

## How Physical Space Agility can contribute to Change Management Strategies: (and create value for individuals and organisations)

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### Summary:

Based on literature reviews, case studies and professional experience designing work environments, Fabienne explored effects of physical space on knowledge development, as well as individual, team and whole-system behaviour in organisations. She concluded that executives and consultants generally pay limited attention to the relationship between interior environments and change management, resulting in missed opportunities.

The consequence is that environments are considered late in change programs, resulting in compromises to “cope with space issues.” Even change projects that integrate environments in the strategic plan, as with relocations or re-organisations, often provide initially well-fitted space that proves inflexible to meet changing needs. Reasons include: existing structures can be hard to retrofit and re-purpose; the impact of physical space on work is difficult to quantify; and change programs tend to focus on mechanistic processes rather than the well-being of and optimal interactions between people.

### Recommendations:

Leaders should recognise interior environments as an ally in change with the potential to convey positive images and messages to employees, customers and other stakeholders. This includes:

**Incorporate space agility in change plan:** Consider how more agile workspaces and layouts can contribute to team and individual performance now and design the physical space so it can adapt to needs as they change.

**“Knowledge era” work:** Requiring both individual mental concentration and collaboration between communities create spaces that allow people to “stay or go” if the spaces do not personally fit.

**Expand real estate ROI metrics:** from “space efficiency” and low-cost use of real estate to incorporate broader economic contributing factors in the environment such as:

- The degree to which it enables visual and physical interaction
- The extent to which it is stimulating and variety rich
- The degree to which users of the space perceive it to be empowering and controllable