

Part Three

How do I Get Started?

How you decide to set about the process of job design will depend very much on your own background and management style. It will also depend on the nature of the changes you are making and how quickly you must implement them. The more you involve employees in the change process, the more likely they are to accept and be committed to the changes. The more people who are involved in the change process, the longer the change is likely to take. No matter how you choose to involve staff in the process, it is important to communicate clearly with all employees about changes. This means both informing and listening. Employees will be quick to resent any actions they think are intended to manipulate them into accepting changes.

When you inform employees that changes will be occurring, remember their first question is going to be "What does this mean to me?" Try to answer that question first, then explain how the change will be managed. You have a variety of options as to how you proceed to involve employees in the change process. You can call for volunteers, create a team, ask for representatives from an area etc. The important thing is to continually communicate to all those who are affected what is happening.

The Department is not seeking to dictate any one method to you. We believe, however, that you may find this approach useful: an approach which we have expressed in simple and straight-forward terms. Start with some basic questions first. Ask yourself who are the clients we serve and what is the service that we should provide to them. Then look at what your current work flows are and how you are physically organized to serve your clients. It is not unusual to find that over time, what started as a streamlined organization has grown to the point that physical layout is a problem. This is most noticeable when organizations are spread out over more than one floor or one building. It is more subtle when people are together but it can still be a significant factor.

You may have chosen to have some or all of your staff involved in determining who your clients are and what service you provide to them. You will probably find that in determining what tasks you are currently performing, you will need their help.

Divide and Design

To look at your current work if you manage a large area with several smaller units or sub-units, you should probably look at these areas as discrete and "think them through" on a separate basis. Naturally, it will all have to come together eventually, but at this stage it is probably best to break your task down into "chewable chunks". In a large Social Affairs Post, for example, you may have separate units engaged on refugees, visitor visas, entrepreneurs, and family class applicants, and these may be working more or less independently. We suggest that you use each unit in turn as a basic area of study, and don't aggregate them until later on.

Job Descriptions, Organization Charts, & Performance Reports

We have said that job design and job descriptions are not the same thing – and they aren't. You will probably find, however, that a good point of departure is to sit down and look over the most current organization charts for your area and the most up-to-date job descriptions. It will not be unusual for both of these to be a little obsolete. Don't worry about it, but we