

insights

FOR A BETTER BUYING EXPERIENCE

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Use Your Office to Attract and Retain Employees

IN THIS ISSUE:

Learn how a well designed
office can help employee
recruitment and retention.



Your office can be the single greatest recruiting tool you have.

That's because to many employees, where they work is just as important as their salary and benefits. By offering an office environment that supports how employees want to work (and can change as their needs do), you'll have a greater chance at attracting new employees and keeping existing ones. So how can you achieve this goal at your place of business?



ALLOW CUSTOMIZATION

Employees want the flexibility to personalize their workspace in a way that best accommodates their work habits. But how can you give employees that freedom without creating headaches for yourself? One way is to offer employees modular furniture. Modular furniture allows employees to reposition storage units and reconfigure storage cabinets, as well as move computers and other equipment between their desk and side table.

With modular furniture, employers retain control over decisions like determining which products are suited for certain spaces and functions, yet employees feel they have input into how their workspace is set up.

In addition to modular furniture, there are other items that can also give employees the level of customization they desire. These include adjustable task chairs, task lights, moveable tables and height-adjustable work surfaces, to name a few.

Since these items are universal, they can be used by all employees transitioning in and out of the workplace, sparing you the nightmare of having to constantly procure items based on an individual's personal preferences.

GRANT ACCESS

In addition to control over their workspace, employees want access to the resources they

use most. While modular furniture partially meets this need by letting employees decide what's where, your office infrastructure can be a huge obstacle. While removing or relocating walls and other barriers can be done easily enough to create an open plan environment, there are still challenges, particularly when it comes to electrical systems. Technological innovations like Wi-Fi can allow employees to use computers and other equipment in a variety of locations, but your employees will often find themselves tethered by cords and cables. A solution that frees employees from having to remain close to the power panels at their desks is to install raised panel floors that incorporate power, as well as HVAC, voice and data cabling systems. This allows employees to plug in cords and cables wherever they need to work, whether that's in a conference room or next to a co-worker's workstation.

IN ADDITION TO
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ENCOURAGE COLLABORATION

For an office environment that actively engages employees, we suggest you reduce the size of individual workspaces and add community spaces that accommodate groups of many sizes. You can even group resources together, such as a copy area and library, to create an amenity center. The rationale for clustering resources in such a way is that it promotes impromptu meetings between individuals and encourages natural flow.

Conventional conference rooms are also being rethought. This is due to many companies now seeing the value in multi-purpose project rooms. These rooms can be used for meetings or rearranged for training. They can even be opened to outside areas for large gatherings and events.



WHAT EMPLOYEES & EMPLOYERS THINK OF THEIR OFFICE ENVIRONMENT

Does an office's design really have an impact on employee satisfaction and productivity? According to a recent study, the answer is yes.

- 90 percent of workers surveyed believe a better office design makes employees more productive and companies more competitive.
- More than 90 percent say the quality of their working environment affects their mood and attitude.
- 89 percent indicated the quality of their working environment is very important to them.
- Almost 90 percent of senior executives think a better office environment would positively impact their company's bottom line.

SOURCE: www.gensler.com
Gensler is a leading international architecture, interior design, planning, and strategic consulting firm.

A HOMOGENOUS, STATIC WORKPLACE IS A THING OF THE PAST

It's easy, however, to go overboard with social spaces. In the place of a lounge filled with foosball tables, try a "cafe" filled with residential-style furniture. It can provide a comfortable space for socialization, plus be fully wired for teleconferencing and video conferencing.

RESPECT PRIVACY

When embracing an open, collaborative environment, it's important not to forget the innate need for privacy.

One solution is to include privacy booths, one- and two-person workspaces ideal for one-on-one conversations and phone calls requiring discretion. Sound absorbing materials are also being used increasingly in the construction of workspaces. Developing technologies, such as phones that mask what's spoken into them, will add extra layers of privacy, even in an open-plan environment.

The major question you must ask yourself is how much privacy do your employees need?

Discovering the right ratio of quiet-to-group space requires more than just a tally of your employees. The correct formula is revealed through an extensive data gathering process where you (and your space planners) must analyze your business model and work processes to determine what's appropriate.

CONCLUSION

A homogenous, static workplace is a thing of the past. When you create a workplace that can continuously adapt to the individual needs of employees, and teams as a whole, you can turn your office into a valuable strategic asset, particularly during recruitment.

Fortunately, we have the expertise to help you create a workplace that fosters employee satisfaction, collaboration and productivity. Call us today for more ideas and assistance in creating a better work environment for your employees.





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