



TenStep Supplemental Paper

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Office Space - The Right Design!

Traditionally, the size of an employee's office has been a reflection of his or her power in the organization. Closed cabins gave employees not only privacy, but a sense of pride. Today, with words like 'knowledge' and 'information flow' driving the corporate culture, designing office space to balance privacy and personal space with the effective flow of information has become critical.

Cubicle or no cubicles?

'Private offices' create a more productive work environment. However, they hinder spontaneous communication and collaboration among employees.

Work environment influences work satisfaction and performance. The top two of ten predictors of job performance are:

- A distraction-free work environment for teams and individuals.
- A work environment that facilitates easy, frequent informal interactions.

Employees spend most of their time in private or near-private activities. Giving them a private office, however small, promotes better morale and provides space for more confidential conversations.

The solution

Ideally, organizations should try to design offices that provide reasonable 'privacy' and also promote collaboration. HR needs to take a close look at the organization's needs, processes and culture to figure out the right design for their particular office.

To promote collaboration, organizations may have a cafeteria that encourages informal interaction and an atrium where employees can congregate.

There is definitely no one-size-fits-all design for an ideal workplace. Nevertheless, it is necessary that the office designs accommodate and satisfy both individual needs and organizational needs. Ultimately, the aim is to create environments that promote productivity and job satisfaction.