

The Hotel as Office

Excerpt - Benefits and Issues

Becker, F. (1995) *New Placemakers: Unconventional Workplace Providers: The Hotel as Office*. New York: Cornell University International Workplace Studies Program (IWSP).

This study examined an alliance in which a Pacific Bell Directory (California) sales team, by housing all its employees at the same hotel, was given complimentary use of the hotel's conference rooms for the duration of its sales campaign. This new work arrangement provided the opportunity to examine not just the cost benefits of new workplace strategies, but some issues that all organizations attempting to implement new work strategies have been struggling to address, including: social isolation, separation of work from home life; and communication, learning, and cohesiveness among coworkers and teams who do not physically work together.

Comparison of Traditional Versus New Campaign Arrangement	
<i>Traditional Arrangement</i>	<i>New Arrangement</i>
Temporary commercial offices	Apartment/Hotel facility
Office with workstations and equipment	Main office in hotel conference room, representatives' offices in hotel rooms
Previous year's office usually unavailable	High likelihood of securing same location each year
Individual choice of lodging	Lodging in same facility
Multiple reimbursement options allow "taking advantage" of company	Reduced reimbursement options limit "taking advantage" of company

Benefits and Drawbacks of the New Campaign Office Arrangement

<i>Benefits</i>	<i>Drawbacks</i>
More productive use of time, less time wasted	Loss of opportunities for learning
Improved concentration in privacy of own suite	Loss of opportunities for positive sharing and morale building
Ability to avoid being depressed by other sales representatives who may be dissatisfied with their own sales record	Feelings of loneliness and isolation
Ability to avoid other representatives with whom one does not get along	

Savings of New Campaign over Traditional Campaign

	Percent Savings vs. Traditional Campaign	Per Campaign Savings	Savings Across All Out-book Campaigns
First Use of New Approach	21%	\$75,000	\$1.2 million
Later Reuse of Same Facilities-Avoiding One-time Costs	23%	\$87,000	\$1.5 million