



Workplace Transformation for the 21st Century

2023

White Paper highlighting JANSON's workplace transformation
and modernization business

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THE WORKSPACE CHALLENGE

As societies evolve, new technologies develop, and demographics shift, businesses and government have to rethink the way they organize their workspaces to maximize the capabilities of their employees. That is a given. The challenge today is coping with the speed at which the workforce is changing. If organizations don't adapt quickly enough, employee recruitment and retention suffer, morale declines, and productivity drops.

This is even more of a challenge for organizations like the military. The mission of the military is national security and their hierarchical structure reflects the way that mission has been organized over decades.



The U.S. Army alone owns and operates more than half a million structures, the majority of which require renovation and modernization.

But that paradigm is changing, just as business in general is changing. As the United States moves from a manufacturing and manpower-based economy to one that is service-based and technology-driven, many organizations are evolving to more flexible and information-driven ones. The question is whether their office space, facilities and campuses have kept pace.

Let's take the Army for example. The largest branch of the U.S. military owns and operates more than half a million structures, the majority of which require renovation and modernization, according to Defense News, December 1, 2022. The majority of these buildings were constructed during the Industrial Era of four or more decades ago.

In the midst of this transformation, the pandemic of 2020-2022 has had a dramatic impact on the behavior of the American workforce. In 2021, during the second year of the pandemic, over 47 million Americans voluntarily quit their jobs, reports the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. This mass exit from the workforce has been referred to as the Great Resignation.

According to research by the Gartner Group published in 2023, each departing employee costs an organization \$18,591, on average. About half of the U.S. full-time workforce, roughly 60 million workers, says that their current job "can be done remotely working from home, at least part of the time," according to a 2022 Gallup poll.

The Department of Defense (DoD) is by far the country's largest employer, with almost three million dependents including active-duty military personnel, reserve forces, and up to 700,000 civilian staff. It faces the same issues as the private sector to find and retain new recruits to ensure the nation's defense. The Army notes that "installation conditions and services are a factor in this competition," in its 2020 report, Army Installations Strategy.

THE WORKSPACE CHALLENGE

Recruitment is hard, and employee retention is even harder. Post-pandemic, employees in all industries – not just white-collar workers -- are demanding greater flexibility in their work arrangements. In fact, “flexibility” ranks as the third most important consideration for job-seekers, finds the EY 2022 Work Reimagined Survey (pay and career advancement are one and two, respectively).

Without flexibility in their workspace, employees do not feel engaged. Gallup defines employee engagement as “the involvement and enthusiasm of employees in their work and workplace.” Disengagement is a serious issue for employers because people who feel disengaged emotionally often wind up disengaging completely, i.e., they don’t return to work.

Gallup’s **State of the Global Workplace: 2022** report found that 60% of employees surveyed said they felt emotionally detached at work and 19% described themselves as miserable. Only one-third said they felt engaged, a lower rate than at the height of the pandemic in 2020.

Engaged workers drive 23% higher profits, according to Gallup’s research. In the defense realm, disengagement represents more than a loss of asset efficiency; it can be a threat to national security.



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ENGAGING EMPLOYEES THROUGH WORKPLACE TRANSFORMATION

Modernization encompasses 360-degree change, some elements of which can be supported by office and or facility redesign. A modern workspace environment has to engage today's employees in a myriad of ways – by providing health benefits that are ever more valued in a post-pandemic world, facilitating engagement through collaboration and visual communication, ensuring security of both the individual and the facility, and reinforcing the core message of the organization.

Flexibility

Engaging employees is a multi-dimensional commitment, but it starts with flexibility in the workplace. To accommodate this flexibility and reuse or re-imagine of existing facilities, offices and workspaces have to be redefined and redesigned. The fixed cubicles of the late 20th century, as well as the linear open space designs of recent decades, are no longer relevant, nor are facilities made of cinderblock dating from the 1960s. “[They] were created in the time of industrial age management science and are not suitable for the complexity of information age warfare,” explains Robert Seise, Director of Workplace Transformation at JANSON, a firm specializing in facilities modernization (renovation and reuse).

Today's office layouts have to take account of mobile technology and the popularity of BYOD (bring

your own device) in many situations. The work environment and use of facilities such as production hangars have to accommodate these changes in terms of digital signage, lighting, and cyber security. The introduction of up-to-date technology has practically become synonymous with modernization in the B2B and B2C markets.

“Many DoD and Federal workspaces were created in the time of industrial age management science and are not suitable for the complexity of information age warfare,”

- Robert Seise
Director of Workplace Transformation
& Facilities Modernization

Health Considerations

- Post-Covid, new air purifying systems can reassure employees that the office environment is a healthy one. They can be integrated unobtrusively into in-ceiling design, and remove a range of airborne pollutants that standard air filtration system can't capture, such as odors, allergens, smoke, and volatile organic compounds (VOC's). For example, certain clean air systems remove 80-100% of common airborne pathogens such as Covid. The air purification system JANSON uses for its customer programs can remove Covid at 100%.

ENGAGING EMPLOYEES THROUGH WORKPLACE TRANSFORMATION

Combined with easily-cleaned seating and work surfaces, these new workspaces give employees renewed confidence in their personal health and wellbeing.

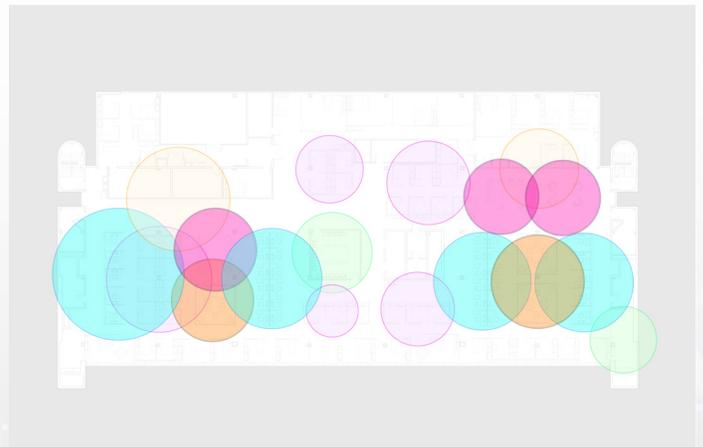
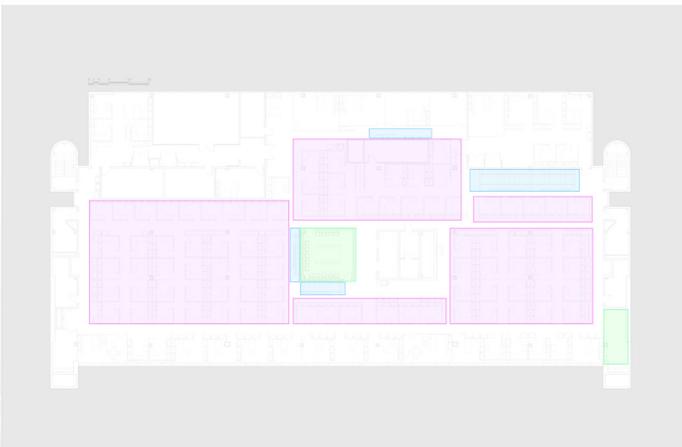
- Traditional lighting fixtures can be swapped out for sensor driven LED systems because the latter are less of a strain on the eyes, more efficient, less costly to maintain, and better for the environment than traditional lighting such as fluorescent and incandescent. LED is more ecological and inexpensive in the long term because 95% of the energy in LEDs is converted into light while only 5% is wasted as heat.
- Natural light should be integrated into facility and office design as much as possible, since natural lighting has been shown to improve physical and psychological well-being, increase productivity, decrease accidents, and raise morale.

- Sound and space considerations need to be factored into workspace layouts. Appropriate flooring, ceiling treatment, and innovative wall materials can mitigate some of the noise issues that arose with open office arrangements.

- The old-fashioned water cooler may have gone out of style, but access to fresh water is more important than ever for employee well-being. That may come in the form of refreshment corners or modernized break rooms that have healthier snack options as well as fresh water.

Collaboration

Conference rooms may always have some place of permanency within organizations, but too many are overflowing with disconnected wires and cables, and lack SMART / hybrid technology solutions necessary for the workforce environments of the future.



Comparison of client's rigid existing workspace layout vs. JANSON's more organic zoning that allows for spontaneous interactions.

ENGAGING EMPLOYEES THROUGH WORKPLACE TRANSFORMATION

Additionally, smaller collaboration spaces, break-out rooms, and relaxation corners allow employees to interact less formally, and more productively. Flexible spaces can accommodate hoteling and hybrid employees with ease.

Steffan Clousing, Creative Director for JANSON, describes a DoD project that included breakout rooms to foster collaboration, updated cubicles with lower walls, glass partitions, natural wood tones, better lighting, and ergonomic seating. Puffy sofas and foosball tables so beloved of Silicon Valley are not necessary, he notes. “What employees want is a healthier, brighter, more inviting work-space.”

“The condition of Federal facilities — living and working spaces — must rival the commercial sector in functionality, quality, resilience, and sustainability.”

- Steffan Clousing
Creative Director

His observations echo those of the Army Installations Strategy: “The condition of Army facilities — living and working spaces — must rival the commercial sector in functionality, quality, resilience, and sustainability.”

The advantages of collaboration are many. Agility improves and so does employee morale. Pooled talent improves outcomes. Socialization is

fostered, and many studies have shown that the single most important factor in employee retention and performance is having friends at work (Gallup, 2022).

Security

Just as individual employees need to feel secure about their health and well-being, facilities need assurance and, in some cases, modernization of their intellectual assets whether “classified” or “non-classified” information. Cyber-security is an issue, since both government and commercial enterprises can come under attack. Increasing IoT (Internet of Things), i.e., connectivity among many devices, heightens the risk of threat from unfriendly parties. Workspace transformation must take all these considerations into account — technologically AND in physical layout.

Messaging

Health, security, and modernized layouts are all vital elements, but messaging with a purpose is key to inspiring employee engagement. Brian Elliot, author of *How the Future Works*, notes that engagement starts with principles. “People need a sense of purpose in why they are doing what they are doing,” he explains. If that can be achieved, “it is much easier to align them and to unlock a lot of potential in them as well.”

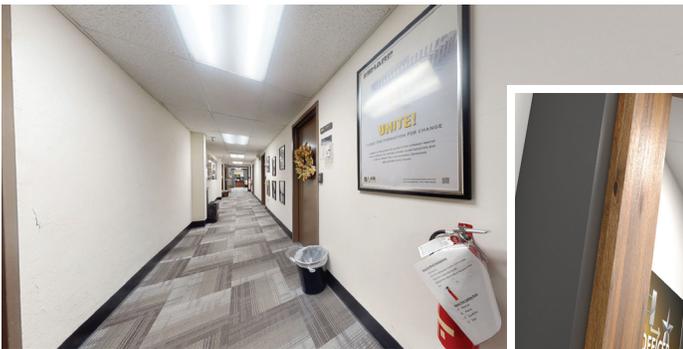
ENGAGING EMPLOYEES THROUGH WORKPLACE TRANSFORMATION

A sense of purpose comes from management, of course, but it also comes from an environment and workspace that is coherent with the mission of the organization. Messaging and bringing the mission to life must be integrated into facilities transformation if the latter is to be successful.

This means using the workplace and or facility for communicating an organization’s mission inside and out – in other words, integrating the mission with the modernization and or renovation plan. The entry, lobby, workspaces, meeting rooms, high-bays, production centers, break rooms, and the like. Such messaging reaches both employees and visitors, i.e., customers, suppliers, distinguished visitors, new prospects, and the media.

Some messaging opportunities are obvious, like signs at an entry door, tiled video wall displays, fixed or digital images along a corridor. Others are more subtle like the organization’s branding, the height of walls, the selection of natural woods or metals as decorative accents. Signage can be static or digital, and the content of the latter should not be left to the IT department, since successful programs are 10% technology and 90% content.

The Army Installations Strategy acknowledges this approach, noting, “Opportunities that leverage technology through creation of data-informed, smart installations will allow the Army to pivot from an industrial-age paradigm, characterized by rigidity and purpose-built specialization, to a data-rich, reconfigurable, and technology-enhanced information-age construct.”



JANSON takes dated institutional spaces and creates dynamic environments in part by opening up current floorplans and incorporating biophilic elements and materials, helping create new spaces that encourage interaction and promote employee wellbeing.

ENGAGEMENT THROUGH NARRATIVE

How to do it

Effective workplace transformation should be driven by experienced design, branding and communications strategists that have the know-how to partner with specialists in A&E, construction and IT.

To transform a military, federal or commercial workspace, an expert should understand the mission and world view of that mission and integrate it into the specific needs of each individual workspace, facility, or campus.

JANSON, an ISO-certified company recognized by Global Tech Outlook magazine as one of the top 10 most innovative woman-owned small business defense technology companies of 2021, has such customized expertise.

JANSON CEO Janet Chihocky explains, “We do a narrative map of what the client’s story should be and overlay it onto the footprint of their facility. We start with a deep dive into the specifics of their mission, their footprint and their organization, whether interviewing key staff or plowing through a plethora of briefings and employee survey criteria within their organization. What do they want their employees to FEEL and to DO? Working together, we define the project’s objectives, walk the space, capture interiors with twin camera imagery, build 3D models, and define how the messaging flow will drive the design of the concepts we build for the client. We practice consummate customization because we do not believe a ‘one size fits all’ approach meets the unique mission and business needs of our customers.”

Her approach is to “reimagine a facility by enriching the experience of its employees and visitors through tailored messaging and engagement.” At the same time, she explains, a successful workplace transformation must “meet clients’ expectations with affordable solutions and service excellence to support their mission and business objectives.”

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- Janet Chihocky
Founder & CEO

Once the client is satisfied with the messaging and design strategy, JANSON then drives and manages the production, fabrication, installation, and sustainment of the project according to an agreed timetable. In some cases, this may be a few months; other projects are so large that the agreed-upon timetable may take several years. As a small and agile woman owned firm, JANSON has consistently delivered on time and on budget in its 25 years of business.

ENGAGEMENT THROUGH NARRATIVE

Future-proofing

The rate of change in today's world guarantees that valid solutions today may not meet future needs. So how to future proof a proposal for workplace modernization?

Solutions chosen by JANSON include concept, preliminary design, and CAD developed with future use in mind, custom display and branded environments, sensor-based lighting, digital conference scheduling, direct view LED view walls, modular furniture that can be customized easily, dismountable glass walls, and flexible layouts. Technology choices, whether for conference rooms, workstations, or digital bulletin boards, are always made with the overall mission and customer messages in mind, in the context of long-term cost efficiency rather than short-term "wow" factor.

Benchmarking

Because workplace transformation has a cost, it should be measured as methodically as any other organizational activity. The webzine Reworked suggests a number of outcome-focused metrics that align with broader organizational goals:

1. Measuring deliverables, such as recruitment and retention
2. Measuring employee productivity
3. Taking quantitative and qualitative surveys
4. Analyzing customer experience
5. Analyzing KPIs (key performance indicators).

JANSON is developing more data-driven ways to assess space usage patterns and workforce morale before and after transformation for its facilities.

Conclusion

Society is changing faster than ever, and employers in public and private sectors have to adapt. The ones that do so successfully will remain coherent with their goals and mission, communicating these through the physical and hybrid workplace as well as through organizational structure.



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