

INTRODUCTION

It was not until the early 1960s that the first speculative office buildings were developed in the United States. These buildings opened the door to new forms of office usage. Through World War II and for a decade thereafter, U.S. industry conducted business essentially as it had since the great industrial expansion triggered by the Civil War. A company would bring a basic material, product or service to the market, whether it was steel, an automobile, insurance, banking or a telephone. Once introduced, the product would undergo improvement changes, but rarely was it subjected to explosive technological changes or rapid design and market obsolescence. Beginning in the 1960's, U.S. industry found that products it had been producing and marketing for decades, in essentially the same format, had to be redesigned or replaced with new or revised products. Technology and competition created a new industrial environment. Changes to redesign or replace required the addition of new types of personnel; market and product research, national, regional and local sales groups, project control divisions, etc., often functioning far from the "plant" or "home office." The new offices were also under the stress of change, growth and relocation, usually with the addition of whole new departments dealing with evolving business concepts, equipment and practices.

The construction industry was also moving along a parallel track. Technological advances in construction materials and systems began to have a major impact on the design, construction techniques and costs of new buildings. The evolution of central air-conditioning systems, curtain wall construction and higher speed elevators were among the developments that led to major revisions in office building designs and, in particular, in building floor plate sizes, building heights and floor-to-floor heights. The new, expanded floor plates generated new core-wall to exterior glass-line distances and changed the way floor space utilization was viewed. The development and acceptance of systems furniture, suspended (plenum) ceilings, and fluorescent lighting troffers, and the use of carpeting instead of floor tile propelled space utilization toward revolutionary solutions.

With the creation of these new buildings, a small group of architectural firms began to experiment with the concept of space programming: the analysis and definition of specific workstation and department requirements, and circulation around and to them. Special areas were being specified and added, such as conference and training rooms, food service, storage and copy centers. A recognition grew that all of these many space needs had to be

defined, assessed and documented, and each space evaluated as to its specific anticipated growth needs. What became apparent to these architects was the need for a process, a system, a program, with standards and appropriate definitions of today's requirements by which their clients could forecast tomorrow's needs. Through experimentation and a great deal of creative work, a few leaders in the interior design community began to develop the concept of defining space needs by converting individual workers' space requirements into standardized *workstations*, that went beyond mere desks. These workstation definitions were grouped into functioning departments. The departments were placed in adjacency patterns for efficient communication with other departments and facility elements, with each department having its unique forecast of present and future space needs. The evolving results were programs that translated into logical and responsive space plans, design and construction documents. These assisted the client in changing and growing without major department interruption or dislocation.

While there are now a sizable number of architectural and design firms capable of providing quality space planning, it is not always clear to the user who is really qualified and who is not. Even the most qualified design firms can produce a quality product for their client only if the client has a clear understanding of its own role in the process, what information must be conveyed to the planner, and how the planner should use that information.

This book will prepare the user for effective participation in the space planning and development process by explaining how the process works, including some of the planning and design conflicts that inevitably arise. Most importantly, the book provides the user with easy-to-follow guidelines for dealing with the process and any conflicts. The book is an attempt to pull together various processes, formats, and material which have been used over and over in producing successful office facilities. We have tried to direct the user in establishing and maintaining controls over the project through the use of detailed programs, criteria, studies, budgets, and critical dates schedules, together with information on some of the more important systems, materials and furnishings to be specified and purchased. The user may find differences between the processes contained in this book and some actual experiences, but all of the critical functions described herein will have to be dealt with.

It is logical and economically desirable to use as little space as possible for a facility. It is also logical and desirable to develop a facility which will permit reasonable expansion in the specific areas where expansion is anticipated, rather than merely taking an option on a piece of space next door and planning on expanding into it... someday. This latter form of expansion is a "growing like Topsy" process which will result in poor adjacencies, poor department organization, poor communication and a great deal of unnecessary department reshuffling at great long term expense.

Even though many architectural firms today are very good at office facilities planning, one should not assume that consultants are totally knowledgeable or fully understand the needs of a facility. Facility managers must do their own research, and ask questions. The designer does not know how to conduct your business. You do. This is to be your facility, not the designer's. There are hundreds if not thousands of decisions which must be made by someone. Often, some of those decisions are made by people who are not qualified. Mistakes or omissions go unrecognized because they were papered over with corrective solutions or went completely unrecognized out of ignorance, until well after move-in, when corrective action is both costly and disruptive, assuming a correction is ever made.

Developing a major office facility is a major undertaking, by-in-large thankless. If it goes well, everyone will take the results for granted, with the designer probably receiving the credit. If the job does not go well, the responsible coordinator or facilities manager will take the heat.

This book is designed to help facilities professionals to better understand some of the questions to be asked and to prepare them to develop sound answers. Use the book as a tool. Add to it. Modify its contents to suit your particular and changing needs. Our pride of authorship will be in your ability to understand and use the processes; to modify and to improve upon its contents.