

Corvelle Service Offering – Employee Mobility

Corvelle successfully led an Employee Mobility project for a major Canadian oil & gas producer.

Description

Employee Mobility is also known by other terms including telecommuting, e-commuting, e-work, telework, or working from home (WFH). Employee Mobility is a work arrangement in which employees enjoy additional flexibility in work location and work hours.

The key features of Employee Mobility are the:

1. Encouragement of distributed collaboration and remote work.
2. Blurring of the distinction between work time and personal time.
3. More widespread use of communications technology and software to conduct work.
4. Partial replacement of daily commutes, to a central work place, with remote work.

Business Value

Operating an Employee Mobility program in the oil & gas industry achieves business value through:

1. **Increased productivity:** Paradoxically, employees typically end up working more hours per week under an Employee Mobility program as the employee and oil & gas producer split the commute time savings. This is a win-win, because the employee achieves better work/life balance and the oil & gas producer receives more work.
2. **Reduced cycle times:** Immediate access to other employees and key business partners under an Employee Mobility program reduces cycle times to complete work. This compression can have a significant impact in reducing time-to-startup on major oil & gas capital projects. This compression reduces costs and improves project economics.
3. **Enhanced attraction and retention:** With an Employee Mobility program, employee satisfaction increases and employee turnover decreases as employees come to appreciate the value of work flexibility. This reduces the costs and delays associated with recruiting and orientation for oil & gas producers in the hot market for talent. This also makes recruiting easier as word of its desirability spreads.

Corvelle Drives Concepts To Completion

4. **Reduced travel:** Travel is expensive and undermines productivity. Travel is inescapable in the oil & gas industry. When an Employee Mobility program includes an improved collaboration capability, it reduces the frequency of travel and reduces associated costs.
5. **Lower real estate costs:** With some oil & gas employees working from remote locations, such as home offices, business partner sites and field offices, central office space and related office costs can be reduced through an Employee Mobility program. This reduces the impact of rapidly rising occupancy costs in the oil & gas industry.
6. **Reduced environmental footprint:** Employee Mobility programs reduce commuting activity. This reduces the impact on the environment by reducing energy consumption, greenhouse gases and air pollution. With the environmental groups highlighting the environmental impacts of the oil & gas industry, the presence of Employee Mobility programs allows oil & gas producers to demonstrate additional environmental sensitivity.

Audience

Building an understanding of Employee Mobility programs will typically interest oil & gas professionals in the following areas:

1. Teams needing to collaborate across several disciplines to complete projects.
2. Teams working in geographically remote areas.
3. Management concerned about:
 - Employee attraction; particularly the younger generation of technology-savvy new graduates.
 - Employee retention in a hot market for talent.
 - Rising real estate occupancy costs.

Business Drivers

Momentum is growing within the Canadian oil & gas industry to operate Employee Mobility programs in order to:

1. Address the needs of large, complex projects, such as tar sands, SAGD and CBM, which require inter-disciplinary interaction to achieve success.
2. Effectively execute projects in geographically remote areas such as offshore Africa or Russia.
3. Respond to employee requests for improved work/life balance and reduced commute times in view of Calgary's increasing traffic congestion.
4. Respond to the competition for talent by creating a more appealing work place.
5. Contain rising real estate occupancy costs in Calgary's rapidly rising market.
6. Enhance business continuity by decentralizing work when necessary to respond to threats including influenza pandemic and the risk of electrical disruption.

Technology Advances

Employee Mobility programs are more feasible, at an acceptable cost, than ever before through the following technology advances:

1. Near ubiquitous access to high-speed Internet through wired Ethernet, wireless WiFi or wireless cell.
2. Cheaper, more capable laptops.
3. A rich selection of software to support distributed collaboration.
4. Widespread use of PDA's; most with wireless access to the Internet.
5. Increasing availability of Voice over Internet Protocol (VOIP).
6. Easy-to-use Virtual Private Network (VPN) software to maintain secure access to sensitive data.
7. Improved integration between voice and data communication.
8. Maturity of software, like Citrix, that enables thin-client, remote access to corporate applications.
9. Increasing functionality to support remote access to enterprise software.

The emergence of service providers in the following areas have also simplified the implementation and reduced the operating costs of Employee Mobility programs:

Service Description	Example Service Providers
Hosting of project workspaces	SharePoint hosting eRoom hosting
Global remote access networks that enables connectivity to the Internet, email and corporate networks	iPass
Hosting of on-demand or dedicated audio and video teleconferencing	Telco's Independent service providers
Hosting of on-demand or dedicated data teleconferencing	Cisco Webex Microsoft LCS 2005
Full function remote office providers	SuiteWorks
Satellite communication for remote locations	Quick Link Communications Westco Communications

Typical Scope

The typical project scope of an Employee Mobility program for an oil & gas company includes the following components:

1. People & Performance
2. Tools & Technology
3. Work Design & Processes
4. Work Environment

People & Performance

The People & Performance aspect of an Employee Mobility program addresses:

1. The culture and policies of the oil & gas producer. For example, culture will adapt to encompass etiquette for remote collaboration.

2. Performance, development, wellness. For example, performance review will include evaluation of work products produced away from the central office.

Tools & Technology

The Tools & Technology aspect of an Employee Mobility program addresses:

1. Computing infrastructure, hardware, software, network, connectivity. For example, the computing infrastructure will have the capacity to support the demands of real-time collaboration.
2. Business applications, collaboration tools. For example, the introduction or widened use of SmartBoards.
3. Data security. For example, data security will be achieved through encryption

Work Design & Processes

The Work Design & Processes aspect of an Employee Mobility program addresses:

1. Work flow, business processes. For example, work flow will need to avoid use of paper in favor of pervasive use of electronic documents.
2. Responsibilities, practices. For example, practices will include a more deliverable-oriented, as opposed to activity-oriented approach to work.

Work Environment

The Work Environment aspect of an Employee Mobility program addresses:

1. Workspace considerations, architectural design, physical layout. For example, work space design will take on added importance to ensure that appeal is not undermined as density is increased.
2. Business continuity management. For example, pandemic planning, disaster recovery.

Approach to implementing an Employee Mobility program

An effective approach to implementing an Employee Mobility program at an oil & gas company is to define and execute the following phases:

Project Initiation

1. Define objectives and detailed scope
2. Develop initial project plan
3. Collect oil & gas company characterization and workforce data
4. Assess oil & gas company readiness typically through interviews of employee groups through out the company
5. Delineate oil & gas company value proposition
6. Conduct manager briefings

Plan

1. Delineate Employee Mobility project vision & strategy including business intent and key success factors
2. Produce a preliminary project plan

- confirm detailed scope
 - estimate resources, timelines and costs
 - confirm benefits
3. Design required business process changes
 4. Develop the communication plan

Design

1. Complete detailed design specification to define Employee Mobility project work environment features
2. Conduct current state gap assessment
3. Define measurement plan for key success factors
4. Delineate functional specifications
5. Develop Employee Mobility migration plan
6. Select initial employee groups for the Pilot
7. Produce a detailed project plan
 - confirm detailed scope
 - estimate resources, timelines and costs
 - confirm benefits

Pilot

1. Roll-out Employee Mobility program to Pilot employee groups
2. Create and communicate shared vision, create sense of urgency
3. Monitor, support and evaluate Pilot employee groups
4. Test required business process changes
5. Refine Employee Mobility project vision & strategy
6. Build implementation strategy
7. Produce a higher-confidence project plan
 - confirm detailed scope
 - re-estimate resources, timelines and costs
 - confirm benefits

Implement

1. Roll-out Employee Mobility program to in-scope employee groups
2. Monitor, support and evaluate employee groups
3. Communicate shared vision, create sense of urgency, manage stakeholder, engage resistance

Program Management

1. Define sustainment processes for the Employee Mobility program
2. Acquire & orient staff who will execute the sustainment processes

Project Management

1. Project planning
2. Status management

3. Issues management
4. Risk management / mitigation

Project Closure

1. Complete final deliverables review
2. Transition from project to Employee Mobility program

For oil & gas companies that wish to confirm the value of implementing an Employee Mobility program, performing the initial phases only will provide a useful perspective on this question.

Employee Mobility program implementation critical success factors

1. Implementing a change management component to assist all levels of employees make the transition from the current approach to work to the nature of work that an Employee Mobility program introduces.
2. Operating sufficient computing infrastructure and telecommunications capacity.
3. Making the technology as easy-to-use as possible.
4. Implementing sufficient security without security undermining ease-of-use or performance.
5. Designing open-space offices with sufficient attention to ergonomics and with sufficient meeting spaces.
6. Implementing asset management for remote assets that tracks assets while not becoming an administrative burden.

Employee Mobility program implementation barriers

1. Need for middle management engagement and endorsement of the changes to the nature of work that an Employee Mobility program introduces.
2. Varying degrees of interest in the Employee Mobility program based largely on the technology sophistication of the employee.
3. Awareness that an Employee Mobility program is complex and requires cross-functional participation.
4. Tendency to underestimate time and resources required for Employee Mobility program implementation.
5. Absence of the following items will reduce the quality of the remote work experience and therefore the benefits of an Employee Mobility program:
 - A robust IT infrastructure.
 - A Content Management System (CMS) such as LiveLink or Documentum.
6. Work characteristics, which preclude effective participation in an Employee Mobility program, creating employee disappointment.

Technology considerations such as software license cost or lack of software or service robustness and reliability are not generally seen as Employee Mobility implementation barriers.