

The Office of Management and Budget's recent space orders and mandates have steadily increased the mobility of the federal workforce over the past five years. "Mobility" is an overarching term describing the ability of employees, enabled by information technology and progressive workplace policies, to perform work within and outside their main worksite.

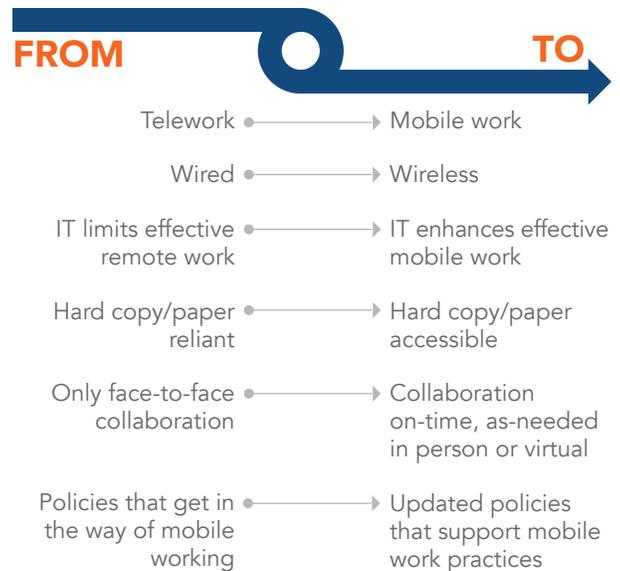
Mobile Work is comprised of a range of separate and distinct modes of work, including:

- Alternative officing (desk sharing, hoteling, drop-in seating);
- Conference attendance;
- Mobile work (site audits, client visits, site inspections, etc.);
- Satellite work;
- Telework;
- Training;
- Emergency situations;
- Travel; and
- Virtual and distributed work.

Chief Administrative Officers and Chief Financial Officers, or their equivalents, typically hold the responsibility for executing real estate directives and leading the design, build, and operate phases of real estate projects inside agencies nationwide. With shrinking budgets and increased demands for doing more with less comes the imperative of examining service delivery, employee performance and human resources, and information technology, while simultaneously continuing to meet rising customer expectations inside and outside the organization. The impact on the human resource line of business is unique, and leaders in human resources have the opportunity to anticipate business solutions in an unprecedented way.

A federal agency took on this challenge through a space consolidation project at their headquarters that reduced their real estate footprint by 37,000

usf. and saved the agency \$3M in operation and maintenance costs, in year one alone. Their workforce experienced a number of fundamental shifts in how they worked:



Human Resources adopted an entrepreneurial mindset and engaged in the effort proactively. They anticipated the impact of these shifts on their customers and managed their own workforce as a pilot group for the agency's user experience in a more mobile work environment.

Inspired by the fundamentals of design thinking, asked, "How can we maintain our customer intimacy with a distributed workforce?" Their first experiment was to increase their own mobile work practices within the HR team. They began with small actions including requests that all meetings contain a conference bridge associated with the meeting invitation. This allowed team members to participate regardless of their location. They committed to learning a new social networking service. This virtual chat tool allowed them to stay connected and maintain the ability to quickly ask questions to each other remotely. They are able to exchange virtual salutations and 'ping' each other for simple questions throughout the work day. In addition, the tool features a presence

sensor to inform others if they were active on chat - through a particular color (red, yellow, or green) that appeared in the corner of the chat window - or unavailable due to a calendar meeting or phone call.

These small actions allowed the team to experience mobility alongside their customers, as teammates across the agency began to work from more than one location within and outside the building. Weekly HR team meetings featured a portion of the agenda where colleagues compared experiences by asking what tactics were helping team members feel connected and what knowledge sharing techniques were critical to keeping work moving through their system.

At a strategic level, the HR team entertained requests from program offices to hire 100% virtual staff and analyzed ramifications regarding compensation as well as the agency's cost structure. In the past, these requests would not have been considered. The agency's revamped their telework/mobile work policy and engaged managers and bargaining unit representatives so the needs of varying members of the workforce were adequately represented. This collaborative approach served all involved to develop a broader shared perspective on the impact an increase in workforce mobility would have on the organization.

The HR leadership team's decision to create two new positions was the most notable. The first was an Employee Engagement Specialist. One of the main responsibilities of the role is to ensure the workforce has access to the right types of spaces to complete their mission and serve their customers. HR saw an opportunity to improve the employee experience of collaborating and using space through technology - acquiring and customizing a software program that allows any employee to reserve space at various locations throughout the building to complete tasks independently, in small groups, or across large teams. This software program might otherwise have been sponsored from a pure facilities or technology perspective.

HR's human-centered approach to technology has paid dividends. Employees now complete work in conference rooms located throughout the building and often spend half the day working with their office partners and half seated on the 8th floor mobile open workspace for quiet space to meet work goals. The Employee Engagement Specialist is able to capture data regarding space utilization throughout the building and share it with the workforce to ensure space is efficiently and effectively used while the agency develops a baseline to make future real estate decisions. When deciding how, when, why and where to get work done, this transformative tool has changed conversations from rigid scheduling and place assignments to collaboration and empowerment.

HR's commitment is evidenced by integrating services to create a second position under the banner of Analytics and Systems Management (ASMB). As the agency continues to implement new workplace technology solutions, ASMB will focus on the unique needs and talents of employees using the systems. Through this lens, ASMB will foster a holistic approach to connecting people to new ways of working and promote employee empowerment through hands-on socializing, marketing, and training of new technologies to support the mobile worker.

If the results of their workforce engagement survey is any indicator of their success, the agency is well suited to stay ahead of their customers and their needs. HR's ability to anticipate customer needs regardless of where their customer is located means that the agency can focus on its core mission of disseminating state-of-the-art knowledge, practices, and providing grants to federal, state, local, and tribal justice systems to support implementation of innovative crime-fighting strategies.