Understanding A Corporate Move's Impact

Merck Challenge

Problem

When a corporation decides to move the location of a major site, the impact on employees is not always completely understood. Often the total impact on the quality of life and commute time for employees to travel to a new location is not always taken into consideration.

Merck recently decided to move its corporate headquarters from Whitehouse Station, New Jersey to Kenilworth, New Jersey. Leadership wanted to understand the impact on the commute experience for the over 2,400 employees who worked at that site and whether certain organizations were more affected than others. Beyond this, there are also larger environmental impacts of such a change, caused by shifts in driving patterns, increased traffic at the new location, and potential impacts on public transit.

Your challenge is to characterize, quantify, and visualize the impact of a change of location for those 2,400 Merck employees to a new location. Specifically, your analysis should address one or more of the following questions:

- What was the impact of relocating from Whitehouse Station, NJ to Kenilworth, NJ?
- How does this compare to the impact of relocating instead to West Point, PA?
- For either option, are certain organizations more negatively impacted than others?
- If the commute experience were the only factor in making a decision and Merck could move anywhere, is there a different location that would be ideal for most employees? For the surrounding communities?

Data and Resources

- An anonymized list of 2,453 employees that currently commute to the Whitehouse Station site. The data set includes their divisions, their home zip codes, and the organization code in which the employee works (Microsoft Excel). [Merck-provided file]
  Note 10/8/2014: Merck pointed out that there was an error in some of the zip codes in the original file. The first tab of the workbook has the entire corrected data set and the second tab has a list of the affected zip codes. [Corrected file] [Original file, for reference]
- A list of valid US zip codes, including a tool embedded in the sheet that allows you to compute the distance between two zip codes (Microsoft Excel). [Supplemental File]
- The zip code of Whitehouse Station, NJ is 08889.
- The zip code of Kenilworth, NJ is 07033.
- The zip code of West Point, PA is 19486.

Want more data related to this challenge? Check out the Temple Library Analytics Challenge guide.

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