

Project: Herman Miller

Subject: Mirra Office Chair

(2003) First Office Chair Designed For Technical Cycles: Herman Miller Mirra Office Chair

The Herman Miller Mirra office chair is the first office chair designed to flow in technical cycles. The chair is the result of collaboration between Herman Miller, MBDC, Studio 7.5, and EPEA. The Mirra chair was designed according to the principles of Cradle to Cradle. Herman Miller created a group of designers called the “Design for the Environment Team” to incorporate these principles. The goal was to synchronize product development with Cradle to Cradle Design.

The Mirra chair was designed for technical cycles as a “product of service”. Just like nutrients in the natural world, materials in technical cycles are nutrients in the industrial world and can be used multiple times. Metal and glass are two common examples; they can be reused continually at their initial level of quality. The materials used in the Mirra chair were analyzed by EPEA according to their extensive material database. EPEA’s criteria removed materials that are toxic or not able to flow in a technical cycle. The Mirra chair contains steel and aluminum which can be separated and recycled. To reduce volatile organic compounds, metals were powder-coated rather than painted. The chair has a molded polymer back which can be recycled and reused up to 25 times, and other plastic parts carry an identifying code, so they can more easily be tracked.

The result was an office chair composed 96% of materials that can be guided into technical cycles. The chair can be assembled and disassembled quickly, so these materials can be easily separated and transformed into new products. All of the materials are non-toxic, as well. The chair has been a profitable success and has received several awards, including: “Good Design” (IDEA), “Best of NeoCon 2003”, “Best Products of 2003” (Fortune Magazine).

Herman Miller

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MBDC

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