

get more entangled.” He identifies the churn work process as a simple and logical progression:

- *Identify the client’s needs.*
- *Establish a game plan.*
- *Sell the plan to the clients.*
- *Prepare drawings.*
- *Implement the plan.*

Elizabeth Seidel has also observed that churn work involves the same activities as an overall new design project. In her opinion, “You can apply the same general design principles to churn work. You need to resolve how your client is going to function. Will the design be functional as well as aesthetically pleasing? Is the cabling and telecommunications supportive? The whole scope of work that a designer would address in an overall large design project is also addressed in churn work, just often on a smaller scale.” She describes the following typical activities:

- *Meet with clients to gather and assess needs.*
- *Interact with clients on ongoing basis (hand-hold through the process).*
- *Create the move team that will disconnect and reconnect.*
- *Be sensitive to both end-user requests and corporate mission.*
- *Assist in political negotiations.*
- *Be conscious of cost as though money is your own.*
- *Be concerned for life safety and building code issues.*
- *Coordinate and work cooperatively with a team of people.*
- *Interact with vendors (furniture installers, electricians, data technicians, etc.).*

Seidel lists six personal traits that are important for any interior designer to possess when involved with churn work as a specialty practice area of inte-

rior design: the designer must be flexible, passionate, politically savvy, courageous (ability to do the hard things), desirous to please, and supportive of corporate policy. She notes that she has performed churn design services in virtually every job position she has held in her 14 years of professional experience. Those positions have included work as a staff interior designer at furniture dealerships, private interiors firms, and in-house facilities departments. In each case, the steps were basically the same and required a mastery of personal communication and management skills.

Interior designers play a vital role in assisting companies to understand churn, plan for it, and strategize the means and methods of managing churn for future opportunities. Seidel has worked in companies where churn was as high as 63 percent annually, where she moved 750 people of a total workforce of 1,200 in one year. The typical percentage of employees moved is somewhat lower. The International Facility Management Association (IFMA) typically reports on the average rate of churn in their Benchmark Reports, which in 1997 published an average rate of churn of 44 percent among their respondents. Wise companies will track their rate of churn in order to determine its overall cost to their organization and consider ways to reduce those costs as appropriate with corporate objectives.

Churn will always exist. In its simplest form, it is a box move, where people and their boxed possessions move while furniture, fixtures, and equipment remain. But many companies have not invested the money or effort to achieve these simple box moves, or believe that “box move churn” does not agree with corporate goals. To reduce the cost of churn through “box moves,” designers must be flexible in planning, adhere to corporate standards, and adopt universal approaches to individual needs. Some companies embrace this approach. For others, the higher cost of churn is acceptable in light of other corporate objectives. Whatever the corporate policy, churn will always be present, and interior designers who focus on churn as a specialty will always find a demand for their services.

Relocation Services

Design professionals provide relocation services as a specialty practice for those clients who require assistance in managing the physical move of the relocation process. These services may include any or all of the following relocation components: security coordination, coordination of telephone and