

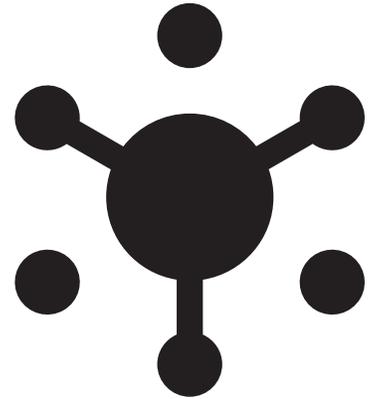


What Makes a *Workplace* Great?

*Eight Principles Used by
High Functioning Organizations*

In an increasingly competitive marketplace, how do certain organizations always seem to attract and retain the best and the brightest? How do they consistently foster innovation, drive productivity and grow revenues?

High functioning organizations understand one of the fundamental keys to success: having a workplace that not only makes the best use of space, but also uses the space appropriately and strategically. In doing so, they create a shared culture and an environment that supports its people, accurately reflects the way people work in the 21st century and aligns the physical workplace with business goals. Here are some of the core principles that make them great.



1 A great workplace is built on collaboration.

Creating a collaborative community of cross-functional workers who want to interact together to solve challenges is a fundamental workplace strategy. Collaboration brings people out of silos, shifts the organization from “me to we” and promotes a lively cross-pollination of ideas that pays dividends in workforce retention, employee productivity and innovation.

2 A great workplace reflects the company’s brand and is aligned with its values.

A shared mission—not specific policies—creates a resilient, high performance organization. When culture is a strong reflection of the CEO’s vision, it creates an underlying bond that encourages managers to translate shared values within local workplace environments, fostering a sense of identity and belonging. Productivity drivers naturally flow from shared values—creating revenue and achieving savings.

3 A great workplace provides increased choice and autonomy.

This can happen by shifting from an ownership to a membership model. The most productive workplaces are no longer one-person-per-desk, but, rather, they create non-territorial neighborhoods by function. People can work in a wide range of environments—formal meeting zones, casual brainstorming spots, IT station, private or quiet zones—where it makes sense to work. It may sound counterintuitive, but people are more engaged and loyal to an organization that works this way. Why? When people have greater choice about how and where they work, they are empowered to choose the space that is most productive for the task at hand.

4 A great workplace is agile.

In a fast-moving, ever-changing economy, the organizations that can adapt to market and economic forces succeed—and those that are built on a flexible workspace model have the advantage because their culture is wired into fluidity. People and technology are in the right place at the right time, and this drives innovation, where and when you need it.

5 A great workplace has the ability to adopt and integrate technology trends.

More than ever, technology is a key enabler of business. Organizations need to ensure that they have the appropriate infrastructure, not only to support their current business but also to support their future growth. They also need to be able to continually upgrade and adopt the latest technology without interruption to the business. In addition, as workers increasingly prefer to use their own devices such as laptops and smart phones (a strategy known as BYOD, or bring your own device), they need to find a way to support their networks, integrate their data and implement impenetrable security.

6 A great workplace understands that “the workplace is the best place to work.”

An investment in shaping culture through workplaces that are truly destinations can protect one of the most valuable assets of any organization: its cultural identity and sense of community. While it is true that telecommuting and virtual workplaces are a necessary part of today's work landscape, it is also true that nothing is better than the connectivity, team building and community that a shared physical space affords. Great workplaces embrace paradoxes: balancing concentration spaces with collaboration areas, formal meeting spaces with social interaction, and security with accessibility. One of a great company's goals should be to optimize its physical space by strategically aligning it with its goals.

7 A great workplace creates a quality experience for its employees.

If workplaces are dull, monotonous and uninspiring, people won't want to come to the office, and consequently may balk at policies that require face time. By creating destinations of choice—or “magnet space”—you improve employee engagement, which, in turn, has a positive effect on productivity and revenue. When people enjoy coming to work—when they feel supported, connected and exhilarated by this connection—employee satisfaction rises, turnover drops and behaviors change.

8 A great workplace integrates the three biggest items: people, technology and space.

When these three elements are aligned and entwined—and working together toward common goals—great things can happen. Integrated teams provide a smooth flow of information shared decision making and an appropriate allocation of resources. This translates into the right people in the right space with the right tools available at the right time: a formula for success.



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