

Planning your Office Space

9 Objectives for change



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The main purpose of an office building is to support its occupants in performing their jobs (preferably at minimum cost). Alongside this functional purpose, office buildings have an important social and corporate function. The design and layout of spaces can, for example, encourage interaction and stimulate creativity. Furthermore the office can convey a strong message to employees and visitors about the organisation's identity or brand.

9 Objectives for Change:

01

Reduction
of Cost

02

Increase
Flexibility

03

Improve
Productivity

04

Encourage
Employee
Interaction

05

Stimulate
Creativity

06

Express the
Company Brand

07

Attract and
Retain Staff

08

Support Change
of Company
Culture

09

Reduce
Environmental
Impact

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1. Reduction of costs

Cost reduction is a major objective in many projects. Accommodation is expensive and not always utilised as effectively as it could be. (On average workstations in office buildings are physically occupied approximately 60 percent of the time) Reduction of workspace reduces heating, power, maintenance costs etc.



2. Increase Flexibility

Closely related to cost reduction is the desire to create a flexible office environment. As today's organisations experience frequent changes in both structure and work processes, buildings need to facilitate these changes when they occur (at minimum cost and with minimum disruption to the business.)



3. Improve Productivity

The most important objective is also the most difficult one: to improve productivity. Basically it is about improving staff output whilst reducing or fixing costs. Although reducing costs is often the main objective, there is a growing case for providing a more effective working environment to improve employee performance.



4. Encourage Employee Interaction

Interaction between employees is critical for organisational performance. The exchange of information and knowledge helps to improve teamwork, social cohesion and the cross-fertilisation of ideas. The layout of the work place plays a crucial role in this.



5. Stimulate Creativity

Creativity is rapidly gaining importance for organisations. Many businesses excel through their capacity for continuous innovation, for which creativity is essential. Again, layout and design of the work place plays a crucial role, creating spaces that stimulate ideas.



6. Expressing the company brand

Branding is about creating a particular image or perception of the organisation and its products or services among customers, suppliers etc. Traditionally, branding has been strongly focused on logos, websites, and advertisements. However, the physical work environment can also be used to convey a particular message or identity, working as a showcase to the outside world.



7. Attracting and retaining staff

For almost any organisation, attracting good quality staff and retaining them is critical. This can be done by providing good conditions of employment, but the physical work environment can also play an important role. Providing employees with comfortable, attractive surroundings tells them that they are valued and helps to make a good impression on job applicants.



8. Supporting change of company culture

Many organisations spend a great deal of money and energy on rethinking and changing their corporate culture. Changing a culture, however, is one of the most difficult tasks. Culture is deeply rooted and therefore difficult to transform. Office design however can be a powerful tool for 'change' in this process.



9. Reduce Environmental Impact

Office buildings have a large impact on the environment both in their construction and operation. Next to transport and travel, buildings are the largest consumer of energy and therefore a significant contributor to the emission of greenhouse gases.

Furthermore, the operation of office buildings requires significant amounts of water and leads to considerable waste. Good office design can minimise the impact of a building on the environment.