

Design your office to attract the best talent

 By [Linda Trim](#)

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Modern workspaces need to be optimally planned in order to attract, retain and engage workers of today.

Previously, employees only worked at the office and the focus was on structured tasks. Yet today, professionals are networked and connected all over the world, in various offices and settings. They work across time zones and require shared spaces to work with colleagues close by, as well as people far away. Indeed, the office has become more than just a single workspace - it is a palette of places and shared experiences.

As a result, a company's success is in large part now determined by the quality of the workspace it provides, and how seamlessly it can allow workers to connect and collaborate.

Here are a few critical elements to designing such a workplace:

1. Allow spaces to reflect 'me'

Led by Generation Y (those born between 1979 and 1997) but followed by the rest of today's workers, staff needs spaces that reflect who they are - which is creative, unique individuals. In addition, an office needs to be very comfortable, with the right lighting, acoustic levels and air flow. People must be able to connect emotionally to their office space. If they want a picture of their baby, there needs to be a place for this. Essentially, one must allow for ample individuality within a workspace.

2. Create 'socially conscious' environments

The youth of today are very conscious of the environment. From the organic food they buy to the hybrid cars they drive, caring for the environment is central to their daily lives. When choosing a company to work for, young professionals look at the environmental message they are sending out and its carbon footprint. As a result, to attract these workers, it is important to be aligned with their environmental mission. So for example, put a great CSI project in place, and give back to the community and to your workers.

3. Provide organisational transparency

Today, workers do not only want to feel a part of a company, but they want to know more about who they are working for. The Internet has made information freely available and young professionals now expect to have it at their fingertips, including information about their employers. As a result, the brand must be displayed across the offices for people to see with value messages throughout. Have hubs throughout the office where people can gather as teams and spread the word of the company.

4. Support personal growth

Most modern workers are highly educated and are used to continually growing their knowledge and experiences. People naturally have a desire to learn, and if they feel they can't grow or learn in an environment, they move to one where they feel they can. It is therefore important to always provide opportunities for staff to grow and learn, such as creating mentor programs or financing new courses of study.

5. Reflect work/life balance

Today's working world is incredibly fast-paced, and most people battle to find a suitable balance. For companies to attract the best talent, they need to offer flexibility and various spaces that don't only relate to work. There are many ways to tackle this. For example, have a gym at the office. Or offer coaching services to find the balance. Create various zones to work in at an office so employees don't feel stifled by their environment.

6. Match the type of work being done

There is far more to an office than 'WE' and 'I' spaces. The office needs to provide zones or workspaces that match the type of work that employees do. For example, if they work with in-depth contracts or legal documents, they need concentration spaces. If they participate in long strategy sessions, they need inspiring 'Think Tank' rooms.

7. Make technology a priority

Today, technology isn't only a given, but an extension of who we are. Be it a smartphone, tablet or laptop - we almost always have at least one piece of technology with us. We demand connectivity and ease of use to simply plug and play. Modern workspaces need to support this technology-driven lifestyle, which is especially important to the younger generation.

In order to attract the very best and brightest to your company, it is critical to pay attention to the workspace you provide. Technology, connectivity and social media have made workers far more demanding, and very aware of what other companies are offering. Ultimately, there is no room to hide if companies want to engage, attract and retain the most talented workers of today, and take their businesses to the next level.

ABOUT LINDA TRIM

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