

The Guide to Buying Systems Furniture



Planning

Acquisition

Installation

Completion

1	24' x 30'
1	30' x 72' D-shape
1	48' corner
1	
2	48'
1	box/box/file
1	



50.FT. 120
SCALE: 1/4"=1'

INTRODUCTION

You have been designated as the manager of your agency's furniture project. You and your project team can actually help improve the effectiveness of your agency by providing a quality work environment!

The planning of a typical office environment can be complex, as it impacts the ability of the agency to achieve its mission. Properly planned systems furniture can help address workplace issues such as: employee retention/attraction, productivity, morale, communication, and technology.

This guide encourages the consideration of these and other helpful issues when designing a new workspace. It has been prepared to guide you through the major phases of a systems project. By following the outlined steps, you can help ensure that your furniture will be delivered and installed on time, and will be the best valued product that meets your agency's requirements. Please read through this guide in its entirety before you begin your project.

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I. PRE-PLANNING

Identify the size of your project, including the number of systems workstations and enclosed offices required.

For Projects Exceeding 100 Workstations:
It is recommended that you contact one of the following resources:

- *An architectural and design firm under GSA's Comprehensive Furniture Management Services (Schedule 71 II K) specializing in furniture projects (planning fee involved)*
- *Your in-house architectural or space planning branch*
- *Your regional GSA Public Buildings Service office (planning fee involved)*
- *Army Corps of Engineers or Navy Facilities Engineering Command (planning fee involved)*
- *GSA's National Furniture Center (NFC):
Juanita Blassingame at 703.605.9176;
fax number 703.305.7183; or e-mail
Juanita.Blassingame@gsa.gov*

For Projects Fewer than 100 Workstations:
You still have the option of engaging the services of any of the organizations above. The NFC is always available to offer project guidance or answer contracting questions.

Also, it is advisable to be in communication with your agency's procurement office at the inception of the project.

Your agency will be responsible for following all local codes as well as all local, agency and federal regulations. For assistance with contracting rules governing your project or furniture purchase, contact either your procurement office or the NFC.

GSA Schedules

The National Furniture Center has negotiated with all the major systems furniture manufacturers and dealers to offer their products to the federal government at "most favored customer prices." GSA's contracts often offer the full range of products produced by the manufacturer. GSA helps meet the requirements of competition under the Competition in Contracting Act (CICA) and FAR §6.102(d)(3). In addition, GSA has already synopsized the procurement and determined the

prices to be fair and reasonable. However, please keep in mind that for task orders above the \$2,500 micro-purchase threshold, you must still:

- i. Write a Statement of Work
- ii. Send an RFQ to at least three (3) vendors
- iii. Make a best value decision

It is recommended that you request the GSA contract catalog from any manufacturer you are considering, as the contracts offer an excellent value for the government buyer. Your procurement office should provide a number of manufacturer's government contract catalogs, and you can also request them directly from the vendor, as well as through the National Furniture Center.

Using GSA Schedules can save you time and money, and purchases may be based on "best value." This means that other factors besides price are considered, such as:

- Delivery time
- Product warranties
- Special features
- Installation and maintenance training
- Past performance
- Environmental factors
- Trade-in
- Probable life
- Comfort/suitability
- Technical Qualifications
- Other (must be specified)

PLEASE NOTE: Systems Furniture manufacturers should NOT provide design services for your project for free or for a nominal fee. These manufacturers will design your space according to their products and ultimately inhibit competition.

It is recommended that you use design and layout services, which are offered under the GSA Comprehensive Furniture Management Services schedule. It is advisable to obtain these services as early in the process as possible after funds have been allocated to the project. When designers are used, stress that designs are to be generic and that designer should provide names of at least three companies that can meet requirements using GSA Schedule items. They must also provide a cost estimate.

II. ORGANIZING YOUR PROJECT

Following these steps will ensure that your project gets off on the right track!

Organize the Project Team

Coordinate with the key decision makers and create a team that has regularly scheduled meetings. This will help keep the project on track. Members of your team should include as a minimum: Project Manager, Contracting Officer, Building Manager, Financial Representative, an end-user of the furniture, and a Technical Advisor.

Gather Floor Plans

Obtain CAD files of floor plans for spaces to be occupied and information pertinent to delivery and installation of your furnishings (i.e., loading dock, elevators, schedule, etc.). The floor plans are essential for planning electrical, voice, data, and lighting needs, while the delivery and installation information is important for obtaining accurate installation quotes.

Identify Project Deadlines

Start your project timeline based upon the completion date of your project and work backwards. Make sure that you allow yourself ample time for the various stages of the project. Typically furniture takes 60-90 days to manufacture. Many plants close during the December holidays and the week of July 4th. The average manufacturer can produce 75-100 workstations per week. For every 75 workstations, allow one week for installation. At the end of installation, punch list items should take approximately 1-2 weeks before the move date.

Allow yourself time for the researching, going to showrooms, preparing the Request for Quote, analyzing the Request for Quote, selecting the manufacturer, etc... Start early!!

Identify the Agency's Approval Authority

Without timely approvals, a project can become bogged down and costly.

Determine that Sufficient Funds are Available

Funding should be allocated to a project in the same fiscal year. Note that leasing the furniture (available as an option under GSA Schedules) may be one way you can obtain the products needed without having to spend scarce acquisition funds.

Determine Buyback Value

Evaluate current systems furniture to determine if any additional savings can be obtained via buyback credit. Include in the solicitation for your project that you would like to make your furniture available for buyback credit. Before your current systems furniture can be eligible for buyback credit, this excess inventory may be usable by another federal agency. GSA's Personal Property Center can provide a solution for the disposal of your current systems furniture. Contact Sherlean Route at (703) 557-5191 or Rick Parker at (202) 619-8975 for more information. If another federal agency does not want the furniture, it can then be evaluated for buyback credit on your project.

III. DEFINING PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

As a project manager, it will be your responsibility to provide the proper environment in support of all the different work functions. Check if your agency has established workspace standards or minimal technical standards. If no standards exist, use your organization chart and personnel list to identify all the different kinds of tasks and the functions within your organization. Use the following task categories as a general guide:

Task Categories:

- *Administrative|Support*
- *Technical|Professional*
- *Supervisor|Mid-level Manager*
- *Director|Executive*
- *Teams*
- *Clerical|Data Entry*

Furniture Consultants under the Comprehensive Furniture Management Services (Schedule 71 II K) can perform all of these programming functions for you and produce the necessary documentation to competitively purchase your systems furniture.

For questions regarding the Comprehensive Furniture Management Services schedule, please contact Rose Hudgens at 703.605.9227 or rose.hudgens@gsa.gov, or Arlene Fitzpatrick at 703.605.9210 or arlene.fitzpatrick@gsa.gov.

Conduct Interviews

After making a list of all functional categories, request a representative/s from each of the groups. Conduct a brief interview with each group representative and establish work patterns for that group.

Identify Workspace Requirements

Identify the actual kinds and amounts of workspace for each task performed.

Individual Workstations:

- Amount of filing space for active files (in linear feet)
- Number of reference books (in linear feet of bookcase shelving)
- Space for computer/s and peripherals (this can be a corner or straight worksurface)
- Printers/scanners/digitizers/fax machines/other specialized equipment
- Requirements for more than one computer system within a workstation
- Shared computer or printer between two workstations
- Worksurface space for reviewing, writing or reading (a 4' - 6' wide by 24" - 30" deep size is generally sufficient)
- Space for binders for active projects (in linear feet)
- Drafting board/other specialized furnishings (identify size)
- Reception area(s) which may require a specialized configuration or a specialized transaction surface
- Guest seating
- Shared workspace for teaming
- Conference areas within workstations
- Security – for documents, objects, entire workspace
- Privacy – visual or speech
- Specialized requirements for physically challenged employees
- Adjacency requirement for other activities or personnel
- Workstations for temporary staff, students, contractors

Support Space

In the interviews, also review requirements for shared support spaces (i.e., fax machines, copiers, centralized files, supplies, printers, reception and waiting areas as well as coffee stations, coat racks, supply cabinets, etc.). It is best to gather this information as part of these initial interviews. Adjacency requirements should also be noted for these spaces.

Identify points of contact for specific requirements (security, training facilities, telecommunications, specialized equipment, etc.). Conduct interviews and analyze your requirements for storage, meeting/conference, break, training, and technical support rooms. Determine adjacency requirements for the areas identified. This information will also be required by the selected vendor in order to plan your final space.



Selecting Workstation Typicals

Workstation requirements and designs are developed or selected based upon the information gathered in the interviews for each of the job functions identified. Since many functions require similar working conditions, a single workstation design may be suitable for several types of jobs, needing only minor variations in the workstation design. The single workstation is considered to be representative or "typical" of the workstation required for those functions.

A series of generic typical workstations has been included in this guide. You may find one or more of these suitable for your requirements or you may choose to develop your own. Typical workstations for support areas are not included but may be developed along similar lines. The vendor selected for your project, can later develop typicals for support areas.

Because of the variations in products offered by different manufacturers, it would be nearly impossible for you to define all the pieces and parts (components) needed for each workstation typical. The vendor selected to do the project, or its designated dealer, will convert and individually customize your generic typicals using their components.

Use the information gathered earlier to select the typicals from the back of this guide that most closely reflect your requirements. Keep the following tips in mind:

Requirements should be kept as general as possible. Specific sizes of panels, storage units or worksurfaces should be specified only if they are critical to function. Approximate requirements for panel heights should be identified. Any special electrical, telecommunications, privacy or security requirements must be specifically identified.

When there are several workstations that are basically variations of one general size, select just one as your typical. Variations can be made in the internal components to accommodate various functions. The smaller the number of various

"typicals," the better it is for your workplace because:

- Fewer parts to inventory
- If your organization changes, you can move people around instead of reconfiguring workstations
- If you do need to reconfigure the workstations, you have standardized parts and more flexibility without having to buy additional new parts
- The number of typicals affects the cost of design and installation

If you choose to develop your own workstations, the typical should, as a minimum, include:

- Plan (overhead) view with overall workstation dimensions
- Component listing
- Upper and lower range of panel height
- Pedestal configuration

Quantities

Next, identify the quantity required for each of the selected typical workstations so that you can place an order for your furniture.

Evaluate Offers

You must decide which proposal provides the best value to your agency. It is important to indicate what factors you are looking for in your request for quote (RFQ). It is important to indicate weights for evaluation criteria (example 60% price and 40% technical evaluation). This allows companies to provide you a solution based upon the criteria you have designated as important.

When buying other furniture items along with the systems furniture (such as seating or private office furniture), similar activities should be undertaken to identify and document the significant features of the required items.

IV. PLACING A DELIVERY ORDER FOR SYSTEMS FURNITURE

In accordance with FAR §8.4, the agency should request pricing **from three GSA sources** of supply. The pricing should be based on stand-alone typical workstations such as those included in this brochure. **Remember: Do not ask the vendors to design a complete floor plan and use that design as the basis for competition among several vendors.** Pricing for design and installation is required from the three vendors when they submit their quotation.

*** In order to help facilitate your selection process, GSA has devised a form that you can use to outline the required information for making best value purchase decisions. The most current Best Value Recommendation form can be found at GSA's website, www.gsa.gov/furniture, keyword search: "best value." This completed form should be submitted to the GSA National Furniture Center or agency procurement office, along with copies of the quotes obtained from the three Schedule sources. All forms that need to be completed can be found on our website at www.gsa.gov/furniture. These include:*

- *Standard Form 344: used to obligate funds*
- *Best Value Recommendation form (mentioned above)*
- *Justification and Approval for Other than Full and Open competition: for sole-source purchases only. Keep in mind that sole-source purchases have longer lead times due to the levels of approval required to process these types of procurements.*
- *Guidelines to Support Installation Charges: for sole-source purchases only.*
- *Limited Acquisition Plan: for acquisitions over \$100,000*

Finally, turn over all of the information gathered to one of the following organizations to place a delivery order from the GSA Schedules:

- NFC (see Step 1)
- Your agency's procurement office

V. DO's and DON'Ts

DO cite the GSA contract number on all orders issued.

DO contact the National Furniture Center, Furniture Systems Management Division for assistance in developing a procurement document for furniture systems.

DO submit procurement documents to the schedule contract holders, NOT to dealers.

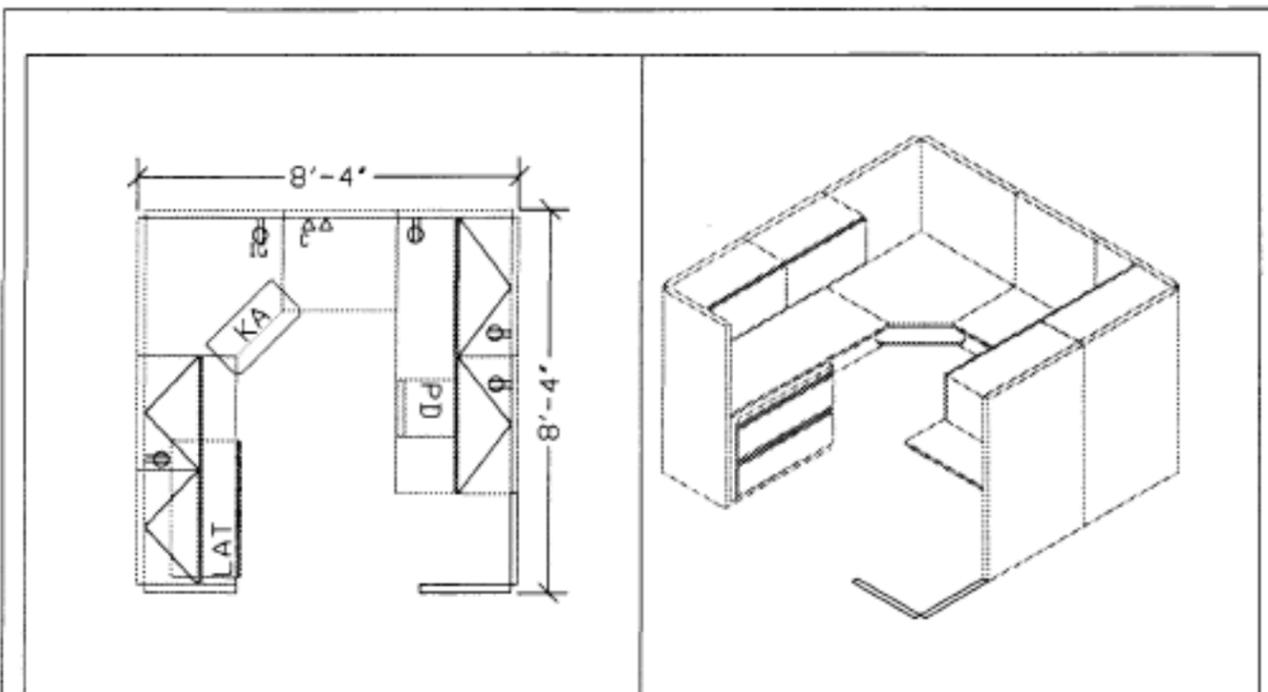
DO consider leasing.

DON'T require vendors to provide complete layouts as a condition for offering on an acquisition. Use typical, generic workstations as a basis for request for pricing. Do not request that vendors provide complete and free design services as a condition for consideration on any size order.

DON'T require or expect a vendor to store your project without storage charges once it has been produced and delivery cannot be accepted. There will be an additional charge for this service and it must be negotiated on a case-by-case basis. Please plan your project in a timely manner so that a storage service charge will not be incurred.

DON'T establish unrealistic delivery dates for your project. Normal lead times (from the date that you begin work on the acquisition to the date installation begins) are approximately nine months. If the project timeline is altered due to delays in design approval, renovation schedules, etc., delivery dates should be renegotiated.

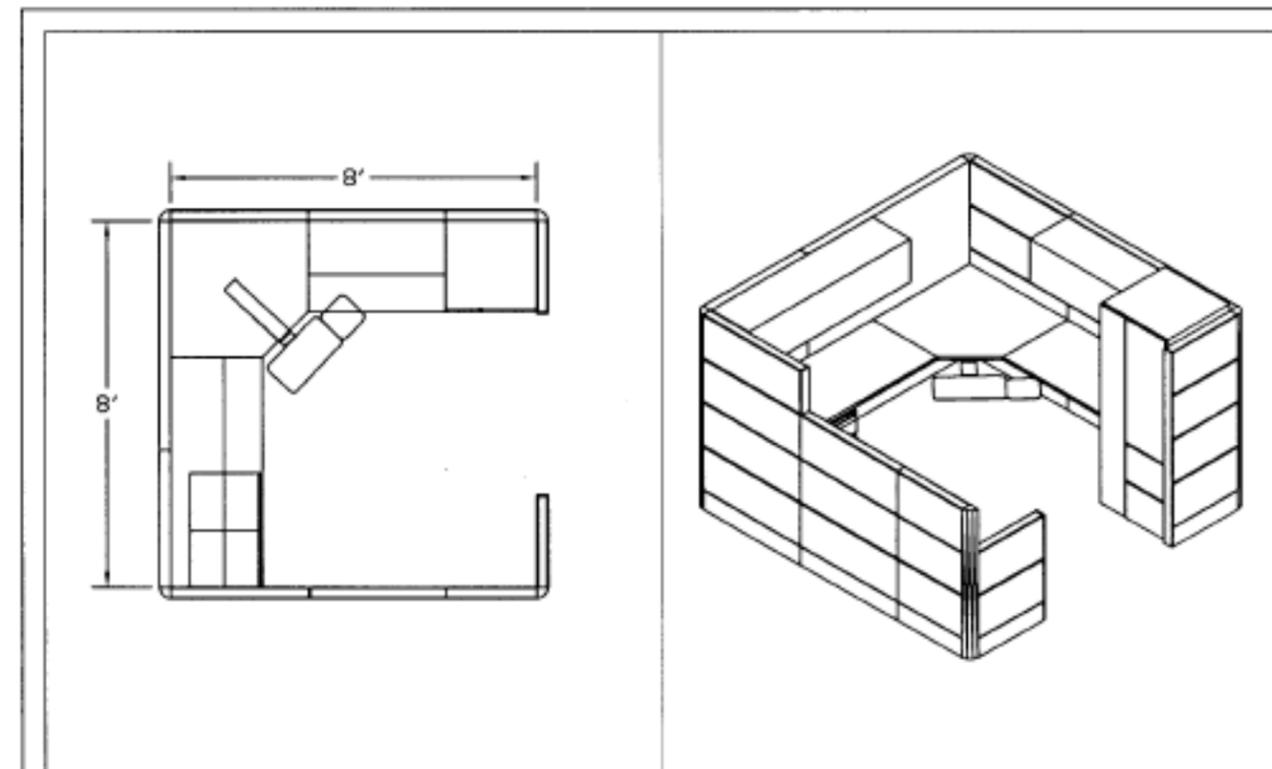
DON'T require vendors to connect stations to the building power source. This function is outside the scope of Schedule 71-I. If required, please contact the NFC to discuss possible solutions.



Component	Qty	Size
Panels	28 lin.ft.	64-68" high
Worksurface	1	24" x 72"
Worksurface	1	24" x 36"
Worksurface	1	24" x 60"
Worksurface	1	36" Corner
Keyboard arm	1	
Pencil Drawer	1	
Cabinet	2	30"
Cabinet	2	36"
Lateral file	1	36" 2-drawer

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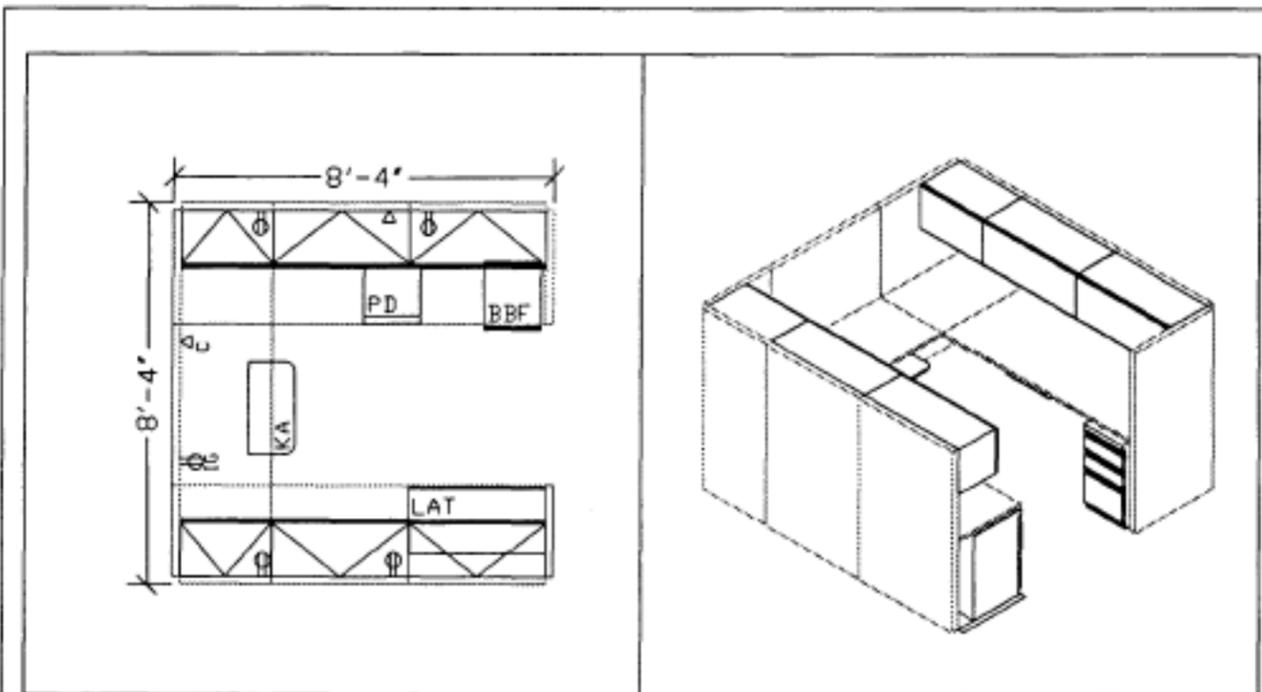
Workstation 9	SQ. FT. 69
Professional	SCALE: 1/4"=1'0"
Date: 04-03-1998	



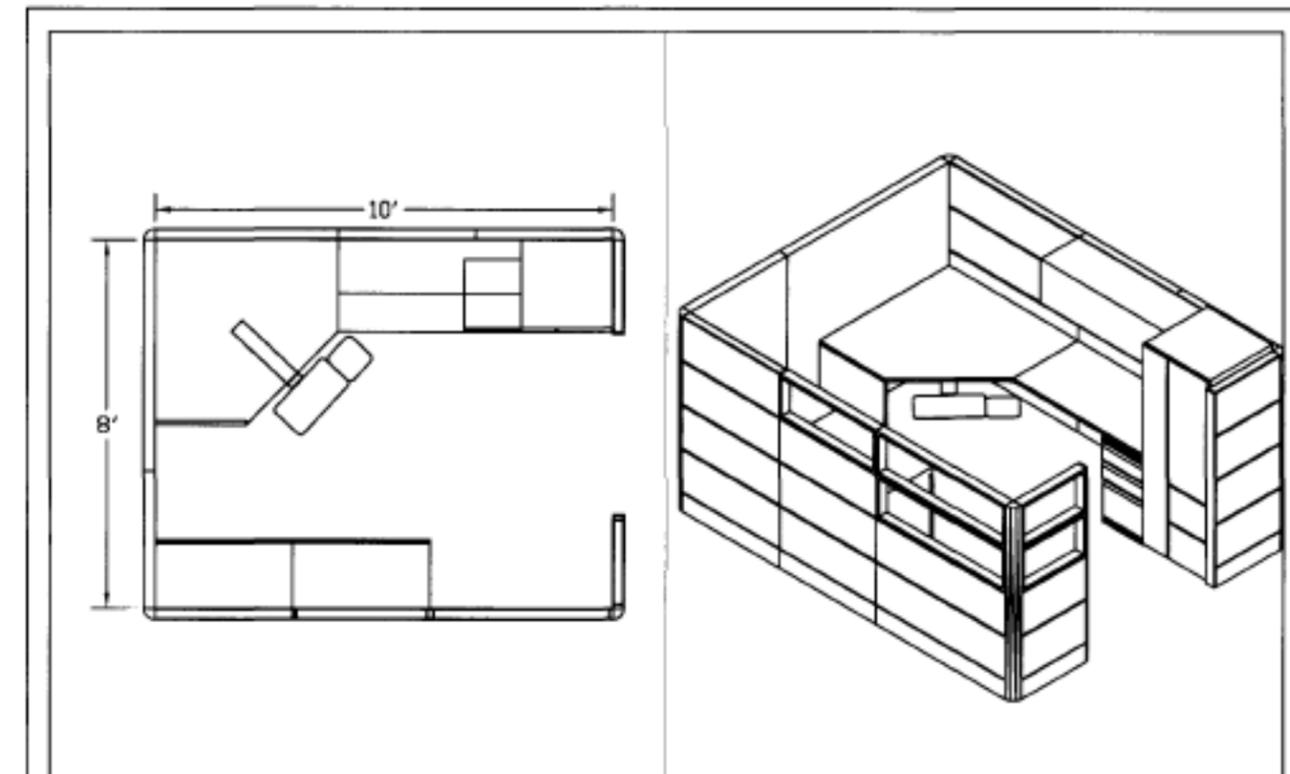
Components	Quantity	Size
Panels, fabric, monolithic	8 lin.ft.	64-68" high
Panels, fabric, segmented	13 lin.ft.	64-68" high
Panels, fabric, segmented	5 lin.ft.	48-54" high
Panels, fabric, segmented	2 lin.ft.	34-40" high
Worksurface	1	24" x 60"
Worksurface	1	24" x 36"
Worksurface	1	36" corner
Keyboard shelf	1	
Cabinet	1	60"
Cabinet	1	36"
Pedestal	1	box/box/file
Pedestal	1	file/file
Storage tower	1	

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SQ. FT. 64
SCALE: 1/4"=1'
DATE: 02-10-2005



Component	Qty	Size
Panel	28 lin.ft.	64-68" high
Worksurface	2	24" x 72"
Worksurface	1	30" x 72"
Worksurface	1	24" x 24"
Keyboard	1	
Pencil drawer	1	
Pedestal	1	Box/Box/File
Cabinet	4	36"
Cabinet	2	24"
Lateral file	1	36", 2 drawer



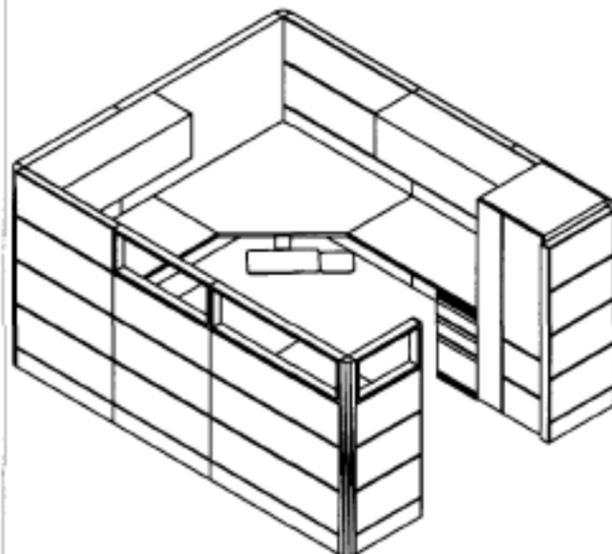
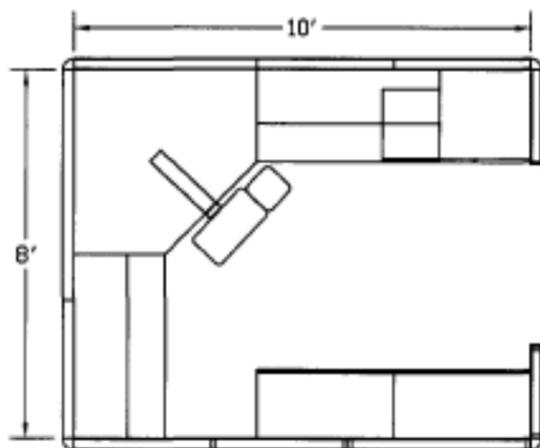
Workstation 12		
Component	Quantity	Size
Panels, fabric, monolithic	8 lin.ft.	64-68' high
Panels, fabric, segmented	15 lin.ft.	64-68' high
Panels, fabric/glazed, segmented	9 lin.ft.	64-68' high
Worksurface	1	24' x 48'
Worksurface	1	48' corner
Keyboard shelf	1	
Cabinet	1	48'
Pedestal, mobile	1	box/box/file
Lateral file	2	36' 3-drawer
Storage tower	1	

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Workstation 11 Professional/ Analytical	SQ. FT. 69 SCALE: 1/4"=1'0"
Date: 04-03-1998	

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	SQ. FT. 80 sq.ft.
	SCALE: 1/4"=1'
DATE: 02-10-2005	

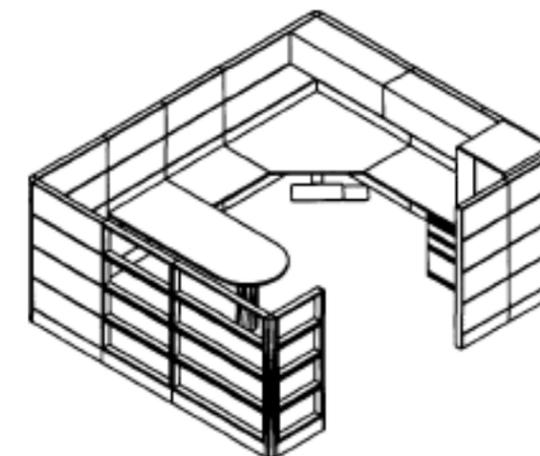
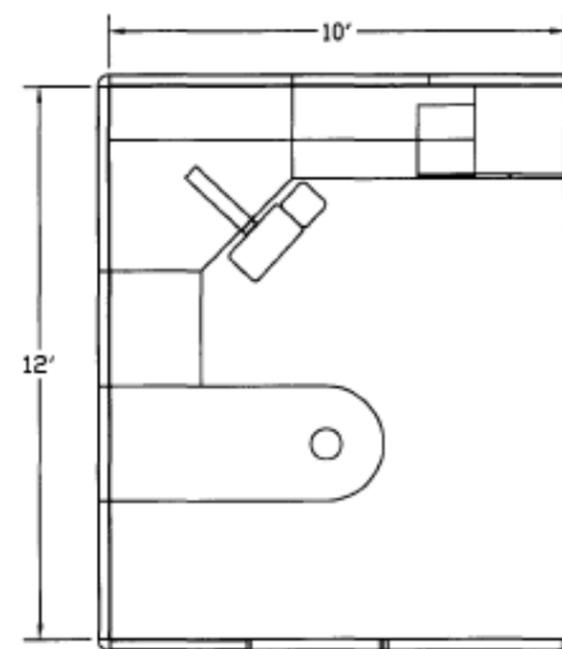


Workstation 13

Component	Quantity	Size
Panels, fabric, monolithic	8 lin.ft.	64-68" high
Panels, fabric, segmented	15 lin.ft.	64-68" high
Panels, fabric/glazed, segmented	9 lin.ft.	64-68" high
Worksurface	2	24" x 48"
Worksurface	1	48" corner
Keyboard shelf	1	
Cabinet	2	48"
Pedestal	1	box/box/file
Lateral file	2	36" 3-drawer
Storage tower	1	

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	SQ.FT. 80 sq.ft.
	SCALE: 1/4"=1'
DATE: 02-10-2005	

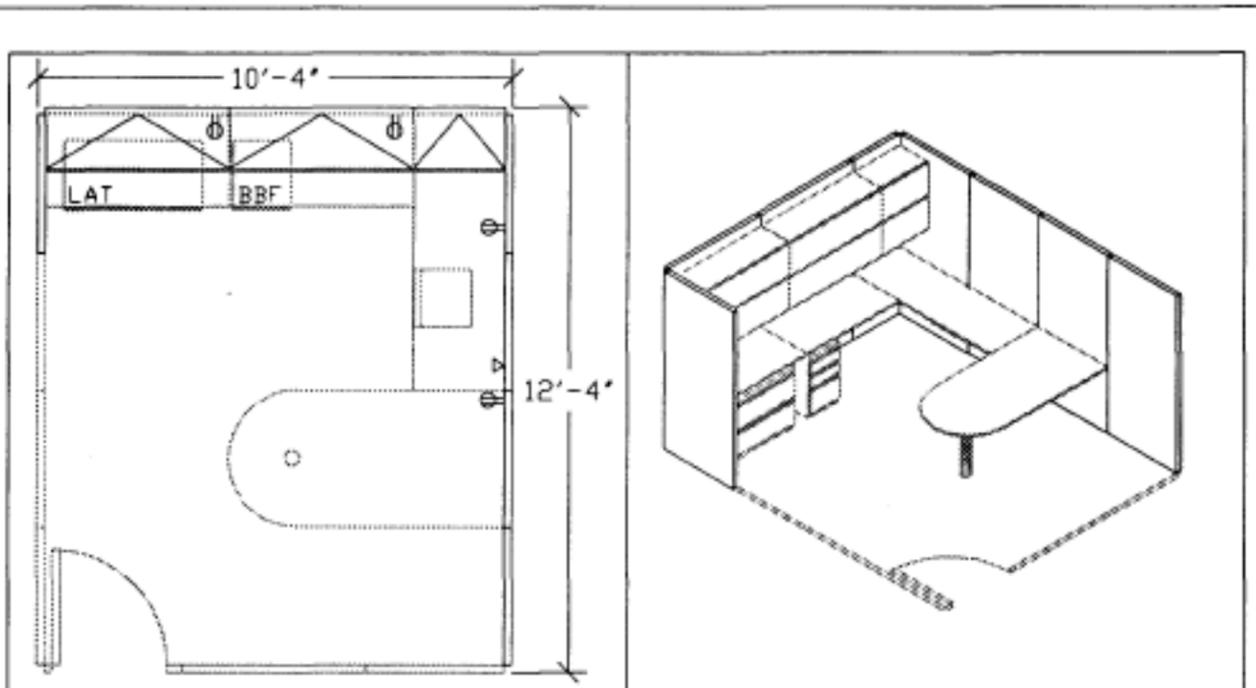


Workstation 14

Component	Quantity	Size
Panel, fabric, segmented	29 lin.ft.	64-68" high
Panel, glazed, segmented	9 lin.ft.	64-68" high
Worksurface	1	24" x 48"
Worksurface	1	24" x 30"
Worksurface	1	30" x 72" D-shape
Worksurface	1	48" corner
Keyboard shelf	1	
Cabinet	2	48"
Pedestal	1	box/box/file
Storage tower	1	

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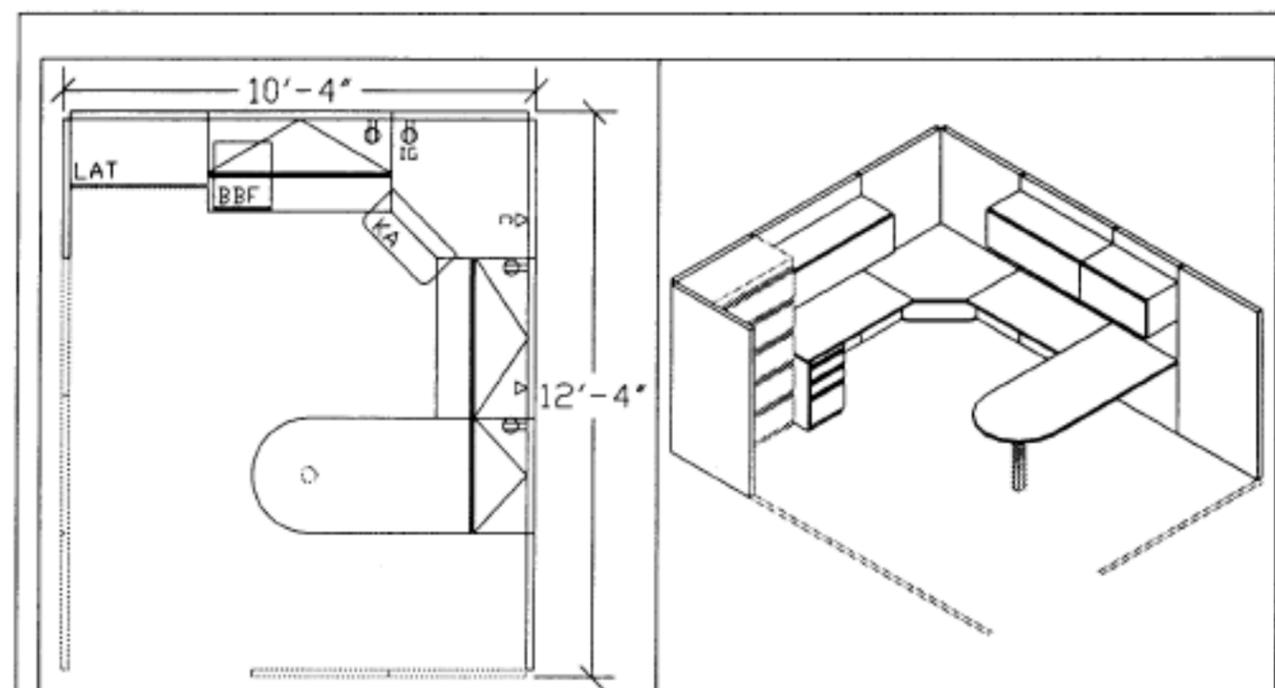
	SQ.FT. 120
	SCALE: 1/4"=1'
DATE: 02-10-2005	



Component	Qty	Size
Panel	44 lin.ft.	80" high
Door	1	36"
Worksurface	2	24" x 48"
Worksurface	1	24" x 72"
Worksurface	1	36" x 72" D-shape
Pencil drawer	1	
Pedestal	1	Box/Box/File
Cabinet	4	48"
Cabinet	2	24"
Lateral file	1	36" 2-drawer

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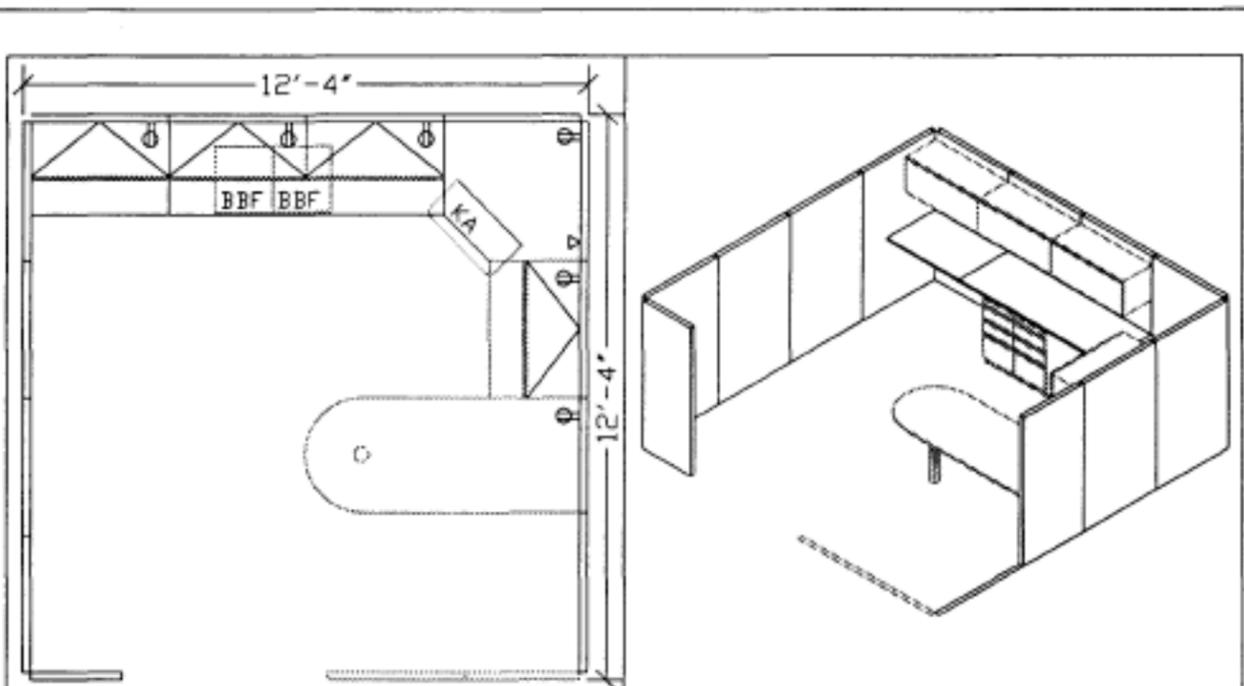
Workstation 15	SQ. FT. 128
Section Chief	SCALE: 1/8" = 1'0"
Date: 04-03-1998	



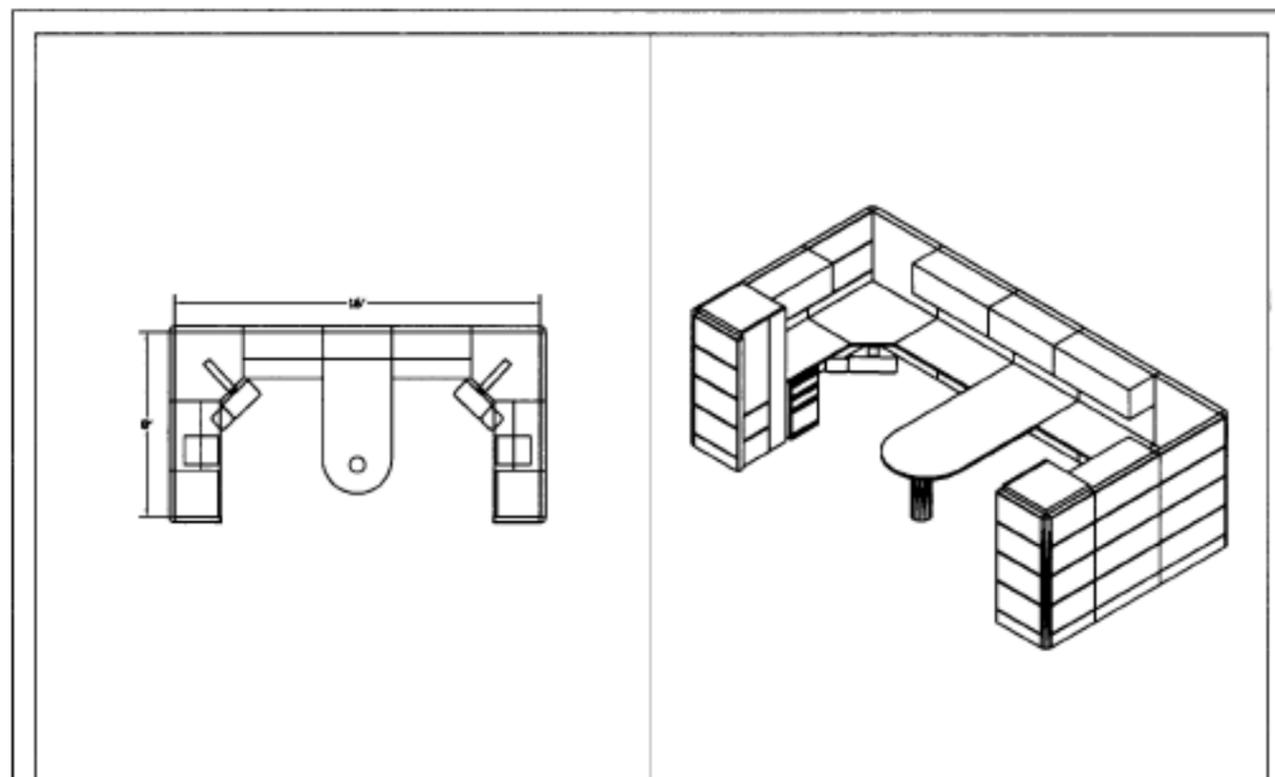
Component	Qty	Size
Panel	40 lin.ft.	64-68" high
Worksurface	1	24" x 48"
Worksurface	1	24" x 42"
Worksurface	1	36" Corner
Worksurface	1	30" x 72" D-shape
Keyboard	1	
Pedestal	1	Box/Box/File
Cabinet	1	48"
Cabinet	1	42"
Cabinet	1	30"
Lateral file	1	5 Drawer

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Workstation 16	SQ. FT. 128
Section Chief	SCALE: 1/4" = 1'0"
Date: 04-03-1998	



Component	Qty	Size
Panels	44 lin.ft.	64-68" high
Worksurface	2	24" x 36"
Worksurface	1	24" x 72"
Worksurface	1	36" corner
Worksurface	1	30" x 72" D-shape
Keyboard arm	1	
Cabinet	4	36"
Pedestal	2	Box/Box/File



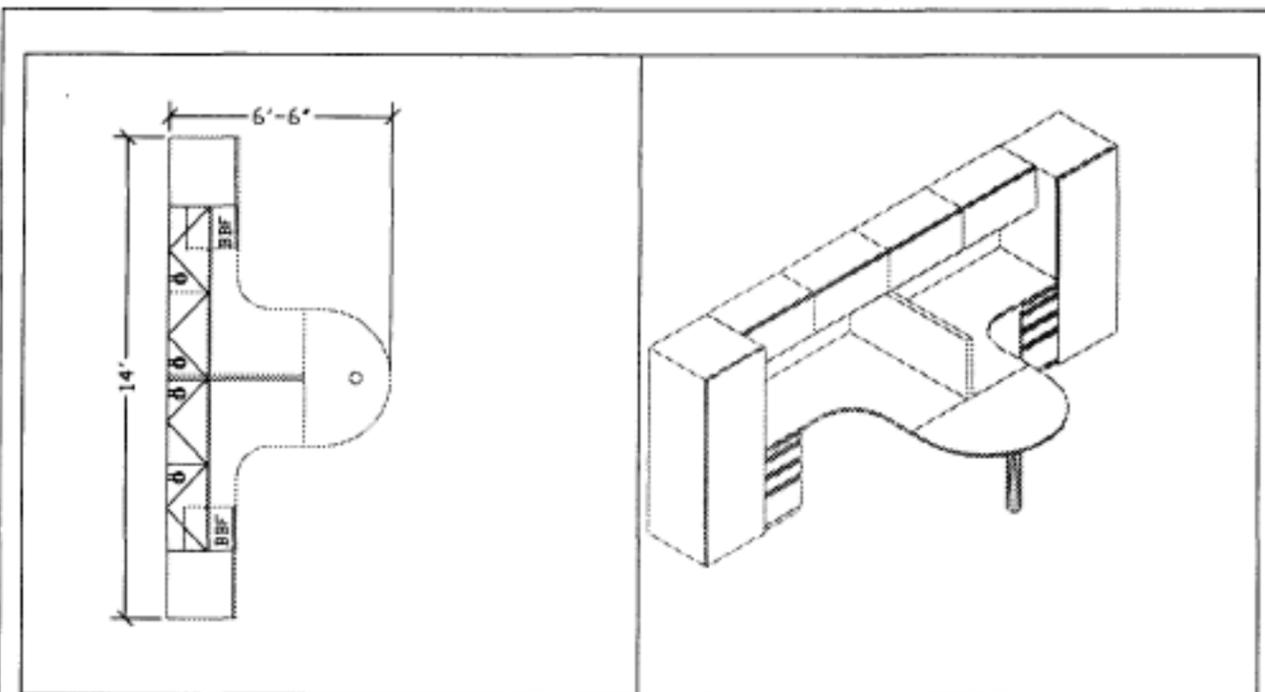
Component	Quantity	Size
Panels, fabric, monolithic	16 lin.ft.	64-68" high
Panels, fabric, segmented	20 lin.ft.	64-68" high
Worksurface	2	24' x 36'
Worksurface	2	24' x 42'
Worksurface	2	36' corner
Worksurface	1	36' x 84' D-shape
Keyboard shelf	2	
Pedestal, mobile	2	box/box/file
Cabinet	3	36'
Cabinet	2	42'
Storage tower	2	

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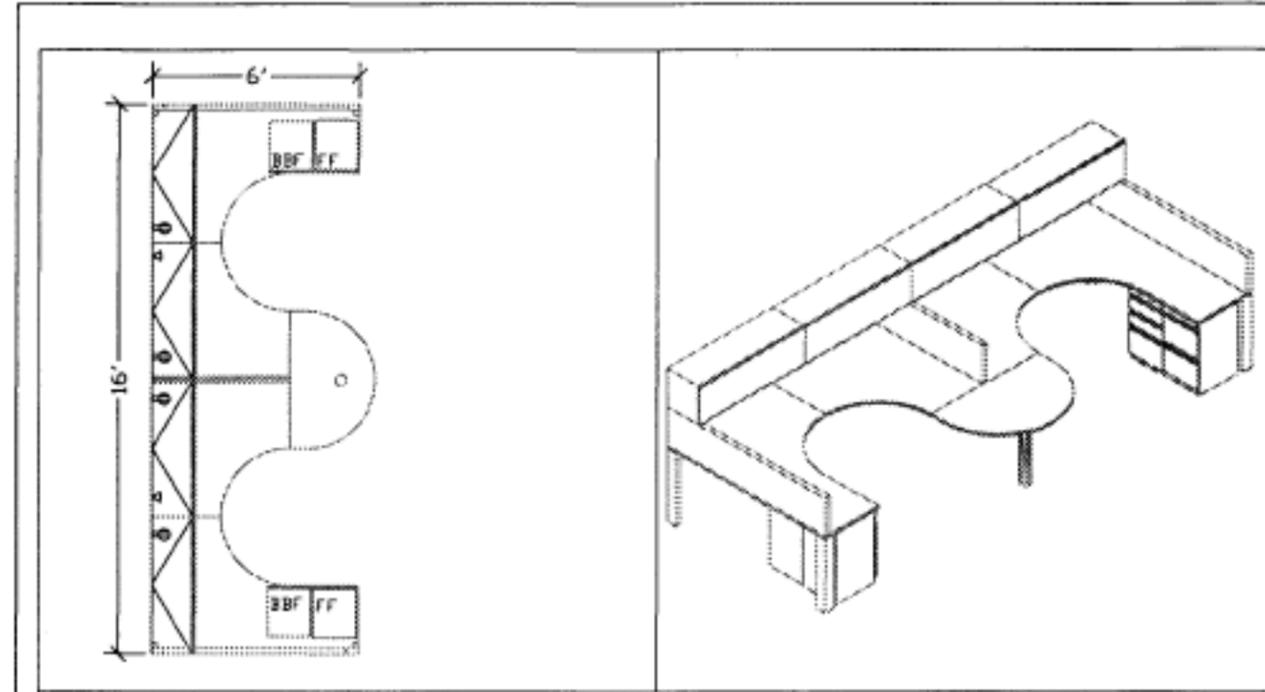
Workstation 17 Branch Chief	SQ. FT. 152 SCALE: 1/4"=1'0"
Date: 04-03-1998	

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	SQ. FT. 128 SCALE: 1/8"=1'
DATE: 02-10-2005	



Component	Qty	Size
Privacy screen	1	48" x 15"
Storage cabinet	2	
Worksurface	2	48" x 60" Corner
Worksurface	1	48" x 30" Semiround
Cabinet	4	30"
Pedestal	2	Box/Box/File



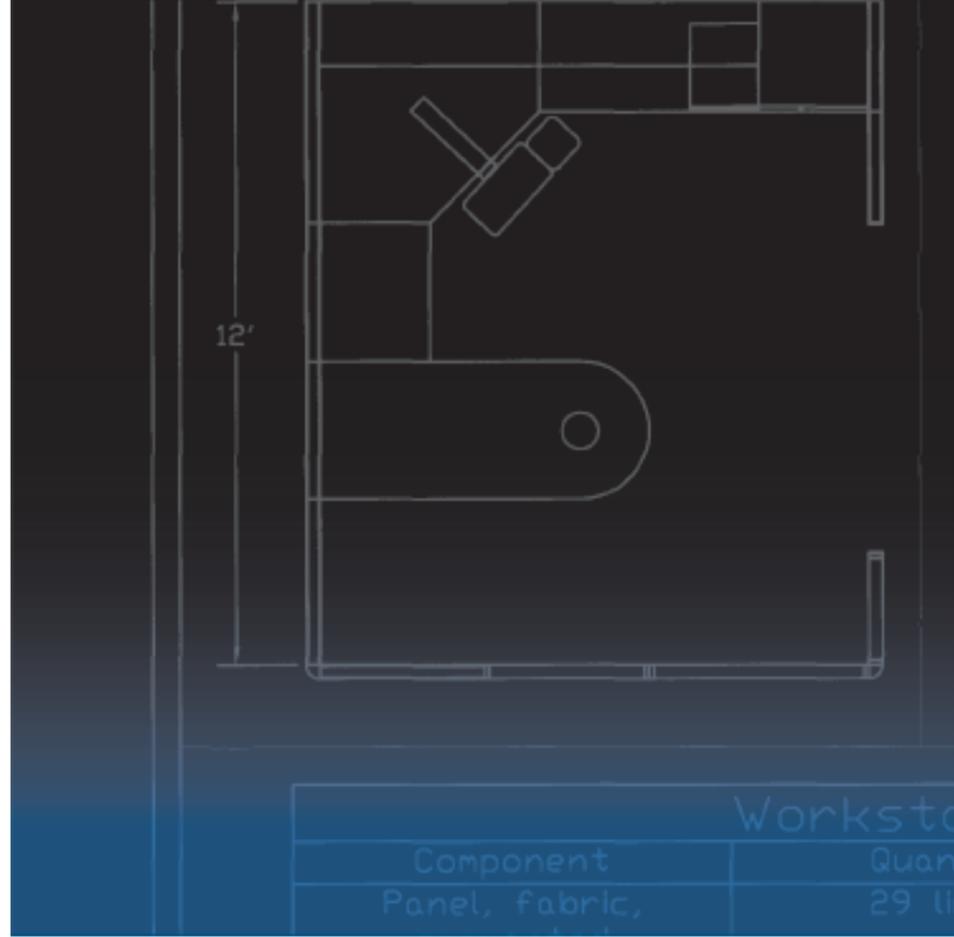
Component	Qty	Size
Worksurface	2	48" x 72" corner
Worksurface	2	48" corner
Worksurface	1	48" x 30" semiround
Cabinet	4	48"
Pedestal	2	Box/Box/File
Pedestal	2	File/File
Privacy screen	2	72" x 15"
Privacy screen	1	48" x 15"

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Workstation 19	SQ. FT. 91
Shared	SCALE:
Date: 04-03-1998	

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Workstation 20	SQ. FT. 96
Shared	SCALE:
Date: 04-03-1998	



U.S. General Services Administration
Federal Acquisition Service
National Furniture Center
2200 Crystal Drive
5th Floor
Arlington, VA 22202

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