

# Missouri Employers Mutual Headquarters



## LOCATION

Columbia, Missouri

## DESCRIPTION

69,000 sf new office building

## COMPLETION DATE

October 2005

## CONSTRUCTION COST

\$10 million

## CLIENT REFERENCE

Greg Flippin, Shelter Insurance - 573-214-4331

## CONTRACTOR REFERENCE

PARIC - Joe McKee - 636-561-9570

## DESIGN SERVICES PROVIDED

Pre-Design (Programming, Security Study), Schematic Design, Design Development, Construction Documents, Construction Administration, Interior Design, Furniture Design (Custom Board Room), Furniture System Selection and Coordination

Missouri Employers Mutual (MEM) was originally located in a fixed cubicle environment in the Woodrail Centre office complex. As their company grew, they added more offices and cubes until they had outgrown their old facility. When it came time to plan the new environment, they realized their workflow had become inefficient due to the constraints of trying to fit into their existing building.

SOA's first step in working with MEM was to conduct an online survey of all 200 employees to identify their barriers to productivity. Then SOA worked with department teams to develop a project mission statement: *We will create productive environments that are comfortable, inspirational, professional and aesthetically pleasing to facilitate communication and interaction.* To integrate this mission statement into the design process, the project goals were: respecting privacy, creating inspiring spaces, developing connections, incorporating flexibility and integrating technology.

During the planning process, it became apparent that a radical change in environment was needed to achieve a change in the corporate culture at MEM. The transformation was achieved by turning cells and cubicles into flexible teams, turning the efficiency per square foot into effectiveness per square foot, and becoming less worker oriented and more workflow oriented. Furthering their culture shift, MEM rejected conformity by valuing individuality, and began promoting team interest over self-interest. According to then-CEO Dennis Smith: "Actually since we have been at home in the building, our productivity is up; our employees are happy, a lot of times they come to work early, they're not as anxious to go home at night and even on weekends we have a lot of people working because it is such a positive and comfortable environment."

