

## Workplace Factors - A Case Study Example

Jessica is an IT professional for the ABC Company and is responsible for supporting Web-based applications development. She works on three virtual teams that are commissioned to develop applications for finance, marketing, and procurement. Her organization has a chargeback system that allocates Jessica's time and overhead to each of her three projects. She manages and reports her time each week through a professional services administrative application. She is targeted to maintain 80 percent productive time (billable) relative to a total workweek of 40 hours. Thus, Jessica's performance is measured by meeting project milestones within prescribed time parameters. Her organization has adopted many of the workplace infrastructure, tools, and settings we have discussed, and thus, she can manage her time effectively.



Because of the workplace flexibility policy, Jessica can choose from a variety of locations to complete her work assignments. By eliminating the daily commute to the company headquarters two or three days a week, Jessica has maximum productive time to work on project deliverables (without the interruptions in the office). Most administrative tasks, such as time and expense reporting, are Web-based and self-service, eliminating the time needed to coordinate these activities with administrative staff. A 24x7 help desk keeps her online and productive. If necessary, she can trade her laptop

for a loaner while her computer is in for repair. Her research time is made more efficient by using the enterprise knowledge management system to retrieve programming information, patches, objects, and other archived development data that relate to her projects. If she needs assistance, she can scan the enterprise skills database to locate colleagues who can help her resolve a specific problem.

Jessica's teams meet regularly via a Web-hosted meeting application. She exchanges information, brainstorms with colleagues, and solves problems, documenting team progress and deliverables in the virtual workspace repository. No longer are the teams constrained by face-to-face meetings and the logistics of getting people together. She uses a number of workflow and project management tools that support the applications development process from needs definition, design, prototyping, programming, testing, and deployment.



Jessica estimates that she is now 30 percent more productive than she was while working for her previous employer, which did not use these workplace support tools, services, and settings. In terms of time, Jessica can deliver 30 percent more value within a given time period compared to her previous work environment. This translates into higher employee use, faster throughput, and higher realization of the total resources deployed. This value is encapsulated in the work product delivered (specification) and its associated cost (time and overhead). If Jessica were a member of a professional services enterprise, she would be reporting 80 percent realization on billable time, an excellent result in the professional services business.

## **Building value**

People create, deliver, and sustain value for the enterprise. A key aspect of value creation and delivery is maximizing the employee's productive time. The workplace can be made liberating, simplified, agile, navigable, and adaptive to leverage employees' most precious resource, their time. To do otherwise diminishes performance and, ultimately, the value of the enterprise.