



LESSONS

FROM 20 YEARS

Insights from Two Decades
of Workplace Transitions



Twenty years of change means
twenty years of listening, learning,
and moving forward together.

Behind every transition is a story of
uncertainty, resilience, and progress.

These lessons capture the moments,
mindsets, and small shifts that made
the biggest difference.



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*Planning with
Purpose*

01.

Success needs to be defined early

**A clear picture of the endpoint
helps teams stay grounded**



Defining the goals for any initiative and clearly outlining what success looks like at the beginning is essential to ensure a common goal for the entire team.

Change is constant, so in addition to defining the vision at the beginning, regular reviews of the original goals are needed to ensure changes are evaluated, agreed upon and clearly defined and communicated.



Suki Reilly
Managing Director

02.

Pilots provide *real-time* feedback

Testing with a smaller group often reveals valuable insights before scaling



Kim Giles
*Senior Workplace
Project Director*

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When introducing a change, whether it's a new workplace behavior or a simple technology upgrade, running a pilot with a small and trusted group is a helpful way to **work out the kinks** ahead of a larger roll out. Adding this step into the project milestones is also a great way to ensure long term success.

03.

Time spent planning is time well spent

**A well-sequenced approach allows for
better agility when priorities shift**

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Taking the time to plan thoroughly really pays off. It's like the saying: **measure ten times, cut once.** I remembered prepping and verifying a large piece of lab equipment, we measured over and over, and on move day, it fit with just an inch or two to spare. That extra planning made all the difference.



Chris Colón
*Workplace Project
Director*

04.



Vanessa Manipon
Managing Director

I love teamwork and see the greatest success when goals are clear and everyone can work together to achieve them.

Transition planning draws on expertise from many disciplines to deliver outcomes that are critical to the organization and employees. By setting expectations and realigning them through the course of projects, we build trust across the teams to ensure and deliver success.

Transitions succeed when expectations are clearly defined

**Everyone moves in the same direction
when roles, timing, and responsibilities
are outlined from the start**

05.



Sarah Speroff
*Workplace Project
Director*

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Anyone who has planned a move during the winter months knows how important this is! Having a backup plan for inclement weather, and making sure everyone is aligned on the back-up plan, can keep everyone's sanity in check.

Contingency planning keeps momentum intact

**Having a backup approach
protects the timeline**

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People
Centricity

06.

Clear communication builds early alignment

**Repeating key
messages across
multiple formats
creates better
understanding**



Lisa Dettore
*Client Engagement
Director*

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In one of my transformation projects, we used the phrase **seven different times, seven different ways** as a reminder that, even within a structured change framework, every employee needs to be considered. It reinforced the importance of delivering key messages repeatedly, in different formats to build understanding and support change adoption across the organization.

07.

Change fatigue can be addressed with *empathy*

**Pacing and acknowledgement
help maintain morale**

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Over the years, I've seen how easily change fatigue can creep in, especially during complex transitions. What has helped most is recognizing that people need time to process, to adapt, to breathe. I've found that when we lead with empathy and manage the pace thoughtfully, teams feel supported and stay engaged.

That human element is what makes transformation sustainable.



Amy Nolf
*Workplace Project
Director*

08.

Everyone processes *change* differently

**Layered engagement creates
room for people to adapt in
their own way**



Not only do you need to use different ways to communicate, it is essential that any programme includes communications AND engagement. By layering in different types of communications and structured engagements you can increase awareness, knowledge and alignment.

Suki Reilly
Managing Director

09.

Familiarization is essential to a smooth transition

**Helping people understand their new
environment reduces confusion and
builds confidence from day one**

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I remember leading a move in New York where one employee had been in the same private office for over 20 years and was understandably nervous about the change. Throughout the planning, I checked in with her regularly and personally walked her to her new office on Day 1. Helping her feel comfortable and supported made all the difference. Moments like that remind me that making people feel at ease is truly one of the most rewarding parts of the job.

Chris Colón
Workplace Project Director

10.

Tools enhance not replace communication

**People still value
authentic conversations**

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Human connection is so important for us when we are working with an organization to plan their successful transition.

We recognize that using multiple channels of communication is essential but ensuring there are two-way engagements activates more participation and understanding. Striking a balance on variety in communication methods and tools helps to bring information to everyone.

Vanessa Manipon
Managing Director

An aerial photograph of Seattle, Washington, showing the city skyline, the Space Needle, and the waterfront. A yellow rectangular box is overlaid on the image, containing text.

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*Enabling
Confident
Delivery*

11.

Flexibility adds strength to the process

**Projects that allow room for adjustment
are more likely to stay on track**

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Every initiative experiences change, whether it be delays, cost constraints or business reorganizations. Every project needs a plan and every plan must be flexible, having the ability to evaluate change and adapt is key to keeping the project moving forward.

Suki Reilly
Managing Director

12.

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Being able to trust the data is essential to reduce risks in making big decisions that can impact people and the organization.

With the level of detail our teams use to plan transitions, we commit the time to make sure data is accurate and quality checked before taking the next steps. I've spent a lot of time down in the details, and the biggest lesson learned from previous projects is to really review your information, fix the gaps and keep that data verified and organized.

Vanessa Manipon
Managing Director

Good data drives smart decisions

Clear and validated information at the start helps create structure and confidence throughout the project

13.

Every project deserves a delivery model that fits

The most effective outcomes come from aligning support to the unique shape and scale of the work



Building custom delivery plans is much like crafting a personalized recipe - choosing the right ingredients in the right proportions to suit the specific needs and context.

Similarly, when developing a project delivery model, we focus on assembling the right mix of stakeholder engagement, tailored communications, data management and detailed reporting. Each element is thoughtfully selected and adjusted to align with the unique requirements of the project and the team.

Kim Giles
*Senior Workplace
Project Director*

14.

Amy Nolff
*Workplace Project
Director*

Accurate tracking isn't just best practice - it saves time and sets projects up for success. Clear labeling, real-time documentation, and regular audits prevent rework, miscommunication, and end-of-project stress. Consistently managing details makes closeouts smooth and predictable, while building confidence in our teams and clients by showing that disciplined execution makes complex projects feel seamless.

Accurate tracking simplifies closeout

**Labeling,
auditing, and
documentation
save time and
reduce rework**

15.

Financial discipline supports operational confidence

**Projects that allow room for adjustment
are more likely to stay on track**

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Specifically when we've been scoped to track the cost of specialty vendors, physical move agent, etc., the project team has been able to see costs coming that perhaps they didn't originally expect, but could then plan for and proactively manage in partnership with us. Having the wherewithal to scope out move budgeting will usually save you a headache at the end of a project.

Sarah Speroff
*Workplace Project
Director*

A black and white photograph of a city skyline, likely New York City, featuring the Chrysler Building and the Statue of Liberty. A piece of torn, aged paper is placed over the center of the image, containing the title and date.

Embedding Culture & Value

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16.

Trusted partners create breathing room

**Internal teams perform best when they
have both support and space to think**



I've always enjoyed working with clients to gain a deeper understanding of the organization's culture, norms and ways of working. It's a privilege to see the inner workings of an organization, and each one is unique.

At the start of projects, we do a lot of listening and learning. Building that relationship as a trusted partner is an accomplishment which allows us to integrate into their team, communicate more effectively and build trust across the organization, leading to more effective and successful projects.

Vanessa Manipon
Managing Director

17.

Every project can reinforce culture

**When aligned to purpose,
change strengthens the team
as well as the space**

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In my experience, workplace projects have the power to shape culture just as much as they shape space. When change is guided by intention and aligned to a clear purpose, teams can feel more seen, supported, and connected.

It isn't only about improving processes or layouts. It is about creating environments that build collaboration, trust, and engagement. Done right, change becomes a tool for cohesion, resilience, and a stronger organization

Amy Nolff
Workplace Project Director

18.

When leaders actively support change and model the desired behaviors, it reinforces expectations, builds trust and encourages employees to follow suit. Their visible commitment helps to reduce resistance and ensures a higher success rate for whatever change is being introduced.

Kim Giles
Senior Workplace Project Director

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Stakeholder buy-in is a *strategic advantage*

**When leadership is aligned,
teams have direction and clarity**

19.

Even *modest change* can benefit from structured change management

A thoughtful approach helps teams adapt to new layouts, expectations, and ways of working



Sometimes the smallest change can be the most disruptive. I recall organizations moving to centralized waste bins or, back in the day, removing personal printers, which were all BIG changes for the individual. Therefore, understanding the 'why' and putting that into a structured program helps aid adoption and successful implementation.

Suki Reilly *Managing Director*

20.

Design only works when it matches how people work

The best spaces support actual workflows and behaviors

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I remember one project where a variety of new soft seating was deployed throughout the space. We quickly observed that the furniture went unused despite the significant investment.

Conversations with staff revealed concerns over how leadership might perceive its use during the workday. To address this, leaders were prompted to lead by example and start holding informal meetings in these areas. Once modeled from the top, staff began to embrace the soft seating as part of their daily work routines, unlocking the intended value of the design.

Lisa Dettore
*Client Engagement
Director*



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