Promoting Healthy Behaviours
Researcher Perspective

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Chapter 8: Promoting Healthy Behaviours

Editors' Introduction

Creating and maintaining mentally and physically healthy workplaces is the loftiest mission of workplace researchers and designers, one that they often feel is thwarted by a businesses' focus on profit. However, worker health and wellbeing and organisational productivity and success are not mutually exclusive endeavours, , as the chapters in this book make clear. Workplace design that optimizes user performance is design that elevates their wellbeing as well.

When our subjective cognitive wellbeing goes up, Armenta, Ruberton, and Lyubomirsky (2015) reports that that "leads to a variety of beneficial outcomes via an increase in behaviours that offer individuals the opportunity to achieve success in multiple domains." The Armenta team shares that when people have greater subjective wellbeing they thrive socially, establishing successful relationship with others, for example. They're also able to successfully cope with life changes, more likely to be satisfied with their jobs (and their supervisors report that their professional performance is better), as well as being more creative and dependable. These individuals are also likely to be in better health than individuals with lower wellbeing levels.

Research also consistently shows a link between mood, wellbeing and physical health; as mental state is elevated, physical processes follow (Sternberg, 2009; Segerstron and Sephton, 2010). Physical stressors, such as temperatures that are too high or too low, or distracting noise etc., can have particularly deleterious effects on mood and wellbeing. Clearly there's more to creating a workplace that promotes healthy behaviours, where people are healthy, than fiddling with the ventilation.

Researcher Perspective

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The first part of this research section defines healthy behaviour in the workplace and explains the mechanisms of behavioural change through interior design. The second part discusses the available evidence on the health impact of workplace design elements, such as furniture, layout, and visual prompts. It concludes with an overview of current knowledge on promoting healthy behaviours at the office.

Workplace design approaches to impact health behaviour

How to design an office that supports a healthy lifestyle? According to the World Health Organization, health equals well-being and has a physical, psychological and social dimension (WHO, 2006). This implies that a healthy office should encourage behaviours that support, stimulate and maintain all three well-being dimensions and discourage behaviours that undermine one or more of these dimensions. When determining which behaviours the workplace design should encourage or discourage, it is important to note that well-being has two components: an objective, observable or diagnosable component, such as a person's medical state, and a subjective, perceived component, such as mood or satisfaction. Both objective and subjective well-being include short-term experiences or snapshots that fluctuate over time and more stable long-term states. When designing and evaluating workplaces that intend to promote employee well-being, these components and states need to be taken into account.

After defining the desired behaviours and analysing current obstacles, a design strategy can be developed. For starters, it has to be possible for the users to perform the desired behaviour in the new environment. In other words, the design should *afford* the target behaviour. According to the ecological psychologist Gibson (1977), the physical environment is composed of surfaces and objects that jointly enable or disable user activities. He called these action possibilities 'affordances'. For example, if the employees should be encouraged to take the stairs instead of the elevator, at least the office should afford the action of stair walking by featuring accessible and walkable stairs.

Although Gibson was convinced that affordances are intuitively understood by users, in practice not all affordances may be perceived as such due to limitations in physical or mental capacity, social conventions, or specific circumstances. For example, employees with walking difficulties, visual impairments, or vertigo may perceive barriers to using stairs. Elevators are perceived as

quick and effortless, and if there is a hurry to bring something from the 3rd to the 10th floor, only trained athletes will consider using the stairs instead of the elevator. Furthermore, the context may signal the inappropriateness of the use of spaces or furniture. If staircases look like they should only be used in case of an emergency, employees will be hesitant to use them daily. Similarly, organisational culture may influence the perception of affordances and make behaviours that are technically possible a less desired option.

The characteristics of a space that communicate behavioural options may be considered psychological affordances and are at a higher abstraction level than functional affordances which technically enable action (Colenberg et al, 2023). To promote healthy behaviour, both functional and psychological affordances are required and should be aligned. The users have to understand the behavioural setting and feel free, capable, and invited to perform the behaviour. Therefore, it is of imminent importance to identify the different user groups of the workplace and learn about their capabilities, backgrounds, preferences, and expectations, and use this knowledge as input for the design. The COM-B model (Michie et al, 2011), a summary of several behavioural theories, may be a useful framework to analyse the capacity, opportunity, and motivation of the users to perform the target behaviour.

In addition to making it physically and psychologically possible to perform healthy behaviour, the workplace design could actively stimulate the behaviour through nudging. The concept of nudging refers to behavioural techniques to guide people in the desired direction by interfering in their unconscious decision processes and gently suggesting a specific choice (Thaler and Sunstein, 2008). The British Behavioural Insights Team has developed a pragmatic framework, EAST, which points out that nudges are most effective when they are Easy, Attractive, Social and Timely (Service et al, 2015). This framework can be a useful starting point for designers thinking about applying nudges to promote healthy behaviour in the workplace.

Structural nudges that are integrated into the physical environment are often more effective than one-off nudges (Van Woerkom, 2021). This may be because long-term exposure to these nudges can create new habits (Aarts and Dijksterhuis, 2000). Indeed, interventions at the workstation have a more sustainable effect than educational interventions (Zhu et al, 2020). Additionally, nudges work best when they align with the users' intentions, such as adhering to a healthy lifestyle, or in situations where they experience conflicting preferences (Venema and van Gestel, 2021), which may well apply to healthy behaviours at the office. Regarding workplace design, nudges may include both spatial and decorative elements and persuasive technology that is incorporated into the architectural design, such as dynamic decoration or sensors that provide a reward (e.g. music or applause) when the desired behaviour is detected. However, the long-term effectiveness of nudges often is not clear and there are ethical concerns in applying non-transparent nudges.

Promoting physical activity at the office

The peer-reviewed research on promoting healthy behaviour at the office is limited; it largely focuses on improving physical well-being by reducing sedentary behaviour and increasing physical activity (Colenberg and Jylhä, 2022). Incorporating physical activity into daily life through thoughtful building design is referred to as active design (Engelen, 2020). Because the office workplace is recognised as an environment where people spend extensive periods of time sitting, applying active design in this context may significantly impact employee health. After all, prolonged sitting is associated with obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and premature mortality, and breaking up sedentary time reduces these risks (Dunstan et al, 2011; Neuhaus et al, 2014).

The most studied intervention to decrease sitting time is the implementation of sit-stand desks whose height can be adjusted to work in both sitting and standing positions. In general, sit-stand desks reduce sitting and increase standing time (Neuhaus et al, 2014; Zhu et al, 2020) but there may be comfort issues (Karakolis and Callaghan, 2014) and the effect may diminish over time. Venema et al, (2018) showed that setting a sit-stand desk by default at standing height substantially increases stand-up working. The use of treadmill desks with bicycle pedals underneath, can increase physical activity (Zhu et al, 2020) and decrease body fat (Torbeyns et al, 2016).

Apart from providing activating furniture or activity-permissive workstations, the physical activity of employees can be influenced by the office's layout. To increase the frequency of non-sedentary breaks, a designer can opt for a larger variety of walking routes, referred to as local connectivity of the workspace, and greater proximity and visibility of co-workers (Duncan et al, 2015; Wilkerson et al, 2018). Furthermore, office workers spend less time seated in an activity-based working environment, which offers a variety of workspaces designed to support specific work activities, than in a traditional office environment (Foley et al, 2016). However, offering an appealing and easily accessible staircase, breakout spaces and centralised facilities can reduce sitting time but may not increase moderate or vigorous physical activity (Jancey et al, 2016). Increased distances between the workspaces and communal facilities, such as the bathroom and kitchen, do not seem to lead to more walking (Engelen et al, 2016, 2017; Sawyer et al, 2017). Therefore, it may be best to combine these affordances with other strategies to promote physical activity at the office.

Additional strategies could include nudging stair use, an activity which can reduce cardiovascular disease risk (Meyer et al, 2010). Different nudging strategies have been tested with mixed results. In a field experiment by Swenson and Siegel (2013), an interactive artwork located within the staircase of a three-storey office and additional signs near the staircase's entrance doubled the stair usage. This effect lasted for at least six weeks. In a study by Ferrara and Murphy (2013), motivational signs were more effective in promoting stair use than art murals on the staircase. Whereas Moloughney et al (2019) showed that enhancing the stairwell with wall paint, upgraded stair treads and handrails, artwork, and glass doors increased stair usage in the long term without additional prompts.

A review by Nocon et al (2010) indicates that the effects of prompts such as posters, floor stickers, and stair banners often are inconsistent or non-significant. In a study by Lewis and Eves (2012), point-of-choice prompts were effective but motivational posters within elevators showed no positive results. In another study, posters initially boosted stair usage, but this dropped back to the baseline after their removal (Kwak et al, 2007). And, in one instance, the applied nudges resulted in reduced stair usage because they annoyed the occupants of the office (Åvitsland et al, 2017). This underlines that prompts can be effective nudges when applied in the right format, time, and location, and when they are embraced by the target audience. This aligns with the aspects of the previously mentioned EAST framework (Service et al, 2015).

At the office, the stairs usually have to compete with the elevators, and therefore both have to be considered in office design. In a natural experiment, Nicoll and Zimring (2009) studied stair use in an office building that featured two types of elevators: a skip-stop elevator that only stopped at every third floor, and a traditional elevator that stopped at every floor. The users of the skip-stop elevator were expected to walk up or down on nearby, visible, and attractive stairs. The employees located near the skip-stop elevators used the stairs 33 times more than the employees near the traditional elevator. However, the presence of open and central staircases in other office buildings did not result in increased walking (Engelen et al, 2016, 2017).

Additionally to promoting physical activity within the office building, active design could involve promoting active commuting (walking, biking) by offering facilities at the office for safe and easy bicycle parking (Zhu et al, 2020), charging e-bikes, bicycle maintenance, showering, changing clothes, and drying gear. Commuting by car may be discouraged by reducing the number of car parking spots. Note that in workplaces other than offices it may be beneficial to employees' health to reduce rather than increase physical activity at work.

Stimulating healthy food choices

Strategies to impact healthy food choices have been widely studied (Arno and Thomas, 2016). However, these studies nearly all focus on the adjustment of portion sizes, packaging, ordering processes or informing users about nutrients and seldomly address the physical work environment. Nevertheless, studies in retail environments indicate that aspects like visibility, positioning and accessibility can increase healthy food choices, such as the placement of healthy items near the checkout (Cheung et al, 2019; Kroese et al, 2016). These insights may be relevant to the layout of the office cafeteria and the design of the food counters.

Research shows that convenience is an important driver for healthy food choices. German scholars found that a malfunctioning all-inclusive buffet led to long waiting lines, which made employees switch to the healthy food counter (Bauer et al, 2021). However, dietary behaviour quickly returned to baseline levels after the all-inclusive terminal was fixed. Adding green footsteps towards the healthy food counter had virtually no effect. Interestingly, the researchers

had abandoned their intention to pair the footsteps with health- and dieting-related priming words because they received negative feedback on their healthy food campaign. Again, this indicates that nudging needs careful finetuning to the attitude of the target group to be effective. Apparently, for this group, avoiding hassle was a stronger motivation for food choice than increasing health and paternalistic reminders caused resistance. Furthermore, nudges may be less effective when people have strong routines. In a Danish hospital, a chef's recommendation sticker and prominent positioning of vegetarian sandwiches increased their purchase by visitors but not by staff (Venema and Jensen, 2023).

Improving mental and social well-being

In contrast to the research on increasing physical well-being through workplace design, research on interior design strategies to promote behaviours that increase mental or social well-being is scarce. Usually, mental well-being in the workplace is promoted through training and education, therapy techniques, e-health, and wellness programs rather than interventions in the physical environment. Mental health-supporting behaviours like taking breaks, and immersing yourself in focused work, may be promoted by the presence of restorative spaces, relaxing chairs, private workspaces, and quiet-working zones, visibility of breakout spaces, and prompts that remind employees of taking breaks, caring for plants, or engaging in explorative activities and learning new things. In healthcare environments, positive well-being effects have been found of 'energy pods', cabins or chairs for short restorative naps (Dore et al, 2021).

To promote employees' social well-being, the workplace design should afford identity expression, enable social interaction and provide privacy (Colenberg, 2023; Spreitzer et al, 2020). This may include nudging employees to, for example, customise their environment, invite them to have a chat or remind them to be quiet in workspaces for focused work. Centralised and well-connected spaces are used more intensively and attract more visitors, which may increase spontaneous encounters and afford human connections (Sailer and Koutsolampros, 2021).

Olsson et al (2020) present several design solutions for actively facilitating, inviting, and encouraging social interactions between collocated people using technology, for example, ice-breaking games and interactive installations. The design solutions aim to improve the quality, value, or extent of social interaction by, for example, increasing awareness of other people in one's surroundings, nurturing ongoing interactions, supporting a sense of community by revealing common ground, or engaging people in collective activity. Their examples of designs related to interior space include an interactive floor, an interactive installation that displays the overall moods of the participating employees in a light pattern projected in a hallway, a tabletop videogame that starts when a coffee mug touches the table, and a display that presents photos in the online gallery of users who are close by. Unfortunately, research on their effect on social interactions was limited.

Conclusion

Workplace design may have a significant and enduring impact on employees' behaviour which includes activities that support and maintain their physical, mental, and social well-being. The current research includes several examples of affordances and nudges that have been found to promote physical activity and healthy food choices. However, evidence-based design solutions for promoting mental well-being and enhancing social relationships are lacking. Expertise in behaviour change, decision making and a human-centred design approach are required to make a structural impact on the employees' health behaviour.

Practitioner Perspective

Deborah Bucci, PhD, Principal, LiveWell Strategies

A Practitioners Dilemma

"It is very, very, very, very hard to change human behaviour."

Ron Goetzel, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health [date]

The realities of the workplace in the 21st century present a shift from the industrial age of the 18th to the early 20th century, where the focus on workplace design was solely on productivity and efficiency, often at the cost of human well-being, into the human era when workplace design is supposed to prioritise employee well-being, health, and overall satisfaction in hopes of improving productivity. Safety is no longer the only focus in the workplace; there is a growing focus on health promotion and disease prevention. Wellness programs and WELL Buildings are the approaches used most often to develop physical and virtual workplaces that boost user mental and physical health.

Even considering all that is known about behaviour change, organisations are still trying to 'practice wellness' by putting the onus on the individual to pivot away from unhealthy behaviours through programs and incentives without taking any responsibility for unhealthy workplace environments. This approach is ineffective and costly (Miller et al, 2018). Workplace wellness programs to promote healthy behaviours have been around since the 1970s (Lewis, 2012). These organisation-sponsored programs have offered a plethora of goods and services to encourage employees to move more, eat healthier, and reduce stress, all to keep employees engaged and manage healthcare costs for those without universal coverage. The wellness industry is a booming business, with 1.8 trillion dollars in sales annually, yet the evidence for the effectiveness of these programs is sparse (Global Wellness Institute, 2024). Today's workers are experiencing high burnout and mental distress and continue to suffer from chronic disease at an alarming rate (Gallup, 2024). Engagement and productivity of workers continue to decline, perplexing organisational leadership while consultants and Human Resource departments continue to search for the miracle cure.

Colenberg and Kraal referenced the World Health Organization's definition of health, which comprises three key components: physical, psychological, and social dimensions that contribute to the well-being of an individual. Further, well-being can be viewed from an objective and subjective perspective, which can be multifactorial, elusive, and open to many interpretations. Defining well-being is an elusive endeavour. The numerous vantage points to view the concept add to the complexity. The words wellness and well-being are so often interchanged that one can wonder which is being used in the literature. Individuals, organisations, healthcare, insurance, academia, industry, retail, and government, to name a few, all weigh in with interpretations, metrics, and standards. Who gets to decide the working definition?

What do workplace wellness programs do? Evidence from the Illinois workplace wellness study. A study supported by the NIH and NSF concluded that were no significant effects of wellness programs on measured outcomes of healthcare spending, employee productivity, and health behaviours. A few specifics were that higher incentives got people started but people did not remain in programs, healthier people self-selected into wellness programs, and unhealthy people were likely not to participate. "After one year, we find no significant effects of our wellness program on the many outcomes we examine, with two exceptions: employees are more likely to have received a health screening and to believe that the employer places a priority on worker health and safety" (Jones et al, 2019).

When the programs are not working and the individual workers are not changing their behaviours, the next place to focus is on the physical workplace environment.

"If I led a company with a lot of employees, I would spend money on environment rather than spend money telling them to change their bad behaviours. If someone's environment is going to dramatically impact their health and productivity – that is where I would focus."

Al Lewis [date]

Why Nobody Believes the Numbers: Distinguishing Fact from Fiction in Population Health Management

As Susanne Colenberg Jos Kraal mentioned, before recommendations can be levied to support promoting healthy behaviours in the workplace, it *could* be essential to identify, define, and determine the gap between the current state and desired outcomes. Additionally, it might be necessary to discuss who the workers are, the industries/occupations in which they are employed, and how their work impacts well-being. Further, what do employees need to do their best work? Within each context, workers experience different stressors; some have to do with how they work, some have to do with what type of work they are performing, or a combination thereof, hence requiring a multitude of different interventions to obviate the effects on their mind, body, or spirit. There is not a one-size-fits-all solution.

Does design need to *promote* healthy behaviours, facilitate behaviour change, or design a healthy workplace where any space inhabitants will benefit by just being there? Kate Lister and Tom Harnish wrote, "The whole person, not just the 'employee,' comes to work each day and goes home each night" (Miller et al, 2018). They carry into and out of work all the complexities of their personal life circumstance along with other worries, fears, challenges, frustrations, hopes, and dreams. Wouldn't it make sense to design a building to support the well-being of everyone, no matter their circumstance or reason for being there?

The Onus on the Building Industry

Everyone benefits if buildings are designed to be healthy and advocate for the well-being of all. The WHO laid out some ground rules for the minimum standards in the physical work environment. The most comprehensive endeavour toward prioritising health and wellness in the

built environment is the WELL Building Standard, launched in 2014 by Delos[1] and administered by the International WELL Building Institute (IWBI), a subsidiary of Delos. This evidence-based program includes ten critical areas focused on every aspect of environmental design, and recommendations extend beyond the built environment. The ten key areas are air, Water, Nourishment, Light, Movement, Thermal Comfort, Sound, Materials, Mind, and Community. Paul Scialla, founder of Delos, posits that humans spend 90% of their time indoors, between four walls and a roof. "What if we could activate that space to provide a passive and constant delivery of preventative medical benefits that would not require the occupant to do anything…" [ref, date].

Colenberg and Kraal highlight recommendations for specific design elements that fall under some of the critical areas noted by Delos. It is important to reiterate that context matters. Nudges were also introduced as a method of encouraging healthy behaviours. The effectiveness of nudges in the workplace depends on a combination of factors, especially context. When carefully designed, ethically implemented, and aligned with organisational goals, nudges can be valuable for influencing positive behaviours and promoting a conducive work environment.

A Case Study

A global media company had just completed a massive upgrade to one of its campuses in anticipation of a future relocation of employees from other sites in the area to this one central campus. An urban, edgy design was carried through all the buildings on campus. The colour scheme used for decor and furniture was on trend with design elements to enhance creativity, collaboration, calmness, and focus. Exciting art and sculpture were scattered between the corporation's long-history relics. Comfy, inviting furniture was placed strategically throughout the buildings, offering spaces for solo work and collaborative meetups. Quiet, meeting, and larger conference rooms dotted the campus, as did a few phone booths. Each division had a hydration station, eating space, food storage, and warming equipment. A state-of-the-art dining area with a marketplace design that offered every type of cuisine imaginable was centrally located and available 24/7. The main entrance to the campus housed a Starbucks with plenty of seating. The overall interior design capitalised on capturing natural light, offering the opportunity for numerous plants throughout the campus. An onsite gym with fitness classes, locker rooms, and table tennis areas was available to employees for a nominal fee.

Numerous outdoor spaces with tables and chairs, high-speed internet, fire pits, and hammocks offered places to gather and work. Walking trails through gardens with water features connected the parking garage to the buildings, with plenty of bicycle parking in a protected shelter. Employees would pass through security and be lured into the inviting space.

The global media company was dedicated to supporting employee well-being. Unsurprisingly, when there was an increase in stress-related health claims and consistent feedback from employees reporting stress related health issues (insomnia, headaches, IBS etc.) from their

[1] https://delos.com/

onsite health care centre, it peaked concern, and the organisation decided to look at what they could do to improve well-being in the workforce.

The leadership brainstormed some strategies based on best practices in other organisations, current literature, and experts in the field. It was decided to run a pilot study utilising their top three choices; however, before implementing any initiatives, a brief two-question pre-pilot survey was sent to get employee feedback. One hundred and five employees participated in a pre-pilot survey that asked two questions; those questions and their most frequent responses follow:

- What do you want help with most?
    - Manage stress and reduction
    - Improve cognitive skills
    - Increase creativity
- What are your most significant barriers?
    - Finding the time
    - Not knowing where to start
    - My work environment is not conducive

The overwhelming responses to both questions were quite telling. The workplace was not conducive to cognition or creativity, which caused employees to experience various types of stress. Combined with employees' time crunch and lack of knowledge of a clear pathway forward, it became clear why employees were suffering.

With this information at hand, a pilot was created, which offered an employee the opportunity to attend mindful meditation classes and yoga, a free subscription to a meditation app, and the opportunity to attend a Corporate Athlete Course that was offered on campus. What about changes related to workplace design?

Proceedings from a Corporate Athlete Course

The day begins with introductions, roles at the organisation, and expectations. Below are a few responses generated by this group of attendees:

1. Learn how to have more energy at the end of the day – I am so beaten down when I leave.
2. Learn how to recover from stress in the moment and throughout the day and how to do that in my cube.
3. Wellness refresh. I do not know how to take care of myself at work anymore, and I do not know if that is valued.
4. I work all the time because I cannot concentrate in the open workspace. I need to learn tips to focus better.
5. Energy. I need more energy. I am taking care of my terminally ill mom while trying to work and care for my family.

6. I have been moved into an open workspace. I have no privacy, and the distraction is incredible. I cannot concentrate at work – so I must take my work home. So, I work all day. How can I get better focused during the day?
7. We have this great gym here, AND I want to work out daily; however, I get much flak about going. When I do, I come back so focused. I want to be able to do that freely without being judged. How can I help change the mindset and culture?

After so much effort in designing the campus, the comments relating to the impact of the workspace design on employee well-being came as a surprise. Leadership took the following actions:

1. Communicated the commitment to employee well-being and added an employee representative to their design team.
2. All spaces on campus were available for employee use in whatever way it served them.
3. Several conference rooms were converted into quiet rooms and furnished with comfortable furniture for rest breaks and focused work on a drop-in basis.
4. A wellness break room for naps (by reservation) was created.
5. Two meditation booths were placed in quiet and accessible spaces on campus.
6. While converting the open desk spaces entirely was impossible, smaller work pods with less density were created.
7. Healthy snacks and fresh fruit were available in all break rooms.

The pilot became an enterprise-wide initiative offering these programs domestically and in several international locations. Adding an employee to the design team provided continuous feedback, which was valuable as more teams relocated to the central campus.

Discussion

"How can I help change the mindset and culture?"

This comment sums up what employees were experiencing: A disconnect between what they needed to do their best work and the environmental support offered through building design. Despite the incredible architectural design, employees still experienced a loss of well-being by being in the space. There was a stigma around using the environment and its amenities. It is unclear how much input employees had in the design decisions. What was clear is that the workspaces offered to these employees did not support their needs for focus, privacy, and autonomy during their workday. What could help?

'Holding space' is often used in therapeutic and personal development settings. The meaning generally refers to offering support, empathy, and a non-judgmental presence to someone going through a challenging time. What if the workplace design could create physical and environmental conditions that support employees' well-being, collaboration, and productivity by

creating a physical environment that promotes safety, comfort, and inclusivity? In essence, holding space for whatever might happen within the four walls on any given day.

Here's how the concept may apply to workplace design:

- *Physical Comfort:*
  Providing ergonomic furniture, comfortable seating, and adjustable workstations can contribute to physical well-being. Ensuring proper lighting, ventilation, and acoustics also plays a role in creating a comfortable workspace.

- *Flexibility and Adaptability:*
  A well-designed workplace allows for flexibility and adaptability. This includes versatile workspaces that can be easily reconfigured to accommodate different tasks, collaboration, and individual work.

- *Inclusive Design:*
  Designing spaces that are inclusive and considerate of diverse needs fosters a sense of belonging. This can involve providing a variety of spaces for different work styles, preferences, and accessibility requirements.

- *Biophilic Design:*
  Incorporating elements of nature, such as plants and natural light, can positively impact well-being. Biophilic design principles aim to connect people with nature within the built environment, promoting a healthier and more pleasant atmosphere.

- *Noise Management:*
  Addressing noise concerns through the strategic placement of quiet zones, sound-absorbing materials, or dedicated collaborative spaces helps create an environment conducive to concentration and collaboration.

- *Technology Integration:*
  Implementing technology solutions that enhance productivity and reduce stress can contribute to holding space in the workplace. This includes tools for efficient communication, task management, and a seamless work experience.

- *Wellness Rooms:*
  Providing designated wellness or relaxation spaces allows employees to take breaks, practice mindfulness, or engage in activities that support mental and emotional well-being.

- *Social Spaces:*
  Designing communal areas where employees can connect, collaborate, and build relationships helps foster a positive workplace culture. This can include breakout areas, cafeterias, or collaborative workspaces.

- *Personalisation and Control:*
  Allowing employees to personalise their workspaces and providing control over environmental factors (such as temperature and lighting) can contribute to a sense of ownership and well-being.

- *Supportive Leadership and Policies:*

"Holding space" in the workplace extends beyond the physical environment. It also involves leadership practices and policies that support employees' well-being, work-life balance, and mental health.

Conclusion

Promoting healthy behaviour through workplace design is best accomplished by two key elements. First and foremost, workplace design should benefit all, encompassing the elements listed by the WELL Building Standard that support physical, mental, and social well-being. The second crucial factor is creating a culture of care in the organisation. While designers cannot change or fix a toxic work culture, they can ask deep questions about the intended use of the physical space and, in a sense, nudge a focus on worker well-being. Leadership and stakeholders must be committed and consider worker well-being in all strategic decisions, which builds a health-focused culture. Workers should be involved in every step of the design process, from initial inquiry to follow-up evaluations. An analysis of the gap from the current state of well-being into an ideal, and considering if it is attainable, is crucial. Organisations must look at best practices and talk with subject matter experts, academics, and practitioners to assemble a complete picture of what could increase mental and physical health in their offices. Design solutions need to be sustainable through enmeshment and integration into workplace culture. These solutions and strategies cannot exist in a silo. There needs to be evaluation and continuous improvement to keep up with the dynamic changes of the world.

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