

01.

THE OPPORTUNITY

using a physical change in location as a catalyst for reinvention, not repetition. A chance to reflect, imagine, innovate and create an opportunity to define new ways of working.

Our client, a global law firm, had recently embarked on an ambitious global workplace change strategy and chosen their Canberra practice as one of the first offices globally to move to an agile environment and new ways of working.

The design for the new premises included some significant changes for partners and staff, including moving away from dedicated offices and needing to reduce storage by 70%.

One of the most exciting opportunities was to capitalise on how the move could positively impact the development of an agile and high performing workforce, build management and leadership capability, ensure a healthy and safe workforce and attract and retain talent.

02. OUR APPROACH

defining how people will work together and share the new workspaces and preparing them for the changes ahead

Key aspects of our approach were to:

- Develop a series of principles for the change and communication activity, which are endorsed by and subscribed to, by the partners and Senior Leadership team (SLT)
- Appropriately engage with partners and SLT, preview messages, and strive to achieve a 'no surprises' communication approach
- Acknowledge that change can be hard. Listening allows us to better understand the concerns of those impacted. Their feedback can help inform the design, look and feel of the new space
- Focus on supporting and empowering leaders to provide top-down communication with their teams about the project
- Regularly engage with the change advocate cohort; support and equip them for their important role
- Provide opportunities for staff to practice and explore new processes; consider how different spaces, such as meeting rooms, focus rooms and breakout spaces can support different kinds of tasks—from collaborative to refresh
- Engage staff in the look and feel of the new office. Provide them with an opportunity to provide feedback on the range of furniture chosen to ensure it is fit for purpose and best supports their work
- Use a diverse range of communication channels; a mix of face-to-face, online and experiential, which is sympathetic to employee communication preferences and aligned to the firm's broader strategic initiatives and communication activity

- Provide clear and factual information and engagement that creates positivity and excitement about the relocation and establishes two-way dialogue, and
- Develop a clean up campaign and arrange | oversee paper culling and reduction events in preparation for the move

In the lead up to moving into the new office, only half of the staff were feeling positive about the changes ahead.

While many were excited about the new facilities | amenities and improved opportunities for connecting and collaborating with others, there were also outstanding concerns about working in an agile and hybrid workplace, including:

- noise & distractions
- poor desk availability
- loss of personal space

- behaviours contrary to the guiding principles, and
- the impact of remote work

And then, practical completion was delayed forcing the firm to vacate their existing premises (the lease could not be extended) and move into an agile | co-working space for several months!

While incredibly disruptive, this unexpected change turned out to be a blessing in disguise. It provided a circuit breaker and meant that staff and partners had the chance to move beyond theory and practice new ways of working before day one in their new office.

Post move, Puzzle provided further support to the firm in order to reinforce and embed new ways of working, and also conducted an evaluation | check in process three months post move.

03. THE RESULTS

all the hard work paid off, with a positive shift in employee sentiment


The post move surveys and focus groups concentrated on the performance of the new agile and hybrid workspace and the way in which it supports staff in their work.

Feedback indicated that staff are enjoying the things they were looking forward to as a result of the move to the new office, and are not experiencing many of the things that they were concerned about.

Overall, there was a positive shift in employee sentiment, with workplace satisfaction at 88%.

Most staff agree that the new workplace has had a positive impact on productivity and that they experience high levels of connection, collaboration and interaction with one another in the new office.

“ It is really great that the teams are all mixing and not sitting in specific spots. This has created a great environment suited to collaboration across teams and is helping to build improved social connections across the teams.



This was just one of our 1,200+ workplace adventures. We'd love to help you with your next adventure!

contact us

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