

# Distributed Teams Fusion Cell

Space Group

Telecommuting/Teleworking/Remote Working Article Review and Summary

**Article Name:** Workplace Utilization and Allocation Benchmark

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[https://www.gsa.gov/cdnstatic/Workspace\\_Utilization\\_Benchmark\\_July\\_2012\\_%281%29.pdf](https://www.gsa.gov/cdnstatic/Workspace_Utilization_Benchmark_July_2012_%281%29.pdf)

**Notes:**

## Methodology

*In the summer of 2010, through the winter of 2011, GSA conducted a workspace utilization survey, analyzed data results, conducted Internet research, and held telephone interviews with several public and private organizations. GSA attended several leading industry workplace conferences to identify and gain insight into emerging contemporary trends, practices, and standards in workspace utilization and allocation. (pg.7)*

**Summary/Findings:**

## Research Analysis

*Private sector survey respondents reported an average space per person of 200 USF (230 RSF), with a median of 193 USF (222 RSF) as compared to the Federal benchmark of 190 USF (218 RSF) – USF = Useable Square Feet; RSF = Rentable Square Feet (pg.10)*

## Hoteling and Desk Sharing

*In a traditional work environment there is a 1-to-1 ratio of associates to workspaces. With a hoteling/desk sharing strategy there is at least an “n”-to-1 ratio of associates to workspaces. The higher the value of “n”, the more effective the workspace program will be with the prospect of yielding better workspace performance. With no loss in associate productivity, it stands to reason that a 2:1 associate to workplace ratio is twice as efficient as a 1:1 ratio. How high the ratio goes is defined by the nature of the organization, but from GSA’s research, ratios of 5:1 to 7:1 are not uncommon. (pg.20)*

*As an actual example: A high-tech organization located in New York City has 334 workspaces in a facility made up of 108 “permanently assigned” spaces and 226 shared workspaces. There are 550 people who work “from” that office. So, the ratio for the shared space is 2.4 associate to each workspace. This organization measured the actual utilization of the shared workspace and found that the workspaces were utilized only 37 percent of the time. (Of the 226 shared workspaces only 86 were in use at any given time.) If they were to eliminate the 142 “vacant” spaces, they could achieve a ratio of more than 5 associates to every shared workspace. (Even counting the assigned spaces the ratio would be nearly 3 associates to every workspace.) And, they could save nearly \$1.5 million per year by shedding the unused space. (pg.20)*

### Workplace Allocation Results

*In the 2000s, facility managers in both the Federal government and private sector typically thought they needed 200 to 400 square feet per person to build an effective office workspace. Based on GSA research, today's prevailing standard workspace average is a little more than 190 USF square feet per person, and the space allocation could hit a mere 60 square feet in the next 5 years. (pg.25)*

### Case Studies: Today's Innovative Workplace

*IBM implemented an international rollout of telework and mobile work programs in 1996 – the same work programs are still offered today and mobile work and telework have become a global work arrangement for IBM. To support its mobile work programs, IBM hired a global mobility officer who leads a cross-functional team that works to design specific mobility programs for the company's various regions. When designing programs, the team employs an 80/20 rule, which states that 80 percent of IBM's support standards must be used worldwide, while 20 percent may be adapted to suit the local geography, business unit, and work culture of a specific region. (pg.33)*

*Today, 39 percent of IBM's 300,000-member worldwide staff works in some type of a remote environment and the 4:1 staff-to-desk ratio has been gradually increased to an average of 12:1. (pg.33)*

*Herman Miller Inc., a global provider of office furniture and office design services, currently recommends the following office space allocation measurements for an office that houses 100 to 120 associates (pg.36):*

- *Six private offices, at 120 SF per person*
- *One 200 SF file room*
- *Two to four 50 SF phone rooms*
- *One 150-200 SF break room*
- *Two 36 SF touch down areas*
- *Two 120 SF conference rooms*
- *Two 144 SF conference rooms*
- *One 288 SF conference room*
- *One 200 SF reception area*
- *Two 48 SF collaboration spaces*

*Capital One addresses those and similar issues by launching a needs assessment that examines how work gets done in each unit. Associates are given the option of "going mobile," and about 80 percent choose to do so. They receive six to eight weeks of training on everything from how to be productive while working in virtual teams to how to use new equipment, to how to manage their own piles of paperwork when they no longer have dedicated desks. (Hint: forget hard copies and instead embrace the "paperless office.") (pgs.39-40)*

**Evaluate and determine which other Space Group Action Item(s) it would benefit – 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6 and/or 3.7 – and which other Groups in Fusion Cell it may benefit/assist: 3.2, 3.3, 3.5; Policy Group**