Introduction

Group 6 sought to explore the topic at a range of scales, from the macro (change in workplace drivers), through the intermediate (change in the role of office) to the micro (changes that can be made now; cost of refitting a typical office space). It became clear that in future, more employees will WFH than ever before, as both they and their employers have seen productivity increase rather than decrease during this shelter-at-home period. Our immediate experience of this COVID-19 event will evolve to acceptance of the permanent risk of pandemics.

Overcoming in-home barriers to WFH remains a challenge for some (home-office setups, technology, childcare, etc.), but most of these can be removed. Most employees will need compelling reasons to undertake arduous commutes and run the risk of infection in transit or in the office. Offices will have to all but guarantee high levels of hygiene and low risk of contamination. The area per workstation will need to increase to accommodate safe distancing. There will always be the special case of employees
whose jobs require use of unique resources and who cannot work from home. The principal reasons to
go to the office will be socio-cultural, and offices will have less “me” space and more “we” space.

The group concluded that in general, the trend to a greater focus on “people” over “space” will
accelerate. New workplace KPIs will be people-centric rather than space-centric.

**Workplace Drivers**

**Pre-COVID-19**

- Pandemics believed to be improbable, low risk events resulting in minimal disruption
- Employees and managers focus on presenteeism, irrespective of real need to be in the office or
  work there
- Preference for urban locations with access to public transit
- Employees tolerate long suburban-city commutes, in all transit modes
- Frequent business travel, visitors & guests
- Corporate real estate is about Place + People
- Frequent need to touch interactive devices
- Space reduction to save costs and create density, “buzz”
- Sustainability narrowly focused on energy savings and cost reduction

**Post-COVID-19**

- Acknowledgement that there will be future pandemics: need to plan and prepare
- Management leads with emphasis on productivity from anywhere, enabled by technology
- Location agnostic, with emphasis on convenience to employees who WFH
- Coming into the office needs to be worth the commute and associated risks
- Infrequent business travel; fewer visitors, guests
- Emphasis on safety and what people need in a space over the space itself, People > Place
- Touchless, voice- or app-activated devices
- Avoid congestion to re-assure employees and protect their health
- Expanded view of climate change resilience in the face of changing disease vectors and
  pandemic risk

**Changing Role of the Office**

**Pre-COVID-19 - Required to go to office to work**

- Required access to technology, special equipment
- Mix of "Me" + "We" space
- Workplace densification & efficiency

**Post-COVID-19 - Go for people, community & culture**

- Fluidity between home + office
- "Me" space at home to focus + virtual collaboration
- "We" space rich with amenities to:
  - Build community
  - Reinforce culture
  - Celebrate purpose
  - Social experiences
  - Strengthen relationships
  - Engage employees
  - Perform special tasks (e.g. labs)
The Changing Workplace

Pre-COVID-19 – 9-5 Office

- Important to demonstrate presence
- 100% WFH Unproven
- “That’s the way we’ve always done it”
- Not enough research
- Technology blurs boundaries between work and family
- Commutes

Current WFH Challenges

- Can be lonely
- Technology
- Home-office setting
- Client-facing
- Job function
- 24x7 workday
- Daycare
- Home schooling

Post-COVID-19 – Office & Home Blend

- Public transportation
- Daycare, home schooling
- Job function/need
- Extended hours (staggers + shifts)
- New rules for work/family boundaries
- Hub and spoke location model

Pre-COVID-19 Office

Existing Set Up

- Open concept
- 7,618 square feet office
- 105 Total Workstations

Example Costs of Existing Office, Before COVID 19*:

- Total Purchase Acquisition Cost: * Pricing will vary depending on product, dealer, size, manufacturer, location, and total need:
  - As an example, companies may experience an industry procurement cost range of:
    - Between $150,000.00 to upwards of $500,000, approximately.
    - Per work station approximate cost: between $1,428 to $4,761/station.
- Flexible Lease Acquisition Cost: * Pricing will vary depending largely on product, size, company credit, location of delivery, lease term, insurance, and total need:
  - For example: 12 month lease
  - May range between $2,000/mo and upwards of $5,000/mo for 105 stations.
  - Per work station approximate cost: $20/month to $100/mo/station.

*Industry research provided by Jason Callaway, Workplace Business Development Executive at CORT Business Services, a Berkshire Hathaway Company. The pricing listed represents an overall industry snapshot of workplace solutions and may vary by geographic locations.
PROJECT NAME: TEAM 6 - Space Utilization and Metrics
Post-COVID-19 Office Example

Changes:

- Applied 6-foot physical distancing.
- Reconfigured workstations from open concept to private, 67" high panels

Results:

- A minimum of 25% natural loss of total workstations down to 81, from 105 when the minimum 6 foot physical distancing was applied and square footage maximized. This percentage could increase depending on a company’s strategy and needs.
- Work from Home: Natural allocation of 25% employees would continue working from home.
Example Costs to Reconfigure*:

- Total Reconfiguration Purchase Acquisition Cost: * Pricing will vary depending on product, dealer, size, manufacturer, location, and total need, to name a few:
  - For example, companies may experience an industry procurement cost range totaling between $30,000 to upwards of $100,000 for 80 workstations.
  - Per Workstation approximate cost: $375 to $1,250/ per station.
- Reconfigurations Flexible Lease Acquisition Cost: * Pricing will vary depending on product, size, company credit, location of delivery, lease term, insurance, and total need, to name a few:
  - For example: 12 month lease
  - May range between $600/mo and upwards of $1,500/mo, estimate.
  - Per Workstation: Companies could experience a range of: $20/mo and upwards of $100/mo/station, depending on quality, total items needed, dividers, ergonomic products (or not), total workstations, to name a few.

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**Example Costs of Work from Home Office***:

- 12 Month Lease, for example.
- Lease: May range between $185 to $500/mo./per home office, + tax, install, delivery
- Home Office needs will vary largely on number of items, employee needs, size, location, delivery, install, to name a few.
- **Do not recommend purchasing WFH offices for at least the next 2 years.**

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**Short-term Occupancy Principles**

**Health and Safety**

- Maintain physical distancing while maintaining social interactions
- Determine how to provide PPE to building personnel, tenants, and visitors
- Impact: Affects the utilization of the physical office space

**Workplace Environment**

- Reduce employee office attendance through shifts where office occupancy does not exceed more 40% of the office workforce.
- Use alternate desks (checkerboard) with assigned seating to achieve 6-foot distancing
- Limit access points of egress and ingress into the office space
- Impact: Requires a high level of management involvement and planning

**Shared Spaces**

- Close off large all hands spaces (café’s and large breakrooms)
- Reduce conference room and huddle space capacity through the removal of chairs to achieve 6-foot spacing
- Impact: May initially impact the culture of the office
Circulation Spaces

- Communicate the direction of foot-traffic in main circulation paths: corridors, stairs, entries. Many spaces will have one-way flow to reducing passing opportunities
- Designate social distances on floors where queues could form
- Impact: May minimize social interactions and collaboration

Immediate Actions

Sidewalk etiquette in the office – Use directional flow tape to create walkways.
Clean and clean again – Implement routine cleaning and disinfecting with EPA approved products for COVID-19.
One way in & one way out – Use signage to control ingress and egress.
Get creative – Use mobile white boards as dividers. Separate stations with files.
Divide and conquer – Remove seats around the breakroom and conference tables.

Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)

Pre-COVID-19 - Space-Centric KPIs
- Daily attendance
- Space utilization #, %
- "Density" (area/workstation)
- Costs: annual $/RSF, $/Workstation

Return to Office – Safety
- Employee risk/wellness (is it safe to return?)
- Hygiene SLAs (performance)
- Workplace readiness to receive employees (e.g. decommission Workstations, seats) - grade
- Compliance w. legal, governmental and company requirements

Post-COVID-19 - Human-Centric KPIs
- Workplace Experience
- Wellbeing + Health
- IAQ to prevent/protect
- Work Function/Need to be in the office
- Seat sharing & leveraged space utilization
- Employee engagement
- Costs: annual $/employee

Summary

- To date, the focus has been on working in the office and a 100% work from home model has not been widely tested until now. The COVID-19 pandemic has abruptly changed that.
- Office space KPIs were focused on area per desk (equated to space per person in 1:1 settings) and a general reduction in space per desk, which has translated to lower CAPEX and OPEX.
- With a phased return to the office, the focus will be on creating engaging workspaces featuring flexible work environments and rich amenities.
- Most if not all workstations will be leveraged beyond a 1:1 staff ratio.
- KPI's will become human-centric
- COVID-19 is not going away: this and other pandemics are our new "normal."