



**BUSINESS  
FURNITURE**

# PLANNED WORKSPACE

As the famous (perhaps infamous) cubicle of the sixties passes its 40th anniversary and the misery of working in isolated “little boxes” becomes a thing of the distant past, office work space trends continue to change dramatically to reflect the times as well as ever-changing requirements of modern corporations.

Now, terms like “mobility”, “flexibility” and “collaboration” are being tossed around as the new, or next best thing in office spaces as business tries to keep up with changes in worker lifestyles and habits.

“The way people conduct their work and careers today has evolved over the last 40 years. In fact more and more people either own small businesses or they are working out of their homes for an employer. This, for one, has increased the importance of home office requirements quite significantly,” says CN Business Furniture Group MD Robbie Bergh.

“People who work within their home usually want dedicated office space, which was unheard of even 10 years ago,” he adds.

As with bigger companies, a home office also needs space planning. It can occupy a corner of the dining room or be housed in the basement, a converted garage, a spare bedroom, or even a separate dedicated room. The nature of the business will dictate the home office.

And, while property prices and space rentals continue to increase, many businesses are under great pressure to economize and make the most of available space. When company executives calculate the space cost per employee they usually try to pack as many people as possible into the smallest space.



## Space Planning must adapt to Work Styles

The five major elements of Office Space Design:

**Comfort** - Assuring that work stations are adjustable and suited to the task, whether sitting, standing, spending hours at the computer or on the phone

**Efficiency** - Locating work teams in convenient proximity, placing equipment near workers who use it most

**Communication** - Organizing each department for the most effective means of communicating internally and externally with co-workers and customers

**Productivity** - Maintaining a logical flow throughout the office

**Effectiveness** - Establishing clear goals and objectives for the work environment



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Bergh explains that space arrangements have a huge impact on the culture of any given company. "The way your office is laid out affects how people behave. If you want your people to work and interact productively, some features are essential: natural light, greenery and foliage, a quiet ambience, social space, some personal territory."

Given the caged environments of the cubicle era, partitioning ourselves from one another in areas where space is reduced to its leanest and meanest economic essentials we must remind ourselves that the need for physical proximity to other human beings in a conducive environment remains primordial.

CN Business Furniture is a company that designs and enables intelligent, energizing workspaces for a myriad of companies – large and small. By affording customers the opportunity to space plan their business environments, CN provides the opportunity to consider how the office space could be adapted or reorganized to improve efficiency, update surroundings or meet new business objectives.

"At CN, we have perfected the art of effective space planning. Our designers provide an analysis of your office needs, size, storage, breakout areas, meeting rooms, audio visual, air conditioning, IT, kitchens and more to ensure that the correct workspace solutions are found for any business environment," explains Bergh.

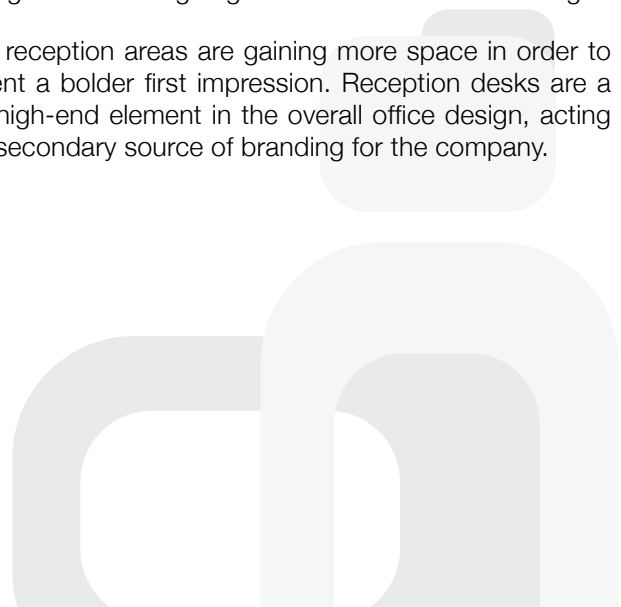
Buildings are no longer just structures to house workers. Employers are beginning to understand that a healthy, happy workforce actually leads to increased productivity, and more and more companies are taking steps to ensure that employees have safe and comfortable workspaces.

According to Bergh you'd previously see private offices for managers and executives and cubicles for all the workers. "People are not set up in departments anymore. They are set up in teams, job families. This is a more collaborative setup, without walls, so people can interact and talk to each other".





Due to a technology driven mobile work force, there is a need to provide conference or common areas that have multiple functions and uses. Most corporate offices today have one large formal conference room and a separate smaller informal conference room. In addition to flexible rooms, furniture built on casters to allow for mobility is becoming more common.




Workspaces are designed to allow for flexibility and efficiency, while incorporating the overall comfort factor. Modular workstations continue to be a dominant alternative to a facility comprised of hallways and private offices. Employee common areas such as lunchrooms and outside seating are becoming larger and more accommodating.

Also, reception areas are gaining more space in order to present a bolder first impression. Reception desks are a very high-end element in the overall office design, acting as a secondary source of branding for the company.



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