

SELECTED REFERENCES

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS SECTION

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THE WORKER AND THE OFFICE OF THE FUTURE**

Carlisle, James H. "The Automated office: making it productive for tomorrow's manager." *Administrative Management* (51 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10010), January, 1981. pp. 41+.

The focus of this article is on "executive workstations" which is defined by the author as an area which "consists of a terminal that allows immediate access to the collection of communication and information systems within, and relevant to, the organization." Among the benefits identified is the executive's ability to bypass normal secretarial and corporate communication channels. As a result confidentiality is more easily insured.

Galitz, Wilbert O. "Human factors." *Best's Review* (A. M. Best Co., Oldwick, NJ 08858), May, 1981. pp. 36-42.

This article is a general introduction to the topic of human factors as it applies to office automation, and it takes a more holistic view than many articles with an ergonomics focus. The author defines "human factors" research as a "discipline that involves systematically applying knowledge concerning people's sensory, physical, intellectual and motivational attributes to the design of equipment, systems, tasks, documentation and environment of the office."

Gutek, Barbara A. "Women's work in the office of the future." In *The Technological Women: Interfacing with Tomorrow*. New York, NY 10175, Praeger Publishers (CBS Inc., 521 Fifth Avenue). 1983. pp. 159-168. \$24.95.

This dim view of women's future sees technological change as having a highly negative impact on women's lives in both the workplace and the larger society. A dramatic statement of the worst case fears and possible situations of women working in a clerical position in the office of the future is presented. Several examples are given of inappropriate people-machine interface.

* Prepared by Susan B. White, Social Science Reference Librarian and Katherine Bagin, Industrial Relations Section Librarian

** Items from this list should be ordered directly from the publisher. Addresses are given in connection with each reference.

Marschall, Daniel and Judith Gregory, ed. *Office Automation: Jekyll or Hyde*. Cleveland, OH 44115. Working Women Education Fund (1224 Huron Road). 1983. 240 pp. \$12.95.

The question of whether extensive automation in future office settings will liberate or enslave workers is examined in this book by a number of authorities on office automation. Collected as the proceedings of the International Conference on Office Work and New Technology, the writers bring the perspective of management, labor, government, and the academic setting. The conclusions reached are wide ranging but point up the possibility of an efficient and comfortable workplace, if present problems can be solved. This study is especially useful as a broad overview of present and upcoming office automation, and as well the importance of careful management of human resources in a machine environment. Examples are given from successful European application of such management.

McQuade, Walter. "Easing tensions between man and machine." *Fortune* (Time & Life Bldg., 541 N. Fairbanks Court, Chicago, IL 60611), March 19, 1984. pp. 58-66.

Ergonomics is described as being the science of designing machines around the needs of the people who use them, rather than the schemes advocated by the efficiency consultants of the 1920's who tried to get people to adapt to machines. Both physical and psychological factors are weighed by ergonomists. Desk top computers and their video display terminals are heavily influenced in design and user adaptability by this new science, brought in by management to relieve the considerable stress experienced by office workers. Presently, the new "generation" of computers has been made so much more comfortable that job satisfaction as well as efficiency is promoted. Machines directed by voice is noted as a final step in adapting machines to people.

Menzies, Heather. *Women and the Chip, Case Studies of the Effects of Information on Employment in Canada*. Montreal, Canada H3G 2J2. Institute for Research on Public Policy (2149 Mackay Street). 1982. 97 pp. \$9.95.

This book discusses what is now an old problem, technological unemployment, striking in a new area, the predominately female clerical work force. Four case studies are reviewed. The point is made that a large number of clerically employed women work out of necessity. High unemployment among these people would cause a dramatic increase in the number of families living below the poverty line. At the same time, there could be a serious shortage of workers proficient in the skills needed to run an automated office. An extensive training program is suggested. Retraining for those presently at risk of unemployment or redirection for those just acquiring job skills is expected to reduce the impact of this problem.

"The office takes off." *Nation's Business*. U.S. Chamber of Commerce (1615 H Street, NW, Washington, DC 20062), May, 1983. pp. 62-72.

The impact of computer technology as it affects the office environment will most certainly change how people work and where they work. As companies move toward the "office of the future," they may need to make structural changes in their workforce. Executives, supervisors and clerical workers will have to accept the changes. Looking to the future, this article explains that new technology makes it possible for many people to work at home once equipped with automated systems which are linked to their offices.

Poppel, Harvey L. "Who needs the office of the future?" *Harvard Business Review* (Harvard University, Graduate School of Business Administration, Soldiers Field, Boston, MA 02163), November-December, 1982. pp. 146-155.

In this thorough, if slightly futuristic, article Mr. Poppel answers the title's rhetorical question with an emphatic "almost everyone." The article reports on a study of white-collar productivity done by Booz, Allen and Hamilton Inc., and suggests approaches for implementing office automation, including ways of overcoming fears and resistance. Five categories of automated office systems are considered: conferencing, information transfer, information retrieval, personal processing, and activity management. A number of potentially interesting articles are cited in the footnotes.

Smith, Harold T. *The Office Revolution: Strategies for Managing Tomorrow's Workforce*. Willow Grove, PA 19090, AMS Foundation (2360 Maryland Road), 1983. 132 pp. \$21.95.

An in-depth research report on a year's project examining technologies and trends leading toward the automated office of the near future. The demographics of the work force and the increasingly important role of management are explored. Forty-nine possible problem areas are listed, including the need to show cost-efficient results from moving to an automated office, and VDT stress is examined. Attitudes toward the new office were surveyed from the viewpoint of management, labor, and the consultant. Strategies for coping with the new environment and a changing work force are suggested. This report is the first of a four-part study on "Managing the Office—1990 and Beyond" issued by the AMS Foundation.

Werneke, Diane. "Women, the vulnerable group, microelectronics at work in the office." *Employment Gazette* (Department of Employment, Caxton House, Tothill St., London SW1H 9NF), September, 1983. pp. 392-396.

This article reports on an international survey of women in occupations where new office technology will have great impact. The work force in

industrialized countries is presented as segregated by sex in this study, part of a larger International Labour Office (ILO) report. Women are clustered in those jobs involving information handling, storage, and retrieval. Therefore, for women, labour displacement, though not necessarily job loss, is seen as a definite possibility. The need for adjustment to new technologies and the opportunity for retraining employees is stressed. Women are seen as a group to be somewhat disadvantaged through being "relatively immobile, both occupationally and geographically." Some statistics are given. Werneke has also authored a book which looks at the employment effect of microelectronics on women, specifically at the implications for women of changes in office technology. The book is titled: *Microelectronics and Office Jobs: The impact of the Chip on Women's Employment* (Geneva, Switzerland, International Labour Office, 1983. 102 pp. 17.50 Swiss francs).

Whelan, Elizabeth M. "Slaying the VDT Dragons." *Across the Board* (Conference Board, Inc., 845 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10022), November, 1983. pp. 56-62.

Most of the concern and controversy regarding the hazards of video display terminals has centered on radiation emission. Actually the greatest sources of distress to the user are poor ergonomic design, non-optimal working conditions, and the absence of job satisfaction. In one study reported workers using optimized conditions and equipment demonstrated a 25% improvement in performance.

"Working at home seen as trend of future as workforce ages, technology increases." *Daily Labor Report* (Bureau of National Affairs, 1231 25th Street, Washington, DC 20037), August 16, 1983. pp. A6-A8.

This article reports on the meeting of the World Future Society in Washington, D.C. Among areas discussed were robotics, women and the workplace, labor-management relations, and workplace values. A representative from the National Association for the Cottage Industry reported that the cottage industry may now include as many as 10 million people working out of their homes. Another speaker noted that the trend toward home-work will force a major managerial revolution.

Wright, G. R. "Visual Display Terminal: Ergonomics." *Accident Prevention* (Industrial Accident Prevention Association, 2 Bloor St., E., Toronto, Ont. M4W 3C2, Canada). Part 1, September, 1982. pp. 3-6 and Part 2, October, 1982. pp. 3-5.

This two-part series details the specific types of visual, physical, and psychosocial discomfort which can be encountered by VDT operators working in an environment where sound ergonomic planning has been disregarded. Preventative measures are discussed.