



5 ESSENTIALS FOR A HEALTHY WORKPLACE

What employees want from their workspace has fundamentally changed amid the sustained shift towards remote and hybrid working. The pandemic has reshaped our lives in so many ways and people now seek workplaces that blend the comforts of home, the accessibility of the office, and the experience of destinations.

These desired outcomes pose a challenge for landlords and occupiers to rethink the workplace and successfully accommodate the future needs of the workforce. Getting this right will not only support the return to offices once the pandemic subsides, but is a powerful tool to attract and retain people as talent shortages escalate.

The term *wellbeing* has become part of our daily language both inside and outside the walls of workplaces, and we look at this from a physical and psychological perspective. As workplace designers we ask,

“What is the wellness approach to design that provides a desirable human experience and consequently a place where people want to work?”

To answer this question, we've identified five imperatives that a healthy workplace should invoke.



Mobility

The office of today wears many hats. We work, we interact, we learn and grow, we innovate and we socialise.

As we work from home, we may experience productivity benefits with less travel and distractions, but this comes at the expense of interpersonal connections as well as ad hoc and structured learning and development.

We have all heard of the physical implications associated with too much desk time and sedentary work. An immediate solution is sit-to-stand desking, but is this enough?

Whilst sit-to-stand desks provide some mobility, are they used correctly?

Many office workers fly through the novelty period of standing at their desks and often revert to all-day seating, while others stand for too long.

We must examine and provide broader options that drive greater workplace **mobility**, encourage behavioural change and are easily implemented regardless of budget constraints.

Travel mapping and the experience on the journey is an important consideration when designing space, for example consider the journey taken in your local Westfield shopping centre and the positioned escalators that ensure the shopper travels further to increase exposure to window shopping.



Choice

With strategic planning and technology, we can navigate employees to move more during the day; to learn, socialise, focus, refresh, and experience more than just their desk. Location-aware technology, provides the information to enable organisations to better meet the needs of their workforce.

Whilst it's been a challenging period for workers around the world, many employees now enjoy the flexibility of remote working – the **choice** to design their workday around their lifestyle.

There is a huge list of wellbeing benefits when working from home, such as natural ventilation, accessibility to nature, the feeling of comfort, soft furnishings, flexible hours, and more time to walk the household pet.

As workplace designers, how can we replicate these home comforts in the office?

New commercial developments provide rooftop gardens or outdoor terraces, some firms offer satellite offices with natural ventilation, and many fitout requests now include more informal spaces to provide a sense of comfort and homeliness, whilst utilising Biophillicia (our tendency to seek connections with nature) to bring the outdoors in.



Belonging

Across CBDs, many landlords are questioning their traditional offering to tenants and now consider how buildings and public spaces activate cities, and provide a sense of community and **belonging**.

Collectively, as we create healthier workplaces designed for the human experience, we continue to develop cities to feel more like local communities rather than sterile, concrete jungles. This is the realm of placemaking and is likely to become an important part of reviving our city centres and enhancing the feeling of belonging.



Social Interaction

As a community, we are aching to return to a sense of normality and social interaction, with friends and family and our colleagues. We seek to enjoy the more personal connection that will define the next phase of our way of work.

We need to harness this enthusiasm and integrate it into workplace planning and design. By providing informal spaces with technology to support physical environments, we can maximise **socialisation**, no matter where people work.



Learning

Workplaces that combine both physical and virtual environments provide immeasurable benefit to employees' **learning** and development needs, too. As we blend healthy physical spaces with technology, we maximise staff engagement, enabling them to learn and grow in an environment that is tailored to their needs. When employee engagement increases, there is a corresponding increase in employee retention by up to 87%.

As we place our workplaces under the microscope and view employee wellbeing at the front and centre, a healthier human experience is achievable. It creates a holistic cycle of benefits for both the organisation and the humans it employs.

Healthy humans equal healthy businesses.

If you're looking to prepare your workplace for the future contact the Cushman & Wakefield Design and Workplace team.

Maria Russo-Fama | Director - Client Services,
Australia & New Zealand. Project & Development Services
p: +61 412 461 581 e: Maria.Russofama@cushwake.com



cushmanwakefield.com.au