



Φ Little book

A balanced work environment



We spend hours in our offices, so taking the time to turn them into spaces that promote wellbeing means that they become places of productivity. Creating a balanced environment makes good sense when applied to office spaces as it establishes a harmonious, healthy and peaceful place to work.

We hope you enjoy reading.

Shane D Mullins, CEO.



Branching out

Plants in the office provide more than a beautiful and natural aesthetic quality.

- They draw in the stuffy old carbon dioxide that we exhale and emit much needed oxygen and freshen the air.

The colour green has a beneficial effect, slowing our pulse rate and lowering blood pressure.

beautiful



The ancient Chinese believed in the harness of positive energy flow, or Qi (Ch'i). This is supported by the principles of quantum physics which indicate that everything, including matter, is energy. Light is a vital energy source and can be crucial in promoting office wellbeing.

Let there be light

- Natural light is preferable wherever possible. Think carefully about the use of electric lighting in darker places - fluorescent light can be harsh and unnatural, often straining the eyes.

Full spectrum lighting or grow lights are said to be more beneficial in an office environment as they mimic natural light. They provide light across the entire spectrum similar to that received from the sun, from infrared wavelengths to near ultraviolet. Good lighting can help to prevent Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD).

Simplicity is beauty

"Have nothing in your house that you do not know to be useful, or believe to be beautiful."

William Morris

- This quote has validity, especially in an office environment. A recent survey says a disorganised workspace can lead to decreased productivity and unprofessional behaviour.

Clearing clutter from your desk will improve productivity and reduce stress. An addition of artwork in the office can prove to be advantageous in increasing motivation and providing inspiration. This, coupled with attractive, ergonomic furniture, can enrich the work environment.



ergonomic

03

Less is more

Hot-desking can make personalisation of your space difficult. For those who have a desk to call their own, the opportunity to personalise is beneficial, psychologically speaking.

- A word of caution though. A workspace cluttered with teddy bears, model cars, executive 'toys', kiddie drawings and silk flowers does not add value to the working environment, but can block the flow of energy and cause distraction.

So when it comes to personalisation, less is more.



A breath of fresh air



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Sick Building Syndrome (SBS) is a phenomenon first identified in the 1980s. It is caused by poor ventilation and long exposure to the gases emitted by manmade materials often used in construction and interior fittings of offices.

- Wherever possible opening windows for ventilation rather than reliance on closed air conditioning systems is more conducive to wellbeing.

There are substantial health benefits to staff if carpets, furniture and other fittings are made from natural fibres. Office machinery should also be minimised where possible.

Follow your nose



The way that your office space smells is not necessarily something that is given much thought, but everyone coming into the space will pick up on its fragrance, or lack of it.

- Fragrances can affect mood and, according to aromatherapists, enlivening essential oils like lemongrass, peppermint, rosemary and eucalyptus will keep everyone energised and productive.

Synthetic fragrances do not have the same effect, so choose natural essential oil burners or fragrances.

The sound of music



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A calm, peaceful environment encourages productivity so if music is to be part of the office ambience then it should be adagio (slow paced) as this induces tranquillity.

- Classical music such as Handel's Water Music runs at this pace, around 60 beats per minute.

High energy music is best kept for those lively get togethers out of office hours.



Have a break



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Focusing on a computer screen or other reading material for long periods of time can strain your eyes and lead to major discomfort, which in turn causes a lapse in productivity.

- Enlivening your office space with attractive art works can alleviate stress and fatigue throughout the working day.

The Canadian Centre for Occupational Health & Safety recommends placing paintings or posters around the office to give your eyes something to rest on from time to time.

It's recommended you take a break from gazing at a computer screen every 20 minutes to give your eyes a breather now and then.

Art in the office is proven to inspire, energise or calm workforces.

Colour me happy

Colour is a very important part of creating a calming and creative environment.

- Green is said to make workers feel more positive, whereas blue can be calming in some shades, but have the opposite effect in a stronger hue.
- Colours should be complementary in order to maintain harmony as clashing colours can be unsettling and cause annoyance as well as headaches.

harmony



Get up and get moving

Exercising the body throughout the day has many beneficial qualities in the workplace. Getting the blood moving around can help staff think clearer, raise levels of energy and increase work rates.

- A study conducted by sports scientist Jack Groppe suggests that participating in some form of physical activity every half an hour can increase levels of energy, engagement and efficiency by up to 42%.

Activities can be as simple as taking the stairs rather than the lift, walking to a loo that is furthest away from your desk, or performing small stretches such as knee extensions. Even just standing up from your chair can increase your work productivity.

up to >42%

