

***I~Work Document: 7\_2***

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**Minutes of the NDA Meeting on 15 January 2007**

***Core network meeting, Staple Inn, London, 10.00 – 17.00 hours***

**Present**

Jo-Anne Bichard & Jeremy Myerson, RCA

Terry Dickerson & Pat Langdon, University of Cambridge

Julian Williamson, HSL

Peter Buckle, University of Surrey

James Lloyd, ILC-UK

Beate Baldauf, Robert Lindley, Imanol Nunez & Kerry Platman, University of Warwick

**Apologies:**

John Clarkson, University of Cambridge

Roxane Gervais, HSL

Amanda Griffiths, Nottingham

This document should be read in conjunction with Kerry Platman's document on key decisions & action points (I~Work document 6-2) circulated earlier.

Since her extensive document covers all agenda items in detail, except the discussion on the conceptual grid, it seems sensible to focus on the latter. The aim of the discussion was primarily to amend the conceptual grid in terms of its constituent parts and in terms of possible cross-cutting themes. The results of the four working groups, which were formed on the basis of institutional membership, are presented in turn.

**Working group 1 (J. Bichard & J. Myerson, RCA)**

The conceptual grid was applied to an existing project and to two project ideas, with perhaps the first of those two tying in expertise from a number of core members. The conceptual ideas are captured in Figures 1 to 3.

**Working group 2 (J. Williamson, HSL; P. Buckle, UoS; J. Lloyd, ILC-UK)**

The discussions in this group focused more on understanding the individual behaviour. For this purpose, the conceptual grid was felt to be of less immediate use. Instead more inspiration was felt to be drawn from Moray's conceptual grid (see annex).

Cross-cutting themes for research were outlined as follows:

- Investigation of the trade offs between age groups to maintain performance (can they be facilitated/increased without this resulting in rising stress levels?)

Figure 1: Conceptual grid applied to an existing project entitled Welcoming Workplace

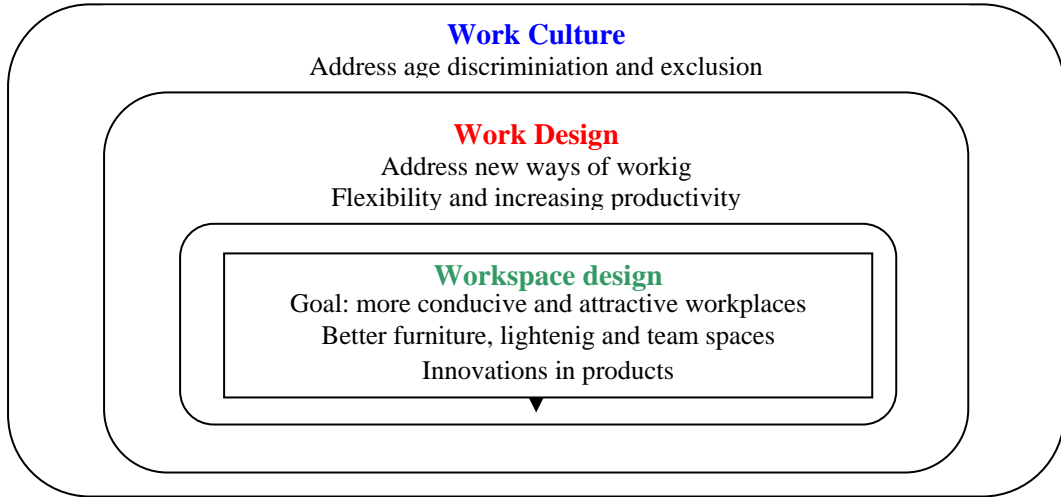


Figure 2: Conceptual grid applied to project idea 1

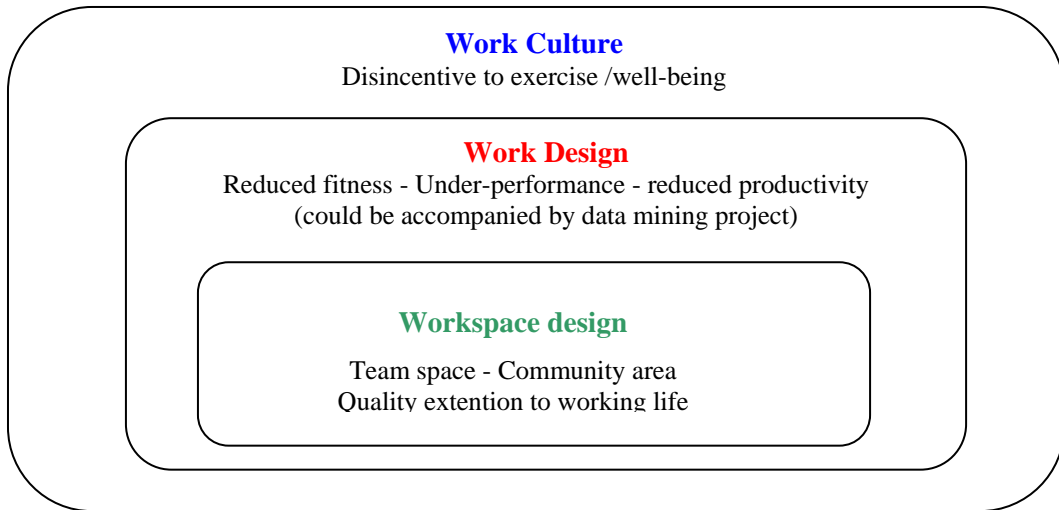
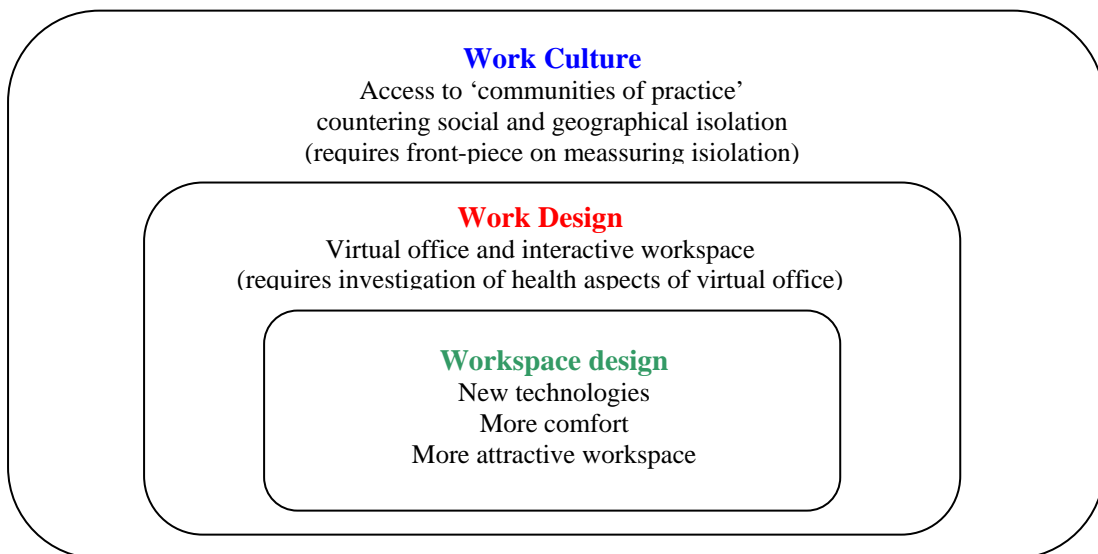


Figure 3: Conceptual grid applied to project idea 2 (possible joint project with Pat Langdon)



- Development of indicators for a more positive work environment based on a workplace audit. This can then be used to address emerging deficits (including those relating to values and culture). Intergenerational co-operation, transfer of knowledge and learning and the physical working environment are examples of what should also be considered in this context.
- Cost-benefit measures of training (What is the training cost itself? How much is it going to cost to implement? What is the cost benefit of the training?)

**Working Group 3** (T. Dickerson & P. Langdon, University of Cambridge)

Although helpful, the conceptual grid was thought to lack in dynamic in terms of 'closing the loop' and it does not include the worker.

The cross-cutting themes emerging from this group were as follows:

- How does culture motivate people to continue working? Is there a psychology or work? What does work mean for different people?
- Cost-benefit analysis of training
- Social re-engineering of work from a theoretical perspective: e.g. building work into local communities rather than requiring its inhabitants to commute. However, this particular example was discussed controversially. Existing experiments have been abandoned and there were also queries about the impact on the economy
- Compilation of a data base to help match functional demands/restrictions of products and individual capabilities

**Working Group 4:** (B. Baldauf, R. Lindley and I. Nunez, University of Warwick)

It was felt that the conceptual grid should be extended to include socio-economic regimes and the actors.

Cross-cutting themes discussed included:

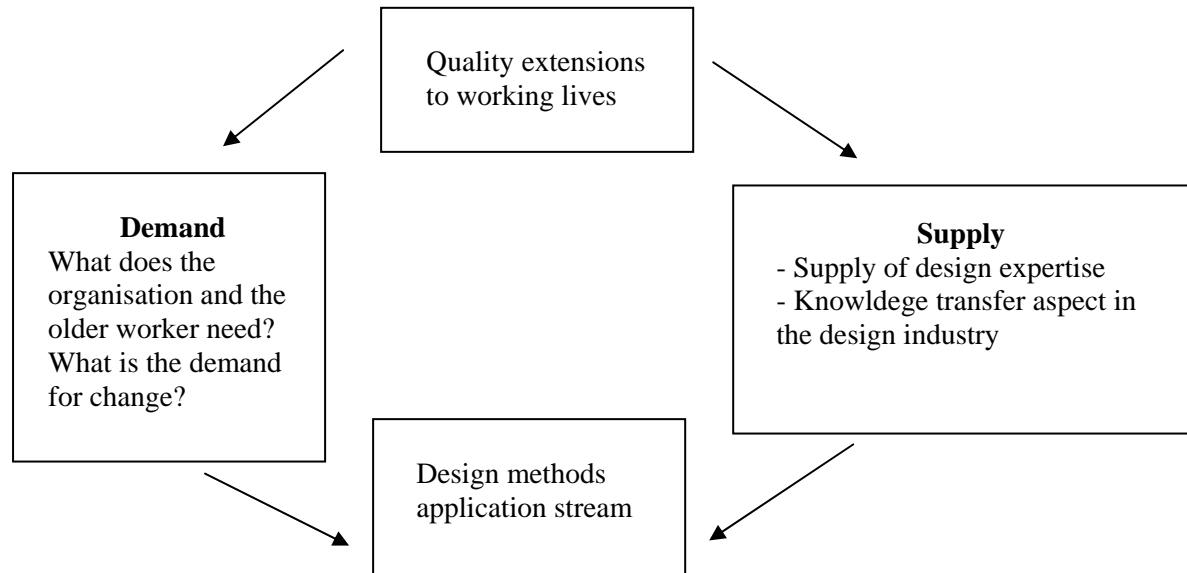
- Developing socio-economic regimes which are compatible with an inclusive society and inclusive design
- Cost- benefits analysis (What is the business case for training older workers?)
- Analysis of the design sector as an industry (with some of those companies working on inclusive design). How can it be sustained? What training would be required? What kind of occupational structure would need to be fostered?)
- High performance organisations in an ageing society

Bullet point 2 above was discussed in more detail, with some key considerations emerging:

- Focussing on barriers to inclusive design industry was discussed controversially since the link to ageing was not clear.
- Should back casting be preferred over forecasting in the design process? Back casting occurs when the design focuses on how the product should look like first and then on what technologies can be deployed to produce it.
- How do you get good designers to think inclusively? (theorising practice)
- The development of inclusive design should take into account the needs arising as a result of chronic conditions (Which ones actually are prevalent? Do we need to review some of the medical literature for this purpose?)

After the break Kerry Platman raised the question as to what kind of proposal we would be aiming for. Staying with the metaphor used, there was acknowledgement that a combination of a signature dish and a dish of the day would be most appropriate. But those elements would need to be linked via an overarching theme.

Partly building on earlier discussions, Jeremy Myers presented some ideas on such an overarching theme.



Rather than focusing entirely on design issues, it was stressed that consideration would also need to be given as to why people leave the workforce. Obviously good workplace design can help to prevent certain illnesses, but may have relatively little to offer when people drop out of the labour force because of caring responsibilities, identified in a DWP study as one of three key reasons for labour market exit of older workers.

It was also noted that the focus of the discussions shifts from extending working lives and the quality of the working life and vice versa.

Without being able to resolve all those issues the discussion needed to move on to the organisation of the user groups in view of the agreed 5 pm close of the meeting.

Annex

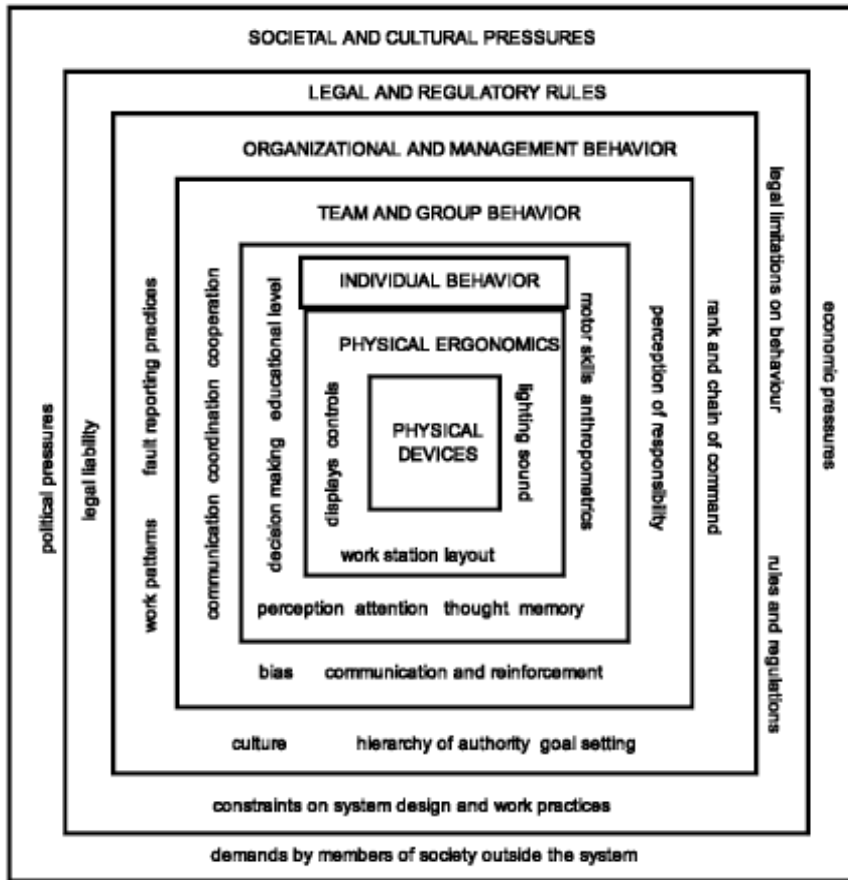


Figure 1. Ergonomics as the study and design of sociotechnical systems.

Source: Moray, N (2000). Culture, politics and ergonomics. In: Ergonomics, Vol. 43, No. 7, pp 858-868