

as “you move things which belong to somebody else to a new location using your common sense.”

Tom Bay states that the personal characteristics he finds most important in a good relocation specialist include: good listening skills, good problem-solving skills, proactive initiative, ability to think on feet, excellent follow-through, and ability to anticipate unknown challenges. Denise Wesen agrees and adds that it is extremely important to have “a very thick skin. The relocation specialist needs to recognize when he or she has done a good job even if the end user is exhibiting stress. Let it be water off a duck’s back. This is especially important if a group has been through a reorganization and people are nervous.” Marci Porritt adds that “a positive attitude and lots of energy” are two personal traits that seem vital to the success of a relocation effort.

As with most projects, the key to success is good communication among all parties. Because the move team is comprised of varied individuals with diverse backgrounds, it is especially important that the relocation specialist identify and involve key individuals in all aspects of the planning as early as possible. The remainder of the team may grow or shrink depending on the phase of the relocation and the current tasks to be accomplished, but a core group of key individuals should be consistent throughout the project. The relocation specialist defines the communication and approval processes, and identifies on the schedule and task lists the party responsible and their progress. Wesen notes that the end-user contacts are always involved as a member of the team, yet “it is important for the professional to be in control. We recognize their concerns, and work cooperatively, but we must uphold the fact that we are the professionals in this particular field. It is our primary responsibility to foster good communication that will set realistic expectations.” The expertise of each vendor is considered an integral part of the process and a valuable addition to the team. Mazzoni reflects that “the common mistake that many relocation specialists make is when they believe that their way is the best and only way to accomplish the task. There is always a better way to complete a task. Listen, assess, and lead.”

### **Computer-Aided Facility Management**

Computer-aided facility management (CAFM) provides organizations a full range of comprehensive facilities-related information that is linked to computer-aided drawings (CAD). The database and linked drawings can easily

provide significant facilities-related tools such as up-to-date as-built plans, rent chargeback information in square feet, and accurate inventories of furniture, fixtures, and equipment (FF&E) items. CAFM systems provide facility managers with easy access to information that assists them in determining and tracking the most cost-effective use of the company's real estate and facilities assets. With this information, they are able to plan for future space needs, demonstrate how business units grow and change, understand the impact of new technologies on space use, streamline costs and processes related to managing churn, and provide hard data to substantiate facilities strategies. Often, other internal departments become involved or contribute to the need for this centralized information, such as real estate, human resources, information systems, records management, and telecommunications. The CAFM specialist may be called upon to help in the programming phase of the full-service, six-phase design project, or to track the evolving needs of an entire organization—to the benefit of the company's overall health as it grows.

Interior designers utilize CAFM capabilities to provide accurate and valuable data to assist their clients in important decision making that is related to the planning and design of their facilities. Adriana Stanescu, an architect from Rumania, has been immersed in CAFM for many years. She describes CAFM as “a software platform, a visual information manager that ties maps, floor plans, organization charts, pictures, and diagrams to numeric and textual information. So, CAFM is the tool that enables corporations to manage a large group of assets quickly yet effectively.” (See Figure 19-4.) Laurie Gathwright, an interior designer real estate analyst with the Corporate Real Estate Department of T. Rowe Price Associates, describes CAFM as encompassing “a broad range of services, from simply managing space information and drawings within a software package to creation of a ‘visual resource manager’ in which assets from multiple departments are tracked. I define CAFM as the utilization of electronic tools to aid in the management and planning of real estate and its related resources. The related resources may be any asset that exists within or around a real estate facility, and the associated lease information. CAFM can also be described as an information warehouse in which data that is utilized by many different departments can be stored.”

A facility manager may retain these CAFM services as a specialty practice provided by the interiors firm, or he may assign internal staff to provide these services. Before designers can exercise fully the benefits of CAFM,