morning. People moved files in portable holders and red wagons to the space where they wanted to work that day. There were team rooms, private spaces, club houses and coffee nooks.

What were the results of this experiment? On the positive side, Sims et al. identified increases in communication, better coordination within groups, a sense of team spirit, and increased access to employees at all levels in the organization. However, serious problems identified by Brown and Duguid led to the demise of the experiment and a return to a more traditional office design.[4] The problems identified by Brown and Duguid included the following.

- *Employees did not want to move around as much as the organization wanted them to. In the New York office, "peer policing" prevented people from "nesting"—e.g., using the same place every day.*

- *Because the spaces varied in their desirability, many employees arrived at work very early to stake out the best locations and thereby prevent others from using these desirable spaces.*

- *Employees, as well as managers, had difficulty locating one another, because everyone was always in a different place. Thus people spent a lot of time roaming around searching for colleagues.*

How could the Chiat/Day problems have been avoided? There are a number of points in the design process when research interventions could have been useful. First, the project would have benefited from a review of alternative workspaces in other organizations, to identify what worked and what didn't. Second, a more thorough understanding of work processes at Chiat/Day might have led the proponents of the nonterritorial office to question some of their basic assumptions. Third, when such a radical departure from current practice is suggested, it is always a good idea to do pilot tests using segments of the organization for experimental intervention before moving forward with the full design program. This enables designers and the organization leadership to identify behaviors and tasks that are most resistant to or amenable to change.

INTEGRATING RESEARCH INTO THE PRACTICE OF INTERIOR DESIGN

If research became an integral part of the practice of interior design, the benefits would be far reaching, including:

- *Increased ability to diagnose client context and needs*

- *Improved design solutions*

- *Development of an internal knowledge base as a foundation for design decision making*

- *Ability to provide clients with valid data from previous projects*

- *Development of metrics that measure the cultural, organizational, and human values of interior design—not just costs per square foot or square feet per person, or other commonly used data*

In today's demanding marketplace, each of these benefits could increase the competitive value of firms that make research an integral part of their practice. Many designers shy away from research out of fear that it is too difficult, too time consuming, and too expensive. Yet it may be more expensive in the long run to ignore research and the potential benefits it affords to those who embrace its potential. This chapter provides an overview of basic research concepts and methodologies relevant to interior design.

BASIC HUMAN–ENVIRONMENT RELATIONSHIPS

Human sensory systems evolved to aid adaptive information processing. Our sensory systems perceive colors, patterns, textures, views, sounds, aromas, light, and artifacts as information that enable us to determine whether a place is habitable and therefore likely to support our functional, social, and psychological needs.