The Productive Workplace for Knowledge Workers environment: A London Office focus on workplace design and environment.

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Evolving workplace

- Evolving workplace- desks, cubicle office-open plan-hot desking-break out spaces
- Unproductive layout wastes billions of pounds through reduced productivity
- Property is second highest cost for organisations.
The prominence of Corporate Real Estate

- Architects DEGW – better performance with changes in lighting, acoustics, furniture, technology and ambience (Myerson, Bichard and Erlich, 2011)
- The workplace environment contributes to 24% of overall job satisfaction (Myerson, 2005)

Organisational workplace strategy - finding the right balance of technologies and spaces that enable people to work in an environment that manages diversity, inspires innovation and allows for both happy and productive employees (Arup, 2011).

Source: (Gensler, 2005, p.14)
Recommended good practice

Add value by facilitating improved ‘well-being’ and productivity from a satisfied and comfortable workforce, enhancing customer experience and controlling costs through efficient management, thereby improving the organisation’s performance.
Culture of the Knowledge Workplace Environment

- Well designed workplace environment
  - Reduces staff attrition
  - Attracts highest calibre of workers - war for talent
  - Greater productivity?

- Different organisations have different preferences
  - Happy worker is more productive

Source: (Ipe, 2003p.17)
Greene and Myerson (2011) state that almost 50% of today’s economy is knowledge-based;

Do open plan offices allow workers to be flexible, creative and communicative?

Source: (Schriefer, 2005, p.223)
Types of Knowledge Workers

- Challenge for office design today is to accommodate 4 types of workers
  - ‘Anchor’ workers, (spends up to eight hours a day at a desk) and
  - the highly mobile ‘Navigator’ (work from home and other locations) coming to the office perhaps just for a meeting (Greene and Myerson, 2011).
- conflict between employees - the egalitarian open-plan structure v a hierarchical model

Greene and Myerson, 2011
Workplace for the different generations

- **Veterans and Baby Boomers 1946-1960**
  Space to concentrate, collaborate, contemplate, good work ethic

- **Generation X 1965-1980**
  Self reliant, everyone equal, work is a contract

- **Generation Y 1991-2000**
  Communicate through technology, social media
  High expectations

"He never really bought into the idea of desk sharing or hotdesking."
Productivity amongst knowledge workers is difficult to quantify, as much of the work they carry out is in their mind (Greene and Myerson, 2011).

**ISSUES**

- Growing focus on collaborating, socialising and learning space
- Desks are becoming smaller and the spare space is now utilised for more agile flexible workspace
- Distraction
- Place-mismatch
- Increasing the retention of talented knowledge workers where corporations are competing for staff nationally & internationally.
Today complex workplace strategies designed to influence employees behaviour and enhance performance

Productivity

Most studies include the physical components of furniture, noise, lighting, temperature and spatial arrangements (Hameed and Amjad, 2009).

What about psychological elements: personal control, responsiveness of the facilities management team and ‘forgiveness’.

Which factors predominate?

This research seeks to analyse specific components in workplace strategy and tests them against a range of workers within different office environments.
THE WORKPLACE

ANALYSED
## Breakdown of Questionnaire Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of Business</th>
<th>Number of Questionnaires</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Sent</td>
<td>Received</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial</td>
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<td>21</td>
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<td>Design and construction</td>
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<td>Accountancy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consultancy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
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<td>Financial</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>500</strong></td>
<td><strong>213</strong></td>
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</table>
### Drivers of Office Productivity Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Negative</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Quite Positive</th>
<th>Really Positive</th>
<th>Extremely Positive</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Being in open-plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Having access to a variety of different places in the office to work</td>
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<tr>
<td>Having comprehensive Wi-Fi coverage</td>
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<td>Having access to good tea and coffee making facilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Being close to printers and copiers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Being in a quiet environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Working in a building that has high quality common parts (reception, lifts, WCs)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Being in a busy, noisy environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Being in a workplace whose design is smart and professional</td>
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<tr>
<td>Being close to a window</td>
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<tr>
<td>Having a relatively private workstation (in an office or a desk with high screens)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Being in a workplace whose design is exciting or in some other way stimulating</td>
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<tr>
<td>Working from home</td>
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<tr>
<td>Having spaces to “break out” to such as a staff canteen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Working in a building in a desirable or convenient location</td>
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<tr>
<td>Being in an environment with good ventilation and control of temperature</td>
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<tr>
<td>Having ample, easily accessible meeting facilities</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hot desking</td>
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Out of the sample of 213 respondents most were male and 70% were less than 50 years old.
Most respondents worked in open-plan but 30% had other arrangements such as: open plan with high screens, shared office with one or two colleagues, semi-cellular room (without a door) and a private office.
Activity Type

Respondents by activity type

- Fee earning in a technical field eg law or tax: 36%
- Managing other people: 12%
- Numeric processes/analysis such as audit: 25%
- Processing activities such as payroll: 6%
- Support activities such as typing and filing: 6%
- Making or receiving telephone calls: 3%
- Research: 1%
- Design or other creative activity: 3%
- Activities often out of the office eg consultancy: 8%
PRODUCTIVITY
Most Productive (Personal Work Style)

I'm at my most productive when...

- Away from my desk
- Working from home
- On my own
- In a stimulating office
- Amongst creative people
- In a buzzy environment
- Under time pressure
Low productivity

What Makes You Unproductive?

- Corporate culture
- Management style
- Design of office
- Quality of IT
- Location of building
- Design of job
- Personal
- Colleagues
- Market
If 100% productivity was what you could contribute to the organisation in absolutely ideal conditions, what do you think your average productivity level has been in the last few months?
Productivity Drivers in Groups

Productivity Drivers Organised in Groups

- **Open and connected**
  - Having comprehensive Wi-Fi coverage
  - Having spaces to “break out” to such as a staff canteen
  - Being in open plan
  - Having access to a variety of different places in the office to work
  - Being in a busy, noisy environment

- **Location and design**
  - Working in a building in a desirable or convenient location
  - Being in a workplace whose design is smart and professional
  - Being in a workplace whose design is exciting or in some other way...
  - Working in a building that has high quality common parts (reception, lifts,)

- **Comfort and convenience**
  - Being in an environment with good ventilation and control of temperature
  - Being close to printers and copiers
  - Being close to a window
  - Having ample, easily accessible meeting facilities
  - Having access to good tea and coffee making facilities

- **Privacy and quiet**
  - Having a relatively private workstation (in an office or a desk with high...
  - Being in a quiet environment
  - Working from home
Enhancement Productivity

Age Attitudes

- Having spaces to “break out” to such as a staff canteen
- Working from home
- Having a relatively private workstation (in an office or a desk with high screens)
- Being in a busy, noisy environment
- Being in a quiet environment
- Being close to printers and copiers
- Having access to good tea and coffee making facilities
- Having comprehensive Wi-Fi coverage
- Being in open plan

% Enhancement Productivity

60+  51-60  36-50  26-35  18-25
Gender Attitudes

- Having ample, easily accessible meeting facilities
- Being in an environment with good ventilation and control of...
- Working in a building in a desirable or convenient location
- Having spaces to “break out” to such as a staff canteen
- Working from home
- Being in a workplace whose design is exciting or in some other...
- Having a relatively private workstation (in an office or a desk with...
- Being close to a window
- Being in a workplace whose design is smart and professional
- Being in a busy, noisy environment
- Working in a building that has high quality common parts...
- Being in a quiet environment
- Being close to printers and copiers
- Having access to good tea and coffee making facilities
- Having comprehensive Wi-Fi coverage
- Having access to a variety of different places in the office to work
- Being in open plan

Orange bars represent Female responses, and blue bars represent Male responses.
Attitude depending on activity

- Being in open plan
- Being in a quiet environment
- Being in a busy, noisy environment
- Having a relatively private workstation (in an office or a desk with high screens)

- Processing
- Managing
- Numeric
- Out of the office
- Research
- Telephoning
- Fee earning
- Design
- Supporting
Attitudes of Fee Earners to Open Plan Depending on Current Workstation Type

- All respondents
- Fee earners in open plan
- Fee earners in cellular
## Focus Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environment A</th>
<th>Environment B</th>
<th>Environment C</th>
<th>Environment D</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Age Range</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Comment</td>
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<tr>
<td>51+</td>
<td>Efficient but Noisy</td>
<td>Gimmic</td>
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<tr>
<td>36-50</td>
<td>Old fashioned</td>
<td>Confusing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>No Inspiration</td>
<td>Not good for Productivity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-25</td>
<td>Depressing, Low productivity</td>
<td>Not serious environment</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pictures in Appendix 5)</th>
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<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

- This working environment is efficient as many workers can ‘fit’ however, despite the screens will be noisy and hard to concentrate.
- The ingenuity of this working environment is appealing. However where would all the paperwork go and where would I leave a spare suit?
- This private office is stimulating and would allow me to be incredibly productive and proud of what I have achieved.
- This seems like a gimmick to me and cannot see the benefits of such an environment.

- These offices seem old fashioned. They are reminiscent of the workplace in which our careers began.
- Extremely modern and where would my private office fit? There is no sense of seniority here.
- This environment would give me the accolade that I was viewed upon in good light by my firm. However I am not sure how approachable I will be perceived to be.
- This is confusing how can such an environment be productive as it encourages noise and socializing beyond the realms of the day-to-day job.

- These are not the most desirable of offices and I would not feel inspired working within that environment.
- This environment is cutting edge and would allow for excellent collaboration and brainstorming with colleagues.
- Worker collaboration would be sacrificed in this environment as beautiful as it is. It would suit someone who works entirely on their own.
- Work would be a welcoming place to go but would I actually get much done? I don’t think this is good for my productivity.

- These offices need remodelling. They are depressing and would have an adverse effect on my productivity levels.
- I feel inspired by this office environment. The prospect of having a choice of areas to working would enhance my productivity.
- This is a fantastic office and would install a lot of pride that I worked for such firm however it is flattering to deceive as I wouldn’t be in touch with the engine room of the business.
- This reminds me of my years at university. I don’t know how seriously I would take working this environment. However I would love to give it a go.
Thank you for listening

Any questions?