**WORKPLACE STANDARDS**

Through the new real estate standards, EYNRE ensured that, regardless of business unit, practice area or location, the workplace maintains a high level of quality and remain consistent with other EY locations. In a profession where the people are as fluid as the projects, the consistency within the workplace can provide a level of familiarity where none might exist.

Each floor of the building is designed with a standard layout so that regardless of seat assignment, employees know where to find team rooms, admin support, copy, coffee and mail areas. This consistency can help both the level of productivity as well as an employee's well being.

**WORKPLACE AMENITIES**

As a result of hoteling, or workspace sharing, about 40% of the McLean staff do not have a permanent workspace. As a result, a visit to the office does not always require a worksurface as much as it does a familiar face and capable hands. Many of the team members come into the office for either team or client meetings, or to obtain support from the professional service personnel in the central file room, reprographics, word processing or graphics support. The centralized amenities allow for "one stop shopping" to make the most of one's time.

Whether an employee is interviewing new hires in the interview rooms, utilizing the 75 person conference center, or relaxing or working in the lunchroom/café with clients and other EY employees, EY provides a relaxed, yet high quality workplace to support the needs of its professionals.

As a result of buying agreements and standards development, EYNRE has established a cost effective approach to workplace design that is also responsive to the timely requirements for space. Acquisition of new real estate is a serious investment for EY. Timing is critical in getting quality product in a quality space in timely manner. EYNRE's buying agreements and chosen product lines allow for the real estate to be acquired "just in time", saving the firm significant monies.

**FIGURE 19-5 (Continued)**

Stephen C. Roth is an architect who has been involved in facility planning for over 15 years. He explains the role of benchmarking: "As Director of Real Estate, Planning & Construction for a public utility, I am responsible for the development of service agreements with our customers and business plans for approval by our management. Cost and service quality measures are an integral part of both activities. Benchmarking helps determine our level of competitiveness and (hopefully) our degree of improvement with respect to the providing of services and, therefore, the performance of our jobs, both of which contribute heavily towards a confidence in our ability to provide the best possible service at the lowest possible cost."

In general, facilities benchmarking efforts fall into four broad categories: resource utilization, space management, space assignment, and real estate. Each facilities organization needs to determine what it wants to measure and why, starting small and expanding each year if necessary. Some typical facility factors include density, churn rates, cost per square foot, private office-to-workstation ratios, cost per move, vacancy rates, and resource utilization. Such factors are measured against companies in a client's own industry or against companies of similar structure in different industries. Benchmarking provides the opportunity to evaluate current facilities and set a baseline for analyzing future performance.

James E. Loesch, CFM, is a founding member of the benchmarking and research committees of the International Facility Management Association (IFMA). He points out that benchmarking can fail without clear goals and a complete understanding of its possible consequences for the organization. Every three years, the IFMA publishes Benchmark Surveys to help its members understand and apply the benefits of benchmarking. But Loesch advises that "data for its own sake is wasted effort. You must have a clear understanding of what you want to get out of it. You must have a clear understanding of what your company values and needs, such as its processes, costs, how it does business, and internal customer expectations. You also must know what are in the numbers, both within your company and among other companies against whom you may be benchmarking. Numbers can lie. You must compare apples to apples." Loesch also cautions that all the participants need to think through the implications of benchmarking. Some results could affect change—i.e., the decision to downsize some positions. Some decisions are political, some are union driven, some are culture driven. He advises, "Know