

# *Social Connectivity in the Mobile Workplace*

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## ***Excerpt - Questions Guiding the Research***

Becker, F. (1995) Hoteling & Non-Territorial Offices: *Social Connectivity in the Mobile Workplace*. New York: Cornell University International Workplace Studies Program (IWSP)

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The following questions guided the research of the Digital Equipment Corporation, Newmarket UK workplace strategy.

1. What was the effect on face-to-face interactions?
2. What happened to the informal office community?
3. How did employees cope with the loss of social contact?
4. How was organizational learning and sharing conducted?
5. What was the effect on employees' feeling of organizational connectivity and commitment?
6. Were there differences in employees' reactions based upon differences in demographics or job function?

Traditionally, the workplace has been an important source of both social contact and informal on-the-job training. With mobile work, these opportunities decline *in the office*.

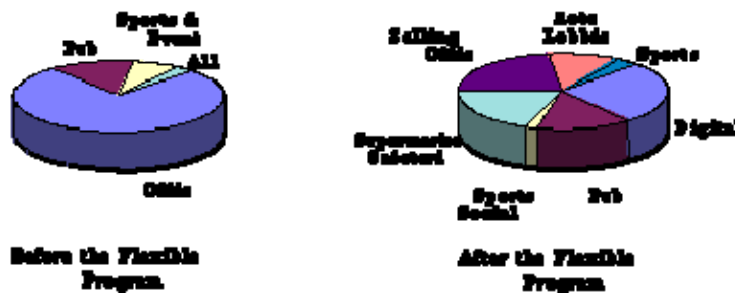
It may be that the community takes on an expanded role as mobile workers seek other nonwork locations for information and contact.

It is possible, for instance, that workers may seek more contact with local businesses for expertise they need (i.e., office-related services such as copying, mailing, videoconferencing). "Smart" communities may even begin to plan for these formal and informal services, providing everything from computer support to professional support groups. Thus the move toward mobile work may revitalize some communities and spur them to develop new businesses and services designed to support mobile workers.



*Potential evolution of business and personal communication.*

Adaptations mobile workers make to cope for reduced social opportunities at the office may work in the same direction. While respondents did not use electronic technologies to cope with the reduction of social opportunities at work, they did actively explore alternatives that included taking up new hobbies and sports that brought them into contact with a different circle of people in their general residential area.



*Places used for socializing greatly increased.*