

mation and confirm the content of the program, which then becomes the guide and checklist for the designer.

This traditional method assumes that clients are capable of understanding their own circumstances, analyzing their effects, replanning and reorganizing for their future, and then clearly communicating this to the designer in terms of building needs. It also assumes that the clients' representatives have a thorough understanding of their entire system and the complexity of their own cultural, technical, financial, and organizational needs. In most cases, certainly, clients do not even completely understand their own current state and are often responding to their existing physical space or cultural archetypes in a way that may no longer be valid.

How, then, do you begin to build common understanding of the "change" that will occur, and how do you assist your clients through the process of discovering the unknowns?

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## PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY

### Process Design and Development

You must begin with a planned process, which is designed around the end results that you and your client seek. Similar to the way you would design a project, you must start with a conceptual idea of the process, you must explore areas for analysis, and you must determine what level of effort and cost the client is willing to invest in development. Once these concepts are outlined and agreed upon, a game plan, with agendas, must be created, which will guide you through the process. It must be facilitated in a way that allows for open exploration, honest feedback, and well thought out direction. The process must address the emotional, cultural, and operational and/or functional needs of the client. It must include the analysis of existing conditions as well as the projection of the client's future needs, which will support the client's strategic objectives.

It is important to understand that the discussions need to be highly interactive, participatory, and open to questioning by all. In *Excellence by Design: Transforming Workplace and Work Practice*, by Turid Horgen, Michael Joroff,

William Porter, and Donald Schön in association with the Space and Organization Research Group (SPORG) of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's School of Architecture (John Wiley & Sons, New York, 1998), there is a discussion of "process architecture." The book describes the necessary steps to providing process leadership to accomplish the goals of transforming a workplace. "Process architecture requires openness to creative tension between the user and practitioners. This approach is much more demanding than traditional programming. . . . Process architecture demands a tolerance or zeal for open-endedness and persistent uncertainty. For the process architect, the design is never entirely complete . . . . However, one characteristic of the design process is that one rips apart what has been, looks at it with different eyes, and puts it together in a way it has not been put together before."

A variety of facilitation methods can be used in an interactive manner for information gathering. They include one-on-one interviews, focus groups (structured discussions, with preselected participants, internal and external to the organization), open forums, workshops (internally focused working sessions), and benchmarking (guided tours, of similar or relative projects, with focused discussions). It can also be appropriate to use questionnaires, surveys, etc., to gather information that can provide valuable data to the project, where an inclusive process does not affect the outcome of the information.

The concept of facilitating a process, rather than just doing one, is fundamental to reaching a superior level of service to clients. It is as important that the building be ready for an organization as it is that an organization be ready for the building. Facilitating clients through this interactive process can often be the catalyst for change to begin and to continue even after they occupy their space.

As an example, for the San José Martin Luther King Jr. Library, a large joint use facility was envisioned, where city and state university libraries would be integrated into a single facility. The vision was to create seamless service, a united culture, and a project unique in the nation, between two distinctly different organizations. A facilitated process allowed for the discovery and acknowledgement of complexity and initiated the necessary steps to cultural and operational development, years before the completion of the facility. In this way the architecture of the organization was developed in unison with the architecture of the facility, and alignment was reached between the organizational objectives and the vision.