Office Design – New Approaches to Organizational Change

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Abstract

"The office building is one of the great icons of the twentieth century. Office towers dominate the skylines of cities in every continent [as] the most visible index of economic activity, of social, technological, and financial progress, they have come to symbolize much of what this century has been about." (Francis Duffy, renowned office design consultant and author, 2000). The office building is also the most tangible reflection of a profound change in employment patterns that has occurred over the last one hundred years (Becker and Steele, 1995).

Nowadays, corporations invest in people and what makes them more productive, including redesigning the office work environment. Organizational change and the changing speed of information technology are influencing the workplace of the future. Workplaces for the new century are designed thoughtfully not by rank and status but overridden by one factor: work process. The purpose of the new workplace is to support the work processes that derive from best practices. New office design is stemming from business trends that influence work style, such as knowledge-sharing, collaborative work, flattened hierarchy, mobility and technology. More and more, company culture—which can be defined as the priorities and values that a company chooses to communicate and promote, is being reflected in workplace design.

This paper researches how new trends in office design have emerged, the physical office environment and emerging ideas of new ways of working. Spatial design and ergonomic transformations that respond to the new face of corporate changes are also discussed in the paper. The paper also examines the spatial experience of corporate Egypt through a survey of 670 employees in different work sectors in Cairo.

Keywords
office space design, organizational change, work privacy, new office spaces