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Telework/Workspace Sharing Pilots at GAO

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Background

- GAO has 11 Field Offices with a combined square footage of 247,000 and annual rent cost of about $7.5 million for FY 13

- Approximately 840 field staff
  - 775 mission analysts
  - 65 mission support

- Each office has a mix of analysts from various GAO Teams
  - Work with other team members across GAO to carry out assignments

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Genesis of Pilot

- Basic concept is to reduce office footprints by increasing telework and implementing workspace sharing

- Provides added flexibility to staff plus cost savings for agency

- Began as discussion of "21st Century Workplace" in early 2011

- Continued with sense of urgency in late 2011 as a result of our budget crunch

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Dollars and Sense

- Overall goal is to reduce footprints by an average of 40%

- Projected cost savings upon full implementation is at least $2.5 million annually

- Projected timeline is through FY 2015

- Includes some office moves and opportunity to efficiently and effectively configure space

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Getting Started

- Selected San Francisco and Boston as first pilot offices.

- Real estate costs and commuting patterns were key considerations

- Held kick-off meetings with staff in each office

- Surveyed staff to get initial read on level of participation

- Pilot has now expanded to include Seattle, Los Angeles, Denver, Dallas, Atlanta, and Chicago

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Implementation Steps

- Assessed technology needs (more on this in a minute)

- Staff submitted formal telework requests for approval by Teams

- Did initial space design based on telework applications and created "peak analyses"

- Space design was finalized based on number of workspaces and team rooms needed

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Technology Needs of Teleworkers

- Same Basic Needs as Mobile Workers
  - Ability to access network remotely
  - Telephony capabilities

- Potential Additional Needs of Teleworkers
  - Printing/Fax
  - Desktop Video Conferencing
  - Document Sharing for Collaboration
  - Special Applications

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Actions Taken to Enhance Telework

- Purchased more powerful servers to run Citrix, boosted both speed and concurrent user access from approximately 25 users to 100 users per location

- Tools provided to 50% plus teleworkers:
  - Monitors, keyboards, and office chairs can be taken home
  - VOIP – "softphones" provided with a D.C. phone number and voicemail
  - WebEx – accounts and WebCams provided to accommodate desktop VTC and provide collaboration tools

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Workspace Sharing

- Purchased reservation system
  - Check in required in office
  - Accessible online to make reservations

- Staff who telework 50% or more do not have designated workspace
  - Either share a workspace with co-worker with complimentary schedule, or
  - Use reservation system to find an available workspace

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Agilquest Hoteling Software

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Results

- Across the offices a range of 27% to 55% of staff telework 50% or more of the time

- Able to reduce number of workspaces accordingly

- To date, we have officially given back over 35,000 square feet of space

- Anticipate rent savings of $1.2 million in FY 2013, and $2 million in FY 2014

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Results (cont.)

- Conducted a survey of participants and those they work with and found that among participants:
  - 96% reported being satisfied with the pilot (88%) or neutral (8%)

  - 96% said the pilot either improved their morale or that their morale remained the same

  - 92% reported either the same or improved productivity

  - Negative responses centered around technology, meetings, and interaction with colleagues

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Results (cont.)

- Stakeholders who were surveyed were mainly positive or neutral about the pilot for the vast majority of questions. For example, only:
  - 3% said there was a negative result in terms of productivity, teamwork, and collaboration
  - 1% thought quality of the product was impacted negatively
  - 4% thought the engagement was less efficient
  - 6% said there was a negative impact on the ability to hold team, hill or agency meetings

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Implementation in Denver

- Officially began the pilot in June

- Of the 66 staff eligible to telework:
  - 18 chose to telework 50% or more,
  - 8 telework 30% to 50%,
  - 10 telework less than 30%, and
  - 27 telework only episodically
  - 3 are on extended leave

- Plan to return about 25% of our space and save GAO about $150,000 per year in rent and security costs.

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Implementation in Denver (cont.)

- Overall, a smooth transition with a few issues encountered:

  - Some staff reluctance/concern

  - Workspace selection and moves

  - Storage for SBU and other information

  - Reservation system

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Next Steps

- Implement the pilot in the remaining 3 smaller offices and headquarters

- Conducting another survey and will issue a report on the pilot

- Assuming good survey results, move from pilot to final operationalization in all offices

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