

# LULULEMON

## Ushering in a New Era of Work

**Pre-design**  
Athletic Apparel  
2018 - 2019  
Vancouver, Canada  
2,650 staff  
Over 200K square feet

lululemon is an icon in the athletic apparel industry, recognized for both the quality of its products and its commitment to a culture of inclusion and wellness. During a period of rapid growth, the company's Vancouver headquarters had grown to include multiple buildings, none of which were purpose-built for designing, testing, and marketing their garments. To accommodate continued growth and bring its facilities more in line with its brand and mission, the company needed a new home. lululemon embarked on a journey to build a new headquarters that would empower their employees to bring their full selves to work.

PLASTARC was contracted to serve as workplace psychologists, providing research and insight to ensure that lululemon's future physical workspace would align with the organization's culture and support how people work and play. Working closely with the architect, interior designer, and a wide range of consultants, we engaged with leaders and employees across the organization.

After a year of pre-design research, we had built a compelling business case for an alternative workplace assignment strategy. Implementing Activity-Based Working (ABW) within a company that works with physical products and materials presents some special challenges. Our unique perspectives on workplace wellness and multisensory design, coupled with our people-centric design analytics, enabled us to build a compelling case for a workplace model that would let people choose where and when to work.

As it worked to fully adopt and implement its new workplace strategy, lululemon engaged PLASTARC to lead a change management effort that would ensure a successful transition to the ABW model. We combined expertise in change leadership with our research-based insight into their culture and needs, developing key messages and educational content to ease the transition to a new way of working. Through regular, in-depth engagement with staff throughout the organization, we sought to identify and address all employee concerns. We developed communication, training, and supporting materials to ensure these were heard and managed, using education and data sourced from our pre-design research.

### METHODS

- Engaged leaders in interviews to learn about needs of different user groups
- Conducted an observational study and survey to assess utilization and workstyles
- Facilitated visioning workshops and listening sessions to identify workplace needs
- Supported the design team through an ongoing peer-review and design liaison effort
- Developed a series of research materials and monthly articles to educate occupants

### KEY VALUES & OUTCOMES

- Identified workplace inefficiencies that informed future workplace planning
- Created a data-driven design brief and program recommendations
- Developed evidence-based reports that served as a foundation for change management
- Presented research that leaders and change agents could use to make well-informed decisions
- Facilitated feedback channels so that occupants could feel heard in the process