



Describing implementation lessons from early rollout of federal coworking

What is the GSA priority?

The General Services Administration (GSA) launched Workplace 2030 (WP2030) to lead and support the federal government through developing the future of work. GSA develops and deploys customer-driven solutions to enable agencies to align people, processes, and tools. It is important to assess demand for these solutions and determine process and operations for future investments and implementation rollout. This work allows us to make progress in addressing GSA's Learning Agenda priority question: *What technologies and solutions does the federal workforce need to additionally improve effectiveness in a more responsive remote work setting?*

What did we evaluate?

Federal coworking, a WP2030 offering aims to provide federal agencies with a shared, flexible federal work environment in multiple GSA owned locations throughout the country. Federal coworking has three phases of implementation: pre-agile, agile, and developmental. During the agile phase, the program recruited regional client decision-makers (e.g., planning managers, client executives) to visit and work within federal coworking trial spaces.

We collaborated with the Public Buildings Service (PBS) program team during the agile phase to assess demand, space requirements, and identify pilot sites for the next implementation phase.

How did the evaluation work?

The sample for this descriptive study was regional customer decision-makers (e.g., planning managers and customer executives at customer agencies).

We developed surveys to collect customer feedback both before (initial survey) and after (post-survey) touring and/or working at federal coworking sites. PBS regional points of contact (RPOCs) administered surveys to customer agency decision-makers given their ongoing relationships with the sample.

Given low survey response rates, we do not report findings as they are limited and not generalizable. Instead, this study served to pilot the effectiveness of data collection instruments and logistics and further develop data management and strategy processes.

What did we learn?

We learned three key implementation lessons related to process and operations to inform data collection, data management, and communications in the subsequent developmental phase of federal coworking implementation.

First, it is important for the program team and evaluation team to agree on the complete list of all individuals within the population of interest, *prior* to data collection. By determining this in advance, both the program and evaluation team can agree on an acceptable sample size needed

to produce actionable findings and better monitor progress towards the target. This planning would allow for more in-flight adjustments to improve data quality and generate strong findings.

Second, centralized communication is important to 1) ensure consistent messaging so that all customers have a common understanding of the program and the importance of data collection; and 2) accurately document customer outreach so that we can better understand customers who respond to our data collection efforts and those who do not. RPOCs were selected to share information about the program and distribute surveys because of their ongoing relationships with customers. Although this method of decentralized communication aligns with normal business practices, it makes it difficult to ensure transparency around what is being communicated and to whom.

Third, integrating automation into data collection and reporting is key to providing real-time feedback mechanisms for program evaluation and improvement. The rollout of the initial survey required manual, daily updating from the project team to inform RPOCs who had responded to the pre-visit survey to prevent sending new requests to customers who already completed the task. This process was laborious for the project team and not sustainable for scaled implementation. It was also challenging for RPOCs who wanted real-time visibility into which of their customers had completed the surveys.

data visibility which will support stronger data collection and analysis.

What do we recommend?

We recommend that the next phase of federal coworking move to centralized communication and survey distribution, and develop automated reporting for increased