

Work Place Design: For Better Team Interaction, Camaraderie, and Collaboration

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Many of today's forward thinking innovative companies are realizing the need for space within their offices to allow for casual interaction among colleagues. By designing space for social interaction; collaboration and camaraderie is being instilled into the office culture. This allows for the exchange of new ideas, further trust between staff members and happier more engaged employees. The following are three design strategies that can help foster such an environment:

- 1) **Breakout Spaces:** These are areas made up of a small table and 3-4 chairs in which teams can quickly gather to discuss a project. These are located within short vicinity of the work desk or cubes typically inhabited by team members. The breakout space allows for better communication and impromptu meetings to discuss ideas or issues at hand. These spaces can also be used for mentoring and learning between more senior and junior staff.
- 2) **Café Space:** This is not meant to be a "lunch room" but rather an open space in which the staff does not only eat lunch but also convenes. A flat screen TV can be incorporated along with multiple round tables and even a tall counter with bar stools. Such a space creates a café feeling which allows employees to socialize in a relaxed environment. This space will therefore allow colleagues to become better acquainted on a personal level hence building relationships. The café space also allows for individuals at different levels within a company who tend not to have the opportunity to interact with each other to come together.
- 3) **Flex Spaces:** These group work spaces can be used a multitude of ways. Depending upon task and group size, the space can be divided and then further subdivided using mesh curtains or sliding partitions. This allows for spaces that can be made quite private when necessary or open hence inviting outside collaboration.

By implementing design solutions that foster better interaction and collaboration between colleagues, the work place can become not only a more profitable environment but also an office with a more engaged staff which can equate to soaring performance.

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