

Change management through spatial design

Applying workplace strategy to
healthcare transformation

Speakers: Susan Chang, Ian McDermott



Speakers



Susan Chang
Executive Vice President,
Workplace Design Advisory

Susan has 30+ years of experience working on and leading teams on multi-faceted, complex projects as a proven leader, designer, planner, facilitator, and strategist. Susan's large portfolio of diverse projects covers an expertise in healthcare programming, planning, and design as well as a broad range of other sectors including post-secondary, corporate workplace, institutional, and hospitality.



Ian McDermott
Vice President, Facilities
and Capital Development

Ian is the Vice President, Facilities and Capital Development for Sinai Health in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. Ian started working with Sinai Health in January 2025 and is excited to help drive forward Sinai Health's new Master Plan. Previously, Ian spent 27 years with the University Health Network in Toronto, finishing his tenure there as the Chief Planning Officer and Executive Director, Redevelopment.

Spatial design defines how a space should work, but Change Management ensures people use it in the intended way. When combined, you have a space that is both well designed and well used.

How CM supports spatial design:



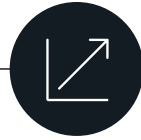
Reduces resistance to new spaces



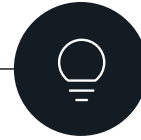
Actively engages users in the decision making process, thereby engages buy-in to change



Prepares people for new ways of working



Improves adoption and ROI



Incorporates user feedback into design



Assists with the emotional adjustment

Spatial design shapes the environment and Change Management shapes the people using it.

Scenario 1: The fragmented campus crisis

Metro Regional Health Authority – Anywhere Canada



Key problems:

- 7 aging buildings
- 45 minutes daily (staff navigation time)
- 40% utilization (underutilized buildings)
- 3,500 staff members

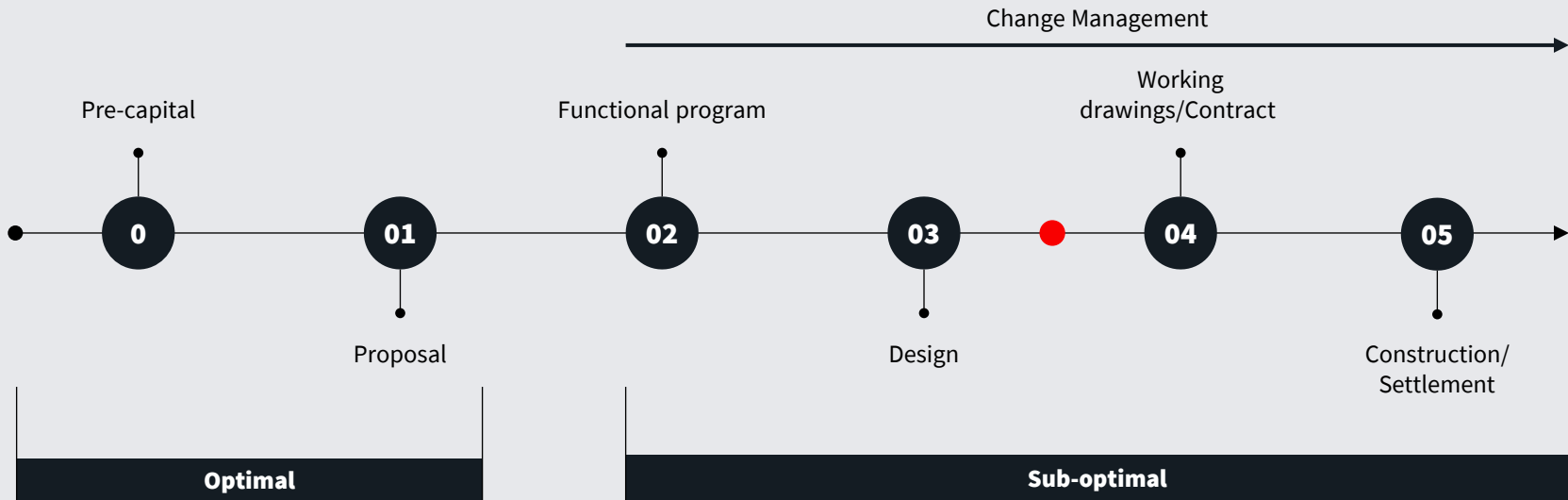


The challenge:

How do you create a cohesive workplace strategy that gains buy-in across siloed departments while managing the complex change journey of 3,500 staff members?

The critical timing for workplace strategy

Stages of project planning



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The proactive advantage

- When healthcare executives begin workplace strategy early, they gain strategic advantages
- Alignment from the outset—physical space decisions align with broader transformation objectives before costly, difficult-to-change commitments are made

Proactive vs. reactive:

Enable strategic spatial choices that directly support:



Care delivery evolution

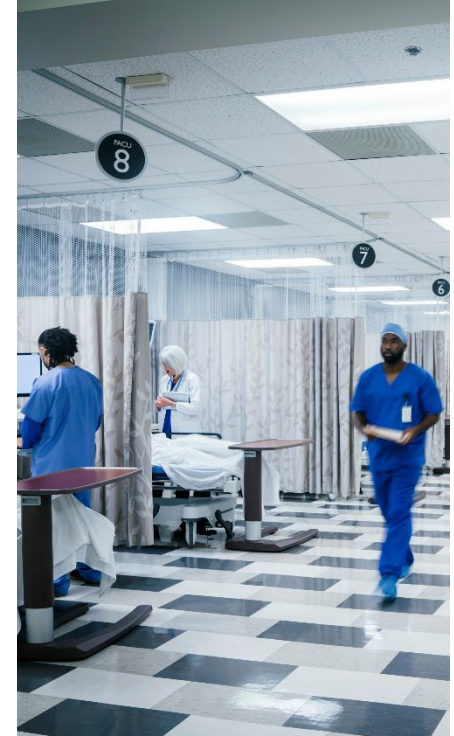


Technology integration



Operational excellence

...rather than forcing adaptation to predetermined environments



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Addressing the Physician Change Management Challenge



The challenge:

- Physicians resist mandated changes from executives
- Culture of independence requires specialized approach

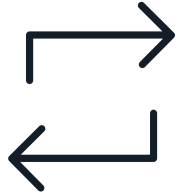


The solution:

- Actively engage physicians in ideating and developing solutions
- Respect autonomy while building collaborative ownership



Spatial design offers powerful tools for physician engagement



Environmental changes

These can demonstrate clear operational benefits vs. imposed administrative requirements



Advocates for transformation

When physicians experience thoughtfully designed spaces that improve their efficiency, reduce administrative burden and enhance patient interactions



University Health Network (UHN)

UHN aims to **establish foundational solutions for its physician workspaces** that balance equity, transparency, and operational needs while enhancing the workplace experience and supporting UHN's culture.

Comprehensive Change Management strategy: Physician workspace optimization



**Coordinated
stakeholder engagement**



**Clear communication
throughout
implementation**



**Systematic support and
feedback integration**



**Measurement of adoption
and outcomes**

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Change Management strategy

Physician workspace optimization

Critical success factor:

Without structured Change Management, even well-designed initiatives face significant adoption barriers and reduced effectiveness.

Stakeholder engagement strategy:

Identify physician leaders, department heads, and champions

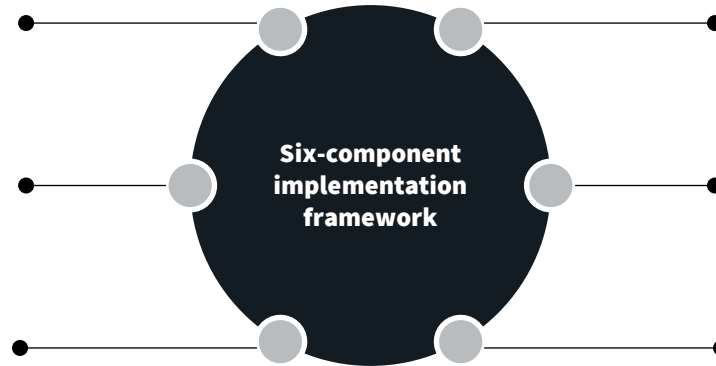
Communication plan:

Consistent messaging on benefits, timelines, and expectations

Proof-of-Concept program:

Test implementations before full rollout

Launch immediately: Dedicated Project Management resources required



Training and support systems:

Resources, workshops, and ongoing assistance

Feedback integration process:

Regular check-ins, surveys, and adjustment mechanisms

Success metrics and recognition:

Track adoption rates, satisfaction scores, and efficiency gains



Sinai Health

Sinai Health is looking to find **equitable solutions for physician workspaces** to allow for growth while supporting organizational and staff needs.



The issues facing UHN and the physician engagement and change in space management is the same at Sinai Health (and by extension through my colleagues) the same across most hospitals. The demand for space (not need) is greater than the available space.

George Brown Polytechnic case study



George Brown Polytechnic

A case study: The physical environment as a catalyst for organizational change

George Brown Polytechnic case study

The challenge:

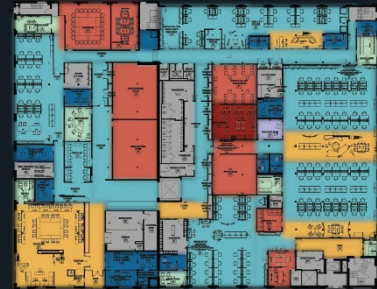
GBP's 2022 pilot was underperforming:

- Low utilization despite significant investment
- Noise complaints and workplace distractions
- Incompatible activities positioned adjacently
- RTO goals unmet with employees choosing not to make the commute to the office

JLL's brief

- Understand how the organization actually works
- Create profiles and neighborhoods for diverse work styles
- Develop new space typologies
- Establish performance metrics

GBP FoW pilot:



Workplace strategy and Change Management:

Our approach

Floor plan diagnostic

Mapped the floor's natural vibrancy profile – identifying inherent high and low-vibrancy zones based on circulation, daylight, and spatial qualities

1

Work modality mapping

Analyzed vibrancy levels of furniture types:

- Workstations → Low vibrancy (concentrate)
- Work cafes → High vibrancy (celebration)

2

Strategic alignment

Matched work modalities to appropriate vibrancy zones. Where incongruent, designed intentional transition zones with acoustic solutions

3

Color-coded wayfinding

Implemented furniture color-coding to create visual feedback loop for appropriate space usage

4

George Brown Polytechnic case study

Color-coded wayfinding uses color, furniture, and lighting as visual cues to communicate appropriate work modality and vibrancy.



Contemplate/Concentrate Collaborate/Connect Cultivate/Celebrate



George Brown Polytechnic case study



Forest

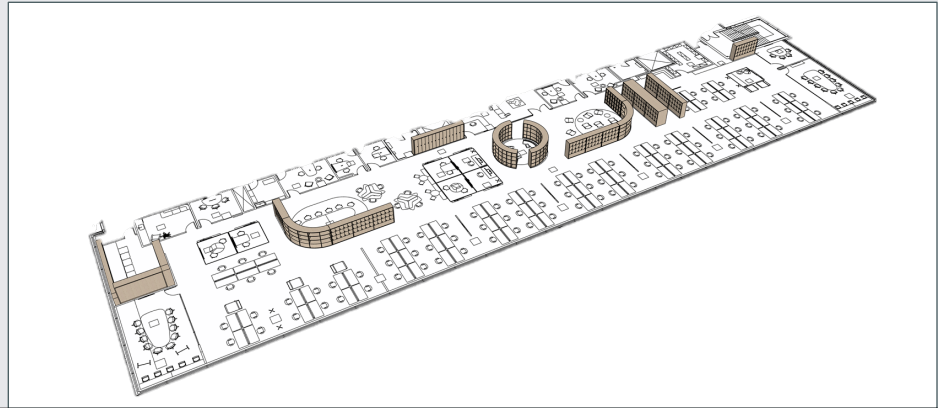


Hearth



Drop-in space

Discreetly integrated into custom millwork, assigned lockers provide staff with secure **personal storage**. Strategically placed, the locker banks demise workspaces and provide opportunities for spontaneous conversation, and double as a **vibrant gallery** for displaying and celebrating student work.



Workplace strategy and Change Management



Vibrancy-aligned neighborhoods

Low-vibrancy zones

Focus neighborhoods

- Private offices, focus rooms, individual workstations
- Cool color palette (blues, greens)

High-vibrancy zones

Collaborate and connect neighborhoods

- Team spaces, work cafes, social areas
- Warm color palette (oranges, yellows)

Design features

- Strategic acoustic treatments at friction points
- Color-coded furniture system for intuitive wayfinding
- Space types matched to zone vibrancy

George Brown Polytechnic case study

Post-occupancy evaluation key findings:



Users of the space appreciate

The evaluation reveals strong positive reception across multiple design elements:

- **Natural light**
- **Waterfront views**
- **Modern aesthetic**
- **Adjustable height desks**
- **Student co-creation rooms**



Lessons learned

The evaluation identified a critical success factor for workplace transformation:

Change Management is crucial in adopting new ways of work.



Key insight

Technical design solutions alone are insufficient. Successful workplace transformation requires:

01 Ongoing communication and reinforcement

02 User education on space functionality

03 Clear behavioral expectations and protocols

04 Continuous coaching to support adoption



Strategic spatial planning accelerates change

Strategic spatial planning creates environments that naturally support:



New workflows



Clinician's desire for visual connectivity with their peers



Collaborative practices







- **Case study evidence illustrates:** Thoughtful space design eliminates traditional barriers to change adoption
- **The result:** Transformation feels intuitive rather than imposed

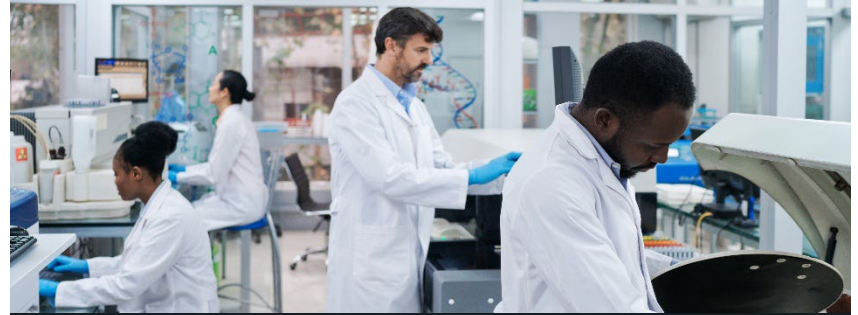
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Change Management approaches







Change strategies:

-  Embed Change Management throughout implementation
-  Engage and physician employee working groups
-  Maintain operational efficiencies with low to no downtime
-  Clear communication campaigns with education to help employees understand the 'why'



Specific design interventions successfully support:

-  Technology integration
-  Improved interdisciplinary collaboration
-  Enhanced patient experience
-  Maintained regulatory compliance throughout transition periods

Measurement frameworks

Measurement frameworks demonstrate quantifiable impact of spatial change initiatives:



Operational performance

Efficiency and workflow improvement metrics



Staff and physician satisfaction

Engagement and retention data



Patient outcomes

Experience and satisfaction scores



These metrics provide:



Evidence base needed to secure organizational buy-in



Justification for continued investment in workplace strategy initiatives



An understanding of what is working well and opportunities to adjust

Actionable methodologies

Healthcare leaders can immediately apply these methodologies:

01

Spatial needs assessments

Structured approaches for conducting evaluations and identifying transformation requirements

02

Stakeholder engagement

Frameworks for engaging diverse stakeholder groups across the organization

03

Change Management integration

Strategies that leverage physical environment modifications to support broader organizational goals

You leave with practical tools ready for implementation



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Sequencing for success



How to sequence spatial changes to:

- Maximize positive impact
- Minimize disruption to care delivery



The implementation approach includes:

- Communication strategies
- Training protocols
- Feedback mechanisms



- These ensure successful adoption of new spatial configurations
- **Critical for healthcare:** Maintaining operational continuity throughout transition

Q&A



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