



EXPERT INTERVIEW

Training of new workflows

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New designs in patient care environments require new ways of thinking and acting from medical personnel in the hospital – which makes training a key element in rolling out any new hospital design.

See interview
excerpts on
YouTube





Volker Merker, head of the architectural and planning firm Merker Architektur Management GmbH in Lübeck, Germany

Moving into a new or substantially renovated hospital is a classic change management challenge. This is a fact that is very clear to Volker Merker, one of Germany's leading hospital architects and planning consultants.

Even though the new work spaces are certainly intended improve things for all concerned, for individual hospital employees these changes initially involve a disruption of established working arrangements. Hospital staff will need to “learn” the altered features of the new hospital and find ways to make the most of the new processes and procedures that come with the new design.

What can hospital planners do to help meet this challenge?

Volker Merker offers two types of answer to this question. At a macro level, he advocates a planning process that prioritises bringing all project participants together in a process of integrative dialogue to establish a shared vision of best practice that will serve as the basis for the new hospital design.

This macro integrative approach helps to ensure that the specified planning requirements are in keeping with the real needs of the critical stakeholders and that there is strong staff buy-in to the new design plans.

In addition to this, it is very important to engage with hospital personnel in the working spaces that they use every day. As Merker remarks, “You need to introduce the building and the space and the functionality that it actually provides to the involved persons – even if they have been exposed to it again and again in the planning process. It is simply very important that the [employee's] identification with the project that was established at the beginning is maintained till the end.”

This means that an effective change management strategy does not only involve the articulation of a shared vision and then its realization in a given building. It also depends on continuing engagement and training with employees in connection with the new design. Hospital planners can use the resources of medical manufacturers to help with various aspects of these challenges.



Upfront input from medical manufacturers in the change process

New hospitals inevitably involve the roll-out of new technologies which places medical manufacturers right in the middle of the change process. The manufacturers need to provide upfront input and guidance at the beginning of the process, sharing their expertise about the impact of evolving medical technology on new processes in a new hospital space.

As Merker explains: “I am an architect and am naturally interested in space and buildings. But in hospital construction this plays a secondary role. At the centre is the patient, and when it comes to diagnostics or device-supported surgical areas or the ICU, then the services are the central element and coordination between the patient, the physician, the nursing staff and the device. And that’s why the medical manufacturers who know the devices and the technology very precisely need to be integrated in the process right at the beginning.”

Support with the start of operations

Another very important moment in the change process comes with the commencement of activities in the new hospital. It is essential that the stakeholders – and particularly the hospital staff who will be using the new work spaces every day – are actively supported as they take on the challenge and the opportunity of using the new facilities.

Merker makes two important points in this connection. First, because the realization of new design projects often can stretch over several years, it is important to renew the involvement of staff as the project finally reaches completion and work begins in the new setting. “Hospital staff should come into the new spaces and be able to say. ‘Yes, that’s exactly what we need and now I understand how I should work here and I find the basic approach good and correct.’”

Beyond this, there should be an awareness that it will be necessary to make adjustments and continue to optimize the facilities and the processes for some period after the new space has been occupied. It should never be the case that the employees are simply “thrown into the cold water” of a



new space without trying to ensure a strong identification with the new facility during a period of training and adjustment.

Targeted training from medical manufacturers

Bringing staff up to speed on the new functionality and possibilities provided by a new set of technical devices and accompanying workflows is another area where medical manufacturers are well positioned to lend assistance. Merker explains: “[The manufacturers] can present the equipment in its complexity and with its advantages for the processes and work flows. And they can practice this with the users on a live basis – whether that’s done in person or by video or with virtual reality.” Merker states very clearly that the manufacturers should not

only be there to sell the devices and set them up in the new work spaces but also to “support and accompany the use of the new processes in a sensitive way – also together with people who have experience with the new technology and have already made use of it in a medical setting.”

Dräger’s support services

As an engaged medical manufacturer Dräger is committed to providing exactly these different types of support. Initial analysis of workflows and workspace modelling with the Dräger 3D Tools:

The first important step is to identify and analyze the actual workflows, the special requirements, and the technology being used in a given hospital space.

- If possible, Dräger will visit the care unit to watch and to interview the staff as they go through their daily routines. In this way we get a direct impression of what staff needs in a specific work environment and where they believe improvements are possible.
- Depending on the type of care unit, the spatial conditions, the requirements for patient-centered care, a healing envi-

ronment, or family support and other project requirements, a first draft of the work space is then developed with the help of the Dräger 3D Tools.

- These three-dimensional digital models provide an excellent basis for discussions with all project participants – allowing the workplace to be adapted and revised as required.

Equipment workshops in Dräger Design Centres

Every workplace is unique! 3D planning tools are good, but there is nothing that can replace actually building your own workplace.

- For this reason Draeger makes Design Centres and Showrooms available at locations around the world to provide customers with the opportunity to design, build and experience their future work places “hands-on”.
- With clinical background and experience from hospitals around the world, Dräger can give hospitals and hospital planners many tips and practical ideas on how working environments can be improved, often just by doing “little things” differently.

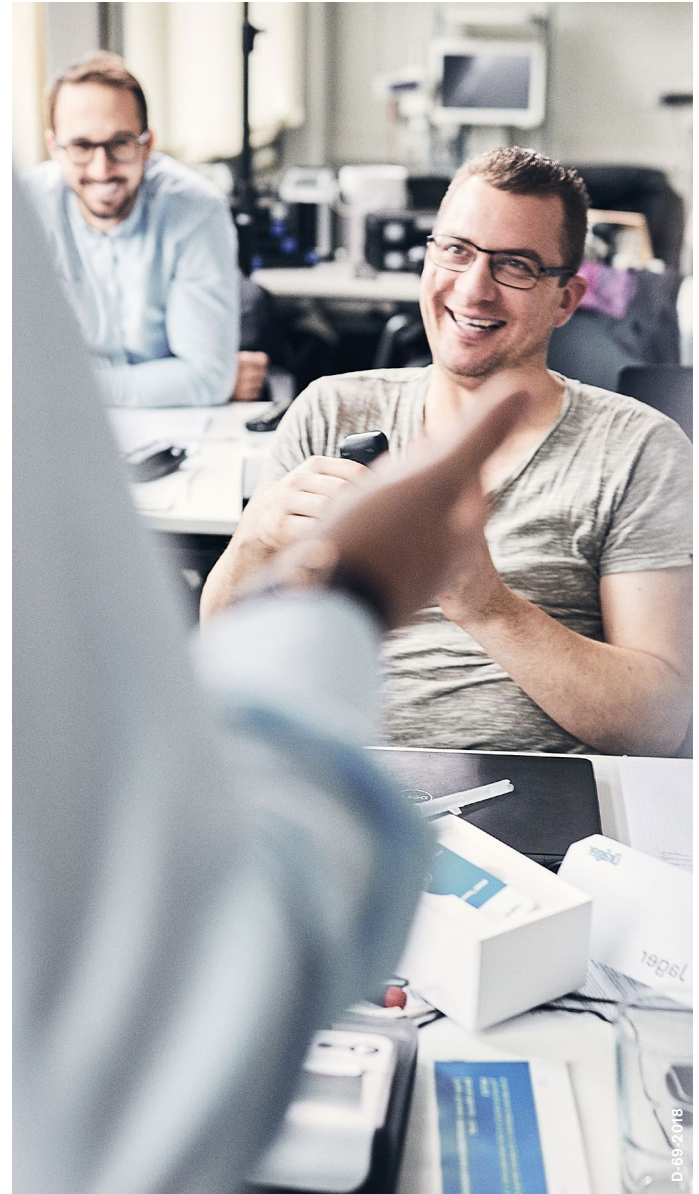


– Hands-on involvement and interaction regarding the future workplace from all important stakeholders in the Design Centre space is also very helpful to achieve full buy-in to project goals.

If physical test scenarios are not possible, Dräger also offers full virtual mock-ups with VR Tools. Customer Workshops can be conducted with the help of remote tools such as Skype.

Comprehensive on-site training and assistance:

After an installation in the hospital is completed, Dräger offers customer trainings, either on-site or in our training facilities. For a remote training, various options such as e-learnings, webinars, training videos, etc are also available. In this way Dräger helps to make sure that the whole potential of the medical devices and the complete workplace is really being put to use (i.e. all functions are known and used in daily operations). A service representative will also take care that all devices are functioning as intended and will deliver fast repair solutions in case of damage or malfunction.



What Dräger can do for you

Dräger has a comprehensive range of services to support hospital planners:

Consultation for hospital planning and medical workplace design

- Initial workflow analysis at the hospital site
- Consultation to improve clinical workflows
- Draft of medical workplaces in our 3D-Tool
- Customer-individual workplace set-up and optimization
- Hands-on workshops with physical mock-ups in the Dräger Design Center
- Virtual mock-ups (additionally, or if a physical workshop is not possible)
- Delivery of BIM and/or CAD data

IMPRINT

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