

The following services can be provided to improve worker morale by saving them time outside the office:

- *Dog walking*
- *Vacation planning*
- *Flower delivery*
- *Employee-interest courses (non-work-related)*
- *Medical facilities and personnel*

All of these amenities and services are viewed as extremely valuable by employees, as many employees are working extended hours and already have little free time to spend with family and friends. More and more companies are asking for interior areas that encourage creativity. AmSouth incorporated an employee cafeteria, fitness center, and outdoor running trail into the design of the headquarters.

Special equipment.

- Every company has special equipment requirements unique to its culture, business, and work process that directly affect an office building's architecture and systems. Vaults, library shelving, and high-density file storage, for example, require increased structural reinforcement in the floors.

Budget.

- Every project has a budget that must be worked into the design. Regardless of the budget, the architect should strive to accommodate all required project goals. Understanding the budget allows you to help the client to make the most effective choices for their office design.

Obviously, every client will not require the same level of infrastructure and amenities. Some may simply need a few tables and chairs and the basic levels of telecommunications networks, while others want to incorporate every aspect listed above to the highest degree, ensuring that they have the most up-to-date technologies and flexibility to easily modify their office in the future.

TEST FITS

The strategic planning phase

The strategic planning phase can culminate in a series of test fits of potential office locations. Taking all the information gathered in the initial stages of the strategic planning, test fits place the client in any number of potential locations. This allows clients to see how their needs might be met in each location, and which one most effectively meets their needs.

The selection of these sites can be driven by the client's desire for a particular site or building location or type; the financial benefits of a site; market conditions, which often dictate which sites are available at which times; features and existing amenities, such as existing telecom infrastructure, of a site; the potential for growth within the site; or, most likely, a combination of these factors.

Test fits begin with a synthesis of the programming and workplace analysis information into basic spatial requirements for the office. The designer should ensure that the test fits each accommodate the required adjacencies and support requirements in addition to the spatial requirements. Additionally, the following should be incorporated into each test fit:

- *Client-desired traffic patterns*
- *Design feasibility*
- *Cost effectiveness*

During the design for AmSouth Bancorporation's new headquarters facility, a number of test-fit options were discussed. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, AmSouth formerly had 1,200 employees housed in eight different office buildings across Birmingham, Alabama. They decided to create a corporate campus to house all employees at one location, which led to test-fit options ranging from numerous buildings placed within one campus setting to one tall high-rise building to house everyone. It was also very important that the location of the headquarters offer pleasing aesthetics and basic amenities for its employees, who largely live in the suburbs of Birmingham. All of these basic project requirements were discussed and evaluated during the first three stages of the strategic planning phase.

In the end, AmSouth decided to create one campus structure, located in the Birmingham suburbs, which is composed of two long, narrow towers strad-