioritize locker size or quantity. Whichever you prioritize will impact the other two factors. For example, if you want full size lockers, you will have to reduce the quantity of lockers which will force a day-use assignment.





Workplace Utilization Strategies

Locker Strategy (3 of 3)

Know your people:

- Conduct a [locker area consultation](#) with all staff, to understand which positions, functions or roles require an assigned locker based on operational requirements (work full time in office), or DTA requirements, and get a pulse of the general preference for locker utilization.
 - Validate DTA requirements with the OHS team

Know your space:

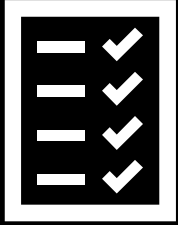
- Gather a list of neighborhood assignments and special access requirements by floor.
- Determine the maximum quantity of lockers based on the locker directive.

1. Determine which factor is priority for your organization (assignment, quantity, or size).
2. Based on the priority, determine the remaining two factors based on the restrictions outlined in the locker directive.
3. Maintain an up-to-date list of assigned lockers and consider integrating the assignment of lockers with HR onboarding process.
4. Develop an operational procedure for regular locker cleaning.

BEST PRACTICE:

- ❖ Organizations report that a substantial number of assigned lockers remain unused after employees adjust to this new work style. It is best to let employees acclimate to the new space and work style before offering assigned lockers to everyone.
- ❖ 1:1 locker assignments are discouraged in unassigned seating work environments, unless the space has enough lockers to serve every employee.

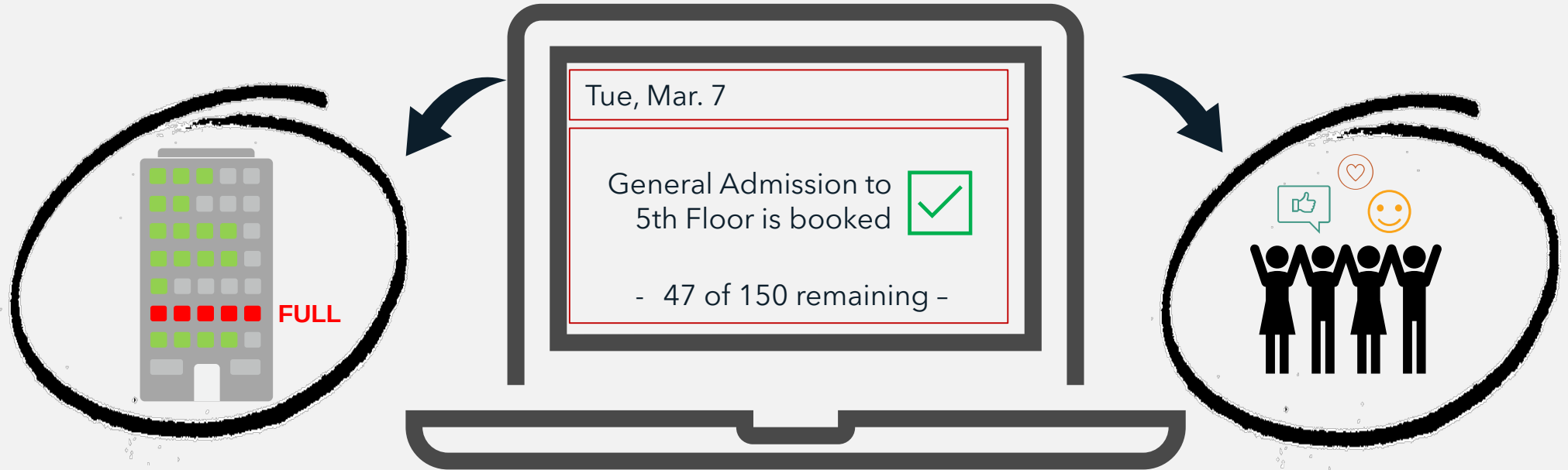




Workplace Utilization Strategies

Booking Strategy (1 of 3)

A booking tool is a great way to ensure occupancy levels are managed as well as support the employee's workplace experience. However, the booking strategy must first align to the workplace type (modernized or traditional) and its utilization intention (ABW or unassigned).

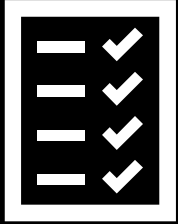


Managing occupancy levels

is important when the population exceeds the onsite target occupancy of a floor. If your population is close to equal to the target onsite occupancy a booking system is not required.

Employee experience

must be considered when implementing a booking system and strategy. The system should be intuitive and user-friendly. Proper training and ongoing support should be provided for it to work effectively.



Workplace Utilization Strategies

Booking Strategy (2 of 3)

✓ General Admission

Employees book their attendance to a specific floor using a booking system. Employees can select the workpoint of their choice simply by seeing that it is vacant.

- ✓ Recommended for GCworkplace or Workplace2.0 spaces due to:
 - Clear visibility of available workpoints
 - Reassurance that there will be room when you get to the office

⚠ Workstation for the day

Employees must book a specific workpoint on a specific floor prior to arriving to work.

- ✓ Recommended for traditional spaces only due to:
 - lack of variety of workpoints in the space
 - high cubicle panels make it difficult to see which workstation is available

⚠ Bookable by percentage

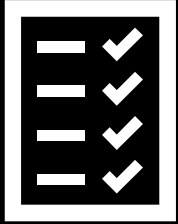
This approach acts as a supplement to the general admission approach by providing a percentage of workpoints that are specifically bookable ahead of time.

A common approach is 80% general admission and 20% bookable.

Exceptions:

- Meeting rooms, collaborative workpoints, and workpoints assigned for special functions or equipment must be bookable by the hour.
- A workplace that serves a population that is about equal to its onsite target occupancy, does not need a booking system for workpoints regardless of the type of space.





Workplace Utilization Strategies

Booking Strategy (3 of 3)

Know your people:

- Gather space utilization data from current booking system or from other data source (if possible).
- Determine the mobility rate of your organization by branch/sector.

Know your space:

- Create a list of the type of spaces (GCworkplace, WP2.0, Traditional) by floor.

1. Based on the type of space on each floor, determine the best booking strategy by floor.
2. If one already exist, determine the changes required to the existing booking system.
3. If no booking system exists, select the desired booking system based on operational requirements.
4. If any changes are made to the space or the purpose of a workpoint, changes must be reflected in the booking system promptly.

BEST PRACTICE:

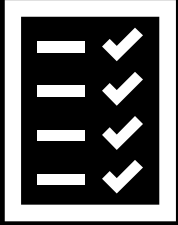
- ❖ Many organizations have abandoned their booking system in an ABW environment that was not over-programmed.
- ❖ A combined approach is a good way to prepare employees for a fully general admission strategy.
- ❖ Enclosed offices can be made bookable like meeting rooms due to their popularity.
- ❖ When implementing a combined approach, implement clear and consistent communications around the reasons for the percentage of specifically bookable workpoints.
- ❖ If required, apply different booking strategies to different floors or buildings.



Workplace Experience

Designing a purposeful workplace experience that supports productivity, collaboration, and employee well-being.





Workplace Experience

What is workplace experience?

Workplace Experience is built on three key pillars: physical workspace, technology, and workplace culture. These elements shape the environment where employees work, collaborate, and interact every day. A well-designed workplace experience ensures employees have the right spaces, tools, and support to be productive and comfortable. While each pillar can be improved on its own, the best results come from designing a connected and seamless workplace experience from the start.

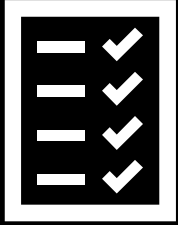


What is the difference between employee experience and workplace experience?

Employee Experience is the full journey an employee has with a company, from hiring and onboarding to career growth and even leaving the organization. It includes things like company policies, management style, opportunities for advancement, and overall job satisfaction.

Workplace Experience is a part of Employee Experience, focusing on how the physical workspace, technology, and culture shape daily work. It includes office design, digital tools, and workplace norms that influence how employees collaborate and interact.

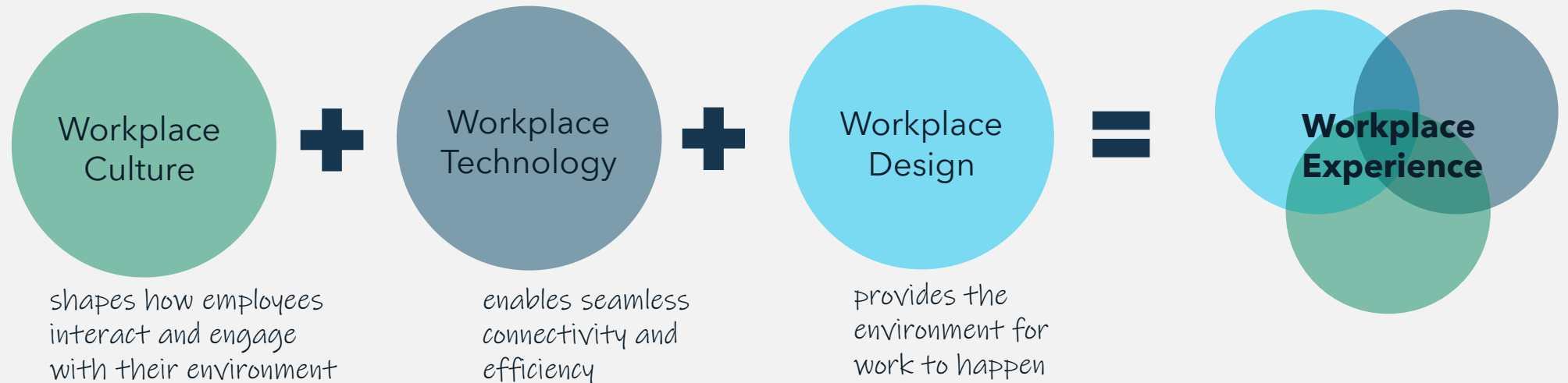




Why is workplace experience important?

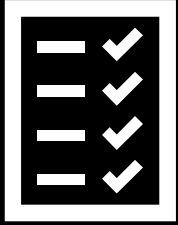
A positive workplace experience leads to higher employee satisfaction, productivity, and retention. When employees feel supported, valued, and engaged, they are more motivated to perform at their best. Prioritizing a **desired workplace experience** helps organizations create a functional, frictionless, and supportive workplace that aligns with business objectives.

Workplace Experience



Defining the desired workplace experience from the start is crucial to ensuring it is supportive and frictionless rather than disconnected or frustrating.





Workplace Experience

The pillars of workplace experience

Workplace experience is shaped by more than just the physical environment – it is the combined result of space, technology, and culture working together. A balanced approach across these three pillars creates a workplace that is functional, efficient, and adaptable, while also supporting employee well-being and collaboration.



The physical workspace:

The physical environment is central to Workplace Experience. Well-designed spaces accommodate a range of work styles, from focused individual tasks to collaborative meetings. Ergonomic furniture, flexible workpoints, acoustic considerations, and access to natural light all contribute to comfort and productivity.



The technology:

Seamless technology enables productivity and collaboration. Reliable networks, intuitive digital tools, and secure IT systems reduce friction and support hybrid work. Integrated workplace apps, booking systems, and virtual platforms ensure employees can work efficiently from anywhere.



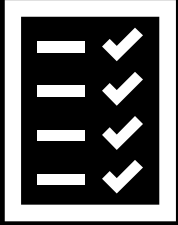
The culture:

Culture shapes how employees interact with their environment. Clear workplace norms, inclusive policies, and leadership behaviors influence engagement and adaptability. A strong culture fosters collaboration and ensures employees feel connected and supported, regardless of location.



By aligning each pillar with government-wide objectives, organizations can create environments that meet operational needs today and are resilient for the future.





Workplace Experience

Operational models to support workplace experience

A well-functioning workplace experience is supported by operational models that help employees navigate and interact with their work environment with **minimal friction**. The following approaches aim to ensure employees can effectively use the workplace.

Self-Service



- ✓ Integrated instructional signage
- ✓ Minimum requirement



Full Service

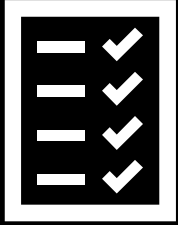


- ✓ Office coordinator role
- ✓ Added layer of workplace experience service



The self-service model offers a solid foundation, while a full-service adds extra support for a more seamless and responsive environment.





Workplace Experience

Self-Service Guidelines

The self-service model helps employees navigate and use the workplace independently with clear signage. To be effective the information must be kept accurate, updated, and aligned with workplace policies. Workplace signage should be **clear, branded, and consistent** to ensure easy recognition by employees. **QR codes or decals** can be used for accessibility and quick access to information.

Types of Signage:

Operational Signage:

- Workplace and building hours, neighborhood assignment, Occupational health and safety boards, first aid location, Fire warden location.

Informational Signage:

- How-to instruction for workpoints, meeting rooms, lockers, printers, kitchenette, Wi-Fi, etc.
- Usage reminders of recommended activities, occupancy limits, expected volume, and duration of use.
- IT equipment details, and how-to instructions.

Wayfinding and zoning*:

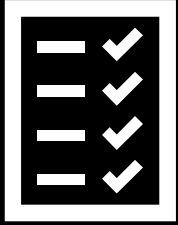
- Directions to key areas and identifying quiet zones.

* Wayfinding and zoning signage is included in the [GCworkplace signage package](#)



Monitor common user questions and navigation challenges to identify where additional signage or clearer instructions are needed to improve the self-service experience.





Workplace Experience

Full-Service Guidelines

Expanding on the self-service model, the full-service model introduces a **Workplace Coordinator** to oversee daily operations and provide on-the-ground support.

This role enhances the workplace by:

- ✓ **On-site assistance** - Guiding employees, troubleshooting issues, and maintaining office resources.
- ✓ **Health & safety** - Acting as a fire warden and first aid responder for emergency preparedness.
- ✓ **Workplace utilization** - Monitoring space use and recommending improvements.

Role of the workplace coordinator:

MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

- on-site 'front desk' resource
- onsite occupational health and safety rep.,
- provide first-line ergonomic support
- first aider
- floor warden
- workplace security liaison
- maintain office supply and IT peripherals stock
- on-site communications

ASSISTANCE

- Assist with locker use
- Assist with network connectivity and first-line technical support
- Assist with meeting space booking
- Assist users with administrative requests
- Assist with coordinating events
- Assist with meeting room set-up
- Share knowledge of nearby amenities and services

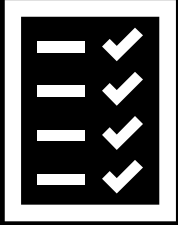
MONITORING & REPORTING

- monitors and reports on user satisfaction
- monitors and reports on workplace utilization



If an on-site coordinator isn't feasible, consider a live chat help service to assist employees with workplace tools, bookings, and navigation—ensuring timely support and a seamless user experience.





Workplace Experience

Data insights to support workplace experience

Whichever operating model you implement, data insights enable organizations to create efficient, adaptable workplaces. Understanding space usage drives smarter decisions, optimizes costs, enhances user experience, and enables real-time adaptation.

How It Helps

When data guides workplace planning, space becomes a flexible tool that supports how people work.

- ✓ Align space with actual demand
- ✓ Simulate changes before acting
- ✓ Increase occupancy without expansion
- ✓ Design spaces that attract teams to the office
- ✓ Integrate strategy across departments

Ideal Data Inputs

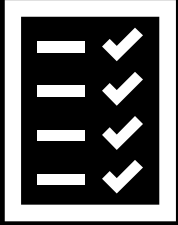
The most useful insights come from combining different types of data. Together, they provide a full picture of how space is working and where improvements can be made.

- ✓ **Occupancy** – badge data, Wi-Fi connections, sensors
- ✓ **Utilization** – seat ratios, usage patterns
- ✓ **Employee behavior** – schedules, preferences, trends
- ✓ **Portfolio data** – leases, costs, square footage
- ✓ **Experience feedback** – surveys, satisfaction metrics



Start with 1-2 data sources to avoid analysis paralysis. Focus on metrics that directly impact user experience and drive actionable improvements.



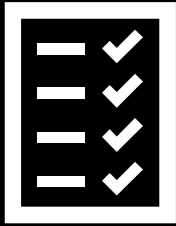


Health, Safety and Well-being in the workplace

Workplace
Experience

Coming soon





Additional resources



Glossary (1 of 2)

Accommodation Manager / CASA (Client Accommodation Service Advisor) – A PSPC advisor who helps departments assess their space needs and align them with hybrid work models, portfolio strategies, and government standards.

Acoustical Zoning – Dividing the workplace into zones (quiet, transitional, interactive) to manage noise and support different workstyles.

Activity-Based Working (ABW) – A workplace strategy where employees are not assigned to a single desk, but can choose from different work settings for their tasks.

Change Management – A structured approach to supporting employees through organizational change.

Change Management Program-in-a-Box – Ready-made tools and templates to help communicate and guide employees during a workplace change.

Clean Desk Policy – A rule requiring desks to be left clear at the end of the day for unassigned use.

Co-location – When two or more departments share office space to reduce the overall footprint, cut costs, and support collaboration across organizations.

Dedicated Access – Space reserved only for specific functions or teams.



Depersonalization / Office Clean-Up – Removing personal and business items from workstations so they can be shared.

Duty to Accommodate (DTA) – Legal and organizational obligation to accommodate employees' specific needs.

Ergonomics / Ergonomic Upgrades – Adjustments to furniture and equipment, such as adjustable chairs and desks, that support employee comfort, safety, and well-being.

Experience Data – Feedback from employees, collected through surveys, consultations, or focus groups, about how they experience the workplace.

Fit-Up Standards (GoC Workplace Fit-Up Standards) – Government-wide rules that set out how office spaces should be designed and furnished to meet functional, health, safety, and accessibility requirements.

Furniture-First Approach – A modernization strategy that relies on flexible, modular furniture to create variety in work settings. It avoids major construction while still improving the employee experience.

GCworkplace – The federal design standard for modern, inclusive, and flexible offices.

Hybrid Work Model – A flexible way of working that balances time between the office and remote locations.

Integrated Project Team – A team of several enabling sectors that ensures workplace transformation projects are coordinated and successful.

Interactive Zone – Areas for teamwork, discussions, and social interaction.

Leadership Commitment – Active support from executives and leaders, essential for transformation success.

Locker Strategy – Planning the number, type, and assignment of lockers, which are by default day-use.

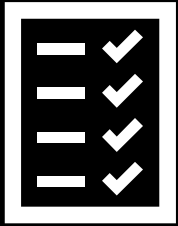
Modernization – A full upgrade of office spaces to align with GCworkplace standards. Modernization projects typically involve construction, technology upgrades, and redesigned layouts to create flexible, collaborative, and inclusive environments.

Neighbourhood Strategy – Assigning areas of a floor to teams or branches to create belonging while keeping variety.

Occupancy Data – Information that shows how many people are in the office, usually tracked through badge swipes, Wi-Fi connections, or sensors.

Office Coordinator / Workplace Coordinator – An on-site resource who supports employees by answering questions, monitoring space use, maintaining supplies, and helping with safety and ergonomic needs. This role helps the workplace run smoothly day to day.





Additional resources

Glossary (2 of 2)

Office Portfolio Reduction Plan (OPRP) – A government initiative to reduce the federal office footprint by 50% over ten years. Where possible, space that is no longer needed may be repurposed for housing or greening priorities.

Optimization – Strategic improvements to existing spaces that make them more efficient and functional for hybrid work. This often involves introducing unassigned seating, repurposing underused areas, and making targeted upgrades without full renovations.

Over-Programming – Designing a workplace to accommodate more employees than the target onsite occupancy, based on hybrid work and daily absences.

Partial Improvements – Smaller upgrades to existing spaces, such as replacing task chairs, adding quiet zones, or creating collaboration areas. These targeted changes can improve the workplace without major cost or disruption.

Physical Anchor Points – Fixed elements, such as wired connections or special equipment, that determine where some functions must be located.

Portfolio Strategy – The overall approach to managing office spaces across an organization.

Priority Access – Space that may be used by all but gives certain functions or teams first rights.

Quiet Zone – An area that encourages individual work and supports the need for quiet or private spaces with minimal acoustic and visual distractions.

Repurposed Space – Converting existing office space into different work settings, such as turning a private office into a meeting room.

Right-Sizing – Adjusting the amount of office space to fit the real needs of a hybrid workforce. This often means reducing the footprint while still meeting operational requirements.

Shared Access – Default access where all employees can use any workpoint.

Special Access Strategy – Assigning specific workpoints or spaces to certain functions, teams, or individuals when needed.

Special Purpose Space (SPS) – Non-standard space, such as labs or mail rooms, designed for unique functions.

Space Assessment App – A PSPC tool that calculates space requirements based on mobility, occupancy, and utilization.

Space Booking Tool – A digital system that allows employees to reserve workpoints or meeting rooms.

Space Consolidation – Combining multiple office locations or teams into fewer spaces.

Swiss Cheese Effect – A pattern of underused or vacant desks across office floors.

Transitional Zone – Areas that balance quiet focus with collaborative activities.

Unassigned Seating – A workplace approach where employees do not have fixed desks but select workpoints daily.

Utilization Data – Information on how spaces are actually being used, such as which workpoints are occupied, how often, and for how long.

Workplace Ecosystem – A network of interconnected work settings, such as workpoints, zones, and amenities.

Workplace Etiquette – Expectations for behaviour in the workplace.

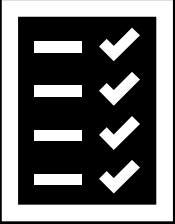
Workplace Technology – Tools and systems that enable employees to work effectively, both remotely and in the office.

Workplace Vision – A concise statement that defines the purpose, goals, and outcomes of a workplace transformation.

Workpoint – Any space where someone can perform their work and is designed specifically to support different functional requirements and/or personal preferences.

Workstation – A type of workpoint that is individual and open within the workplace.





Additional
resources

Reference Material

- ❖ [GCworkplace Hub](#)
- ❖ [GCworkplace Design Resource center](#)
- ❖ [GCworkplace Design Guide](#)
- ❖ [GCworkplace Space Planning Workbook](#)
- ❖ [GCworkplace Technical reference manual](#)
- ❖ [GCworkplace Accessibility and Inclusivity guide in the built environment](#)
- ❖ [Workplace Transformation Program](#)
- ❖ [TBS directive on prescribed presence in the workplace](#)
- ❖ [PSPC Real Property Client Relations Portal](#)
- ❖ [Government of Canada – Office Portfolio Reduction Plan \(OPRP\)](#)
- ❖ [Accommodation Management Resource Centre](#)
- ❖ [Government of Canada Workplace Fit-up Standards](#)
- ❖ [Real Property Space Assessment App](#)
- ❖ [PSPC Workplace Change Management National Centre of Expertise \(NCoE\)](#)
- ❖ [CM Program-in-a-Box](#)
- ❖ [Leesman](#)
- ❖ [Gensler](#)

