

Measure What Matters

If you can't measure it,
you can't improve it

In the middle of the last century, Peter Drucker famously stated, "If you can't measure it, you can't improve it". While that original statement is still completely valid today, a more recent statement from Billy Beane 1 - "The idea that you can create a template that will work forever doesn't happen in any business," - needs to be considered as well. Or to put it more simply - measurement is required to make improvement, but what is specifically measured will likely change. In relation to workplace analytics, this is definitely the case.

We've all been using the same supply management metrics - SF/person, cost/SF, cost/person - to measure the relative effectiveness of the workplace; these metrics are still very relevant and important. And we all know what actions will impact these metrics - reduce workstation typicals from 8' x 8' to 6' x 6' and your SF/person will be reduced by ~44%. But as the workplace continues to evolve - supporting a more diverse workforce, new ways of working, changing technology, and a rapidly evolving business environment - new 'demand management' metrics also need to be considered to fully understand the effectiveness of the workplace.



Allsteel groups these new demand management workplace metrics into two categories:

1. Workplace User Experience Metrics that focus on how users perceive and use the workspace.
2. User and Team Effectiveness Metrics that focus on the performance of users and teams themselves.

These new metrics are not yet universally understood and applied; workplace professionals are still collaborating to define when these metrics should be used and what actions should be considered based on the analysis of the metrics data. And because these metrics focus on human perceptions and behaviors, it is possible they won't be as static as the supply management metrics we've all used to date. And any actions taken or changes made based on the metrics data may not be consistent from organization to organization – there is a correlation between these actions and changes in the metrics, not a direct causation. If you provide STS desks for all employees, employee wellness will likely improve, although it is not possible to say specifically by how much.

Business leaders are used to metrics that show causation – like the workplace supply management metrics we've been using. Because these new metrics indicate causation, it can be difficult for senior leaders to accept their validity.



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