3 TRENDS THAT ARE SHAPING THE FUTURE OF THE WORKPLACE

AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT THEM *TODAY*

There's no question about it- the workspace is radically changing. Gone are the days of claustrophobic cubicles and imposing corner offices. Today's forward thinking companies are deconstructing these traditional notions of what a workspace should look like and adopting innovative designs that break with convention. They are pushing the boundaries of office innovation to design workspaces that are healthier, happier, and more productive than ever before.

What trends are driving the future of the workspace? What can your team do to make them work in the present? In this e-book, we will answer both of these questions and more.

In recent years, a preponderance of companies have adopted workplace wellness programs in an effort to make their employees healthier and more productive. These workplace wellness initiatives can take many forms. Companies do everything from stocking the fridge with healthy snacks to offering free gym memberships to enhance employees' physical wellness.

However, focusing on workplace wellness alone may not be enough. Research suggest that in the coming years, companies will begin to prioritize workplace well-being over workplace wellness in order to create more holistically healthy workspaces.

Employees who are engaged in their jobs are generally in better health and have healthier habits than employees who are not engaged or are actively disengaged.

Gallup estimates that disengaged workers cost the US

$450-550

billion every year.

Workplace well-being expands upon the concept of workplace wellness, integrating mental, social, and physical wellness.

According to biologist Stephen Boyden, "well-being needs to include opportunities to engage in spontaneous social encounters, freedom to move between social phases, opportunities to engage in a full range of behaviors, opportunities for regular exercise, noise levels similar to those in nature, meaningful change and sensory variability and an interesting visual environment."

EXAMPLE: GENERAL MILLS

General Mills has already adopted a well-being centric mentality when designing its offices. Not only does General Mills offer employees healthy dining options and access to engaging physical activity, it also encourages employees to prioritize their mental well-being. General Mills puts on regular meditation sessions for executives and team leaders and yoga classes for senior employees. In addition, every building on the General Mills campus has a room outfitted with zafus (meditation cushions) and yoga mats, so employees can practice mindfulness during the workday.
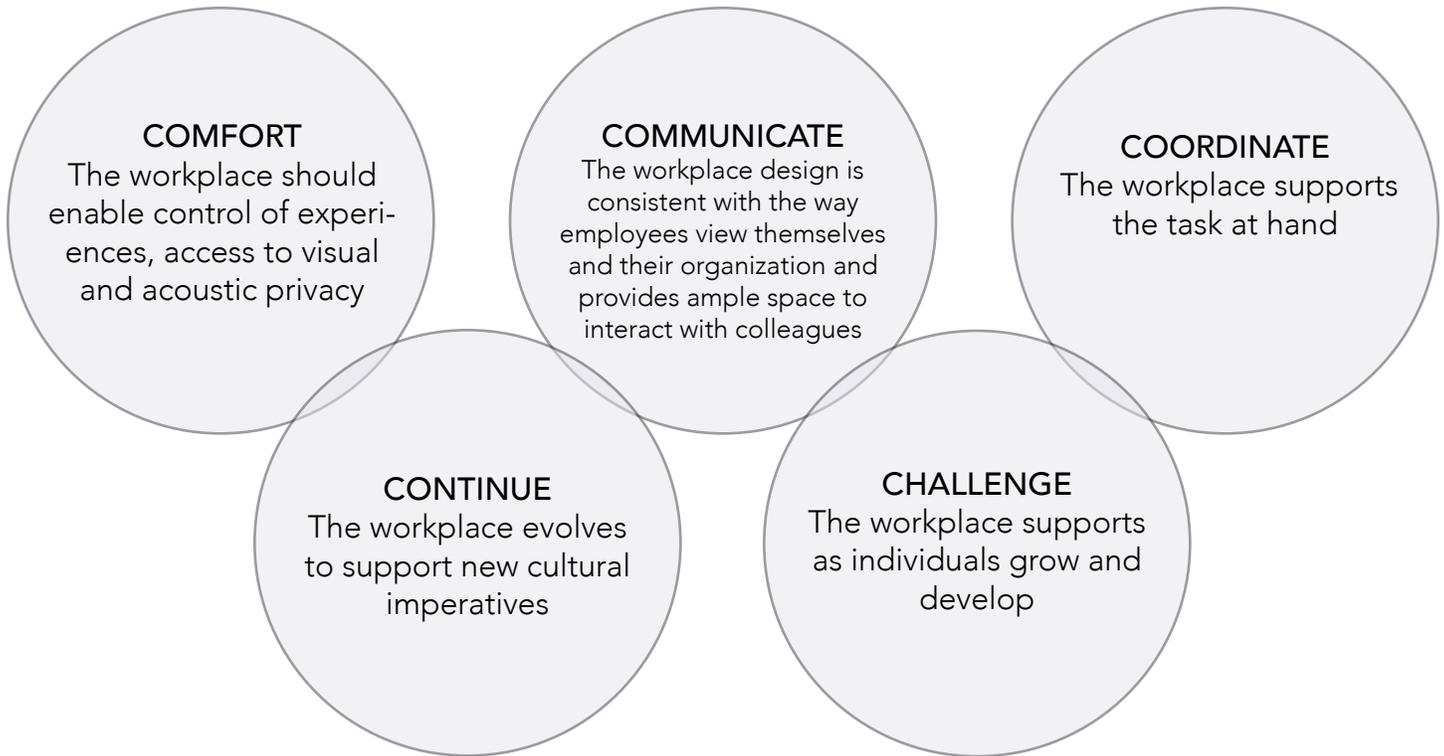

http://awareread.blogspot.com/2012_08_01_archive.html

THE 5 C'S FOR DESIGNING WELL OFFICES

Sally Augustin, PhD, a practicing environmental psychologist, outlines
5 elements that all well offices should have.

COMFORT
The workplace should enable control of experiences, access to visual and acoustic privacy

COMMUNICATE
The workplace design is consistent with the way employees view themselves and their organization and provides ample space to interact with colleagues

COORDINATE
The workplace supports the task at hand

CONTINUE
The workplace evolves to support new cultural imperatives

CHALLENGE
The workplace supports as individuals grow and develop

(Source: http://cdn.rtkl.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/workplace-trends-2015-1.pdf)

TANGIBLE TIPS:

Looking to create a workspace that encourages employee well-being? Here are six things you can do today to promote a more holistically well office.

- Schedule walking meetings to get some energizing fresh air
- Offer employees a variety of seating options, including upright seats
- Stock the office fridge with healthy snacks
- Make movement breaks happen every hour
- Bring in a yoga instructor and take a class with your team once a month
- Create a dedicated calm space where employees can go when they need some peace and quiet

In recent years, there has been a radical movement toward open office design. Cubicles have been torn down and replaced with large, open work areas. The prevalence of open offices represents a paradigm shift in office design. Maria Konnokova, a reporter at *The New Yorker*, states, "open offices often foster a symbolic sense of organizational mission, making employees feel like part of a more laid-back, innovative enterprise."

Open offices bring with them both positive and negative consequences:

PROS	CONS
• More opportunities for spontaneous collaboration • More opportunities for cross-pollination of ideas between teams • Enhanced social connection between co-workers	• Lack of psychological privacy • Less employee autonomy over their working environment • More distractions from co-workers, which can increase stress and reduce productivity

What can companies do to address the issues created by open offices? Embrace the trend for hybrid offices.

Hybrid working environments offer employees a mix of enclosed and open work spaces that are available for employees on an as-needed basis.

In hybrid offices, employees are empowered to choose the working space that is right for them. If they need to collaborate with their co-workers in an energetic environment, they can work in an open space. If they need to put their head down and complete a task that requires focus, they can opt to work in a quiet, enclosed space.

Now, about

70%

of U.S. offices have no or low partitions, according to the International Facility Management Association.

Andrew Laing, a managing director at DEGW North America and contributor at *Fortune Magazine*, asserts that "a flexible work environment can balance the needs for individual work with the need for interaction. The advent of untethered technology and mobile ways of using space has all but eliminated the challenge of deciding between openness versus enclosure when designing a workplace."

EXAMPLE: YNNO

It's no surprise that the Dutch are leading the way when it comes to hybrid office design. YNNO, a workplace design consultancy in the Netherlands, has created the exemplar hybrid office. According to *Fast Company*, the YNNO office features "a mixture of big project tables and private nooks, the space can accommodate all sorts of people and work situations, whether noisy meetings with clients or an employee on deadline and desperate for solitude." Employees are not relegated to an assigned desk, but instead empowered to make the entire office space work for them.

(Source: http://www.fastcodesign.com/1662334/youre-paying-too-much-in-office-rent-try-redesigning)

TANGIBLE TIPS:

Three things you can do to improve your open space now

DESIGNATE AREAS WHERE EMPLOYEES CAN WORK PRIVATELY
Re-purpose a few spaces in your office as quiet rooms. Encourage employees to use these spaces to make phone calls, have quick collaboration sessions, or do focus work.

USE TECHNOLOGY TO KEEP YOU FOCUSED
A new crop of products are popping up to contend with the challenges of the open office. We recommend investing in Luxafor lights, discreet USB light indicator to give your colleagues notice on your availability, or to get informed about incoming information on your computer.

PROMOTE OFF-SITE WORK WHEN NECESSARY
Sometimes, a task is best accomplished off-site. Encourage employees to get their work done in the environment that is most productive them, even if that means leaving the office for a few hours.

Historically, collaboration at a company has meant:
- Scheduling a meeting and inviting many participants
- Gathering around a large, often formal conference room
- Listening to one person disseminate information
- Adjourning the meeting and getting back to work

While these formal meeting sessions can effectively facilitate "large group work processes, efficient exchanges of information, and structured decision-making," they do not inspire the innovative collaboration that companies need to gain substantial competitive advantages.

Recognizing this, forward thinking companies are de-formalizing collaboration by creating spaces that inspire energetic communication and ideation between coworkers.

According to researchers at Knoll, Inc., "the nature of collaboration is making a broad shift towards small, unplanned informal meetings and away from lengthy formal interactions having many participants. Today, the spaces built to support group work are also starting to reflect this trend—in particular the social component of work. Spaces once thought of as having a purely social function are being legitimized as places to work."

Forward-thinking companies are broadening their conception of collaboration spaces to include huddle rooms, game rooms, cafes, lounges, and even the kitchen.
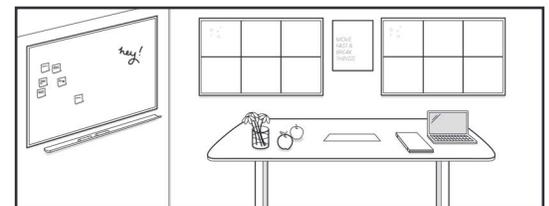
The average employee attends a staggering

62

meetings each month. Sadly, not all of these meetings are the productive collaboration sessions that we hope for. According to Atlassian, over half of the time we spend in meetings, is considered wasted.

EXAMPLE: GOOGLE

Innovation is a core component of the much-talked about workplace culture at Google. It's no wonder, then, that the company has invested in creating imaginative collaboration spaces that encourage Googlers to work together. Take, for example, the Google Garage, a multi-user, multi- space designed entirely for collaboration. According to Mamie Rheingold, a program manager, the Garage is an intentionally designed "physical environment for Googlers to create, collaborate, experiment, fail, make connections and be a part of our own hacker/maker/design community. Designed with flexibility at its core so Googlers can (re)invent, (re)purpose and (re)arrange the space to meet their needs."

TANGIBLE TIPS:
8 Things Every Collaboration Space Needs

- Post-it notes
- White boards and markers
- Snacks
- Natural lighting
- Warm colors to evoke a relaxed vibe
- Creative objects that elicit conversation
- Wi-Fi

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