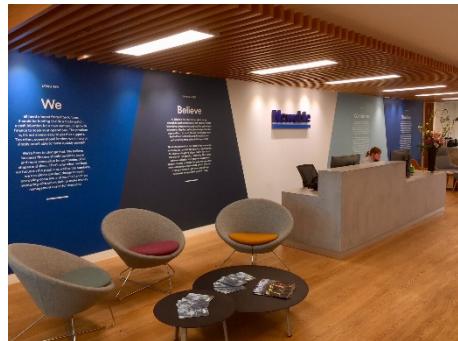


## IMPACT ON ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE

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### Newable – A Brave New Workspace, WhereWeWork Ltd

#### Best Practice Learning Points

- Moving to an open plan office designed around an “activity-based” and free address work model increased team synergy and interaction and also had a significant impact on collaboration and relationship development.
- Staff surveys and workshops before and after the move continuously reviewed and measure responses to the new workplace and the impact on staff and the organisation. All levels of staff were involved in choosing furniture, colours and finishes, and a staff competition was used to name meeting rooms and the coffee shop.
- The new offices have brought existing staff together and attracted new talent while retaining long standing members of the team.
- Significant investment in technology including a multi-functional identity card that operated printing, room booking, access and egress to the building resulted in large increase in staff reporting that office technology was effective.
- Despite concerns about lack of storage space and removal of boxes of files, noone has complained about a lack of personal or departmental storage space.

#### About

Where We Work Ltd was approached by Newable Limited to support them with the logistical planning of their office relocation from Queen Elizabeth Street to a 10,000 square foot office at Barbican in the City of London, and work started on site in January last year.

Newable still had several years left to run on its office leases but the decision was made to relocate to a more modern office environment. It wanted to consolidate its London offices into one location at 140 Aldersgate and close the Dartford, Dockhead and Queen Elizabeth Street offices. It also wanted the relocation to happen within a tight timescale.

In staff polls the working environment had frequently been cited as below standard and unrepresentative of the image Newable wanted to portray.

At its head office in Queen Elizabeth Street, departments rarely collaborated or crossed paths which was having a negative impact on the way staff were communicating, and working conditions were impacting staff morale.

Newable wanted an activity-based working environment to support and future proof its business and improve communications with an open plan free address working style.

The relocation was also an opportunity to improve the visitor experience and reflect the businesses five core values: Dream Big, Get Going, Grow Together, Always Improve and Pass It On.

State of the art IT was also a requirement.

At its new location Newable was planning a completely free address work model with no allocation of a desk for staff, so it became clear that the organisation would also need help with the cultural change that would accompany the move.

Newable was also forecasting significant growth and so needed a workspace that would be able to cope with its projected expansion as well as incorporate new, modern methods of working.

The new space was based on a “hoteling” concept where staff “check in” to each desk space. Following a study commissioned by Newable into how different types of working spaces are used to do different types of work, the layout of the new office was designed to enable these different “modes” of work.

The Newable board’s idea was to have an open and adaptable office that was inviting and collaborative for staff and visitors.

The open plan office was designed around an “activity-based” work style with different work settings to provide natural support for various work activities. Sixty desks were provided for 140 staff with 212 different work settings, including multi-functional spaces with different types of furniture.

Via consultations, all levels of staff were involved in choosing furniture, colours and finishes, and a staff competition was used to name meeting rooms and the coffee shop.

Significant investment was made in cloud and client technology as Newable saw technology as a huge opportunity to support a more agile business.

New laptops were rolled out for all staff along with follow-me confidential printing and universal desktop IT, supported by a multi-functional identity card that operated printing, room booking, access and egress to the building.

Where We Work provided strategic planning for the relocation from the existing three offices, overseeing logistics, development of the new working space, managing budgets, and procuring services.

This included a commercial remover to tackle large practical and operational issues of storage, which was on site to manage the move and clear out the three old offices.

When the group facilities and operations manager was absent from work due to an emergency, Where We Work also had to take over the facilities management for the new building at short notice, including managing deliveries and supplies for the coffee shop, building and fire evacuations with H&S consultants, liaising with landlords and security teams to produce staff passes and setting up the kitchen area.

Where We Work worked with the design and build team to make sure staff had flexibility of work settings, adjustability and mobility.

It also provided change management services to help Newable adapt to new working methods, including free address working, agile working, electronic desk and meeting room booking system.

Staff surveys and workshops were carried before and after the move to continuously review and measure responses to the new workplace and the impact on staff and the organisation. A visit to Hewlett Packard in London where free address working had been implemented was also arranged to deal with questions and concerns about such a working environment.

The move resulted in a successful transition to an improved agile environment, improving team synergy and interaction and also had a significant impact on collaboration and relationship development. The “hoteling” concept has helped removed silos and created new alliances and friendships.

Post move questionnaires found that staff concentration levels had improved while instances of being disturbed were down. The ability to find a quiet space had increased along with the reported effectiveness of technology, along with a 6% increase in the number of days staff spent in the office.

### **The judges said...**

Newable Ltd, which supports small businesses working in partnership with the Department of International Trade, provided an excellent presentation on how to transform the working environment through an office relocation project. As the business expanded, it outgrew the space it occupied and hence engaged Where We Work to plan and deliver an office relocation project which not only lead to the creation of a new vibrant working environment, but also supported a cultural change programme in Newable's business.