

Wellness at Work: 6 Trends for Healthier Workspaces

As the new year approaches, many people are beginning to think about how they might resolve to improve their overall wellness for 2016. Similarly, many businesses are considering ways that they can help their employees stay happy, healthy, and satisfied with their jobs. During the recession, the workforce was generally thankful just to have a paycheck, but now that the economy has turned around, employers can't take top talent for granted. In fact, a 2014 LinkedIn study found that 85% of the global workforce was actively or passively looking for a new job, so companies have to up their game to keep the best-of-the-best on their team.

[>> Infographic: The State of Well-Being & The War for Talent](#)

The way to employees' hearts may just be, well, through the heart. One approach businesses are using to successfully encourage employee retention is through wellness programs, but today's health initiatives go beyond putting a gym in the building. From hiring nutritionists to work with the cafeteria food service staff to bringing in a yoga teacher for lunchtime Zen sessions, companies are coming to understand the sorts of perks that make employees loyal and even improve productivity.

Getting office workspaces into good shape

In addition to their updated wellness programs, lots of businesses are taking an active role in creating *workspaces* that are healthier for their employees, as well. Benefits include increased productivity and job satisfaction, and keeping workers active throughout the day also spurs creativity. Some of the trends we are seeing in the office design field that can help improve wellbeing in the workplace include:

Sit-to-stand desks

A popular option, especially for creative types, the sit-to-stand desk can be raised to be used as a standing desk, and lowered for use as a traditional desk with chair. Studies have shown that the differing vantage points that go along with this change in position can spark creativity.

Dining areas

Too many people have the tendency to work through lunch, scarfing down some take-out between responding to emails or returning phone calls. To change this habit, companies are creating attractive dining areas, often in conjunction with healthier options in the work cafeteria or vending machines, thus encouraging people to take a mental break and get away from their desks for a few minutes.

Collaborative breakout spaces

Big conference rooms are becoming a thing of the past. Again, encouraging a change of scenery and getting people's bodies moving, the collaborative breakout space fits the way people

engage in business in our modern times. These more intimate meeting spaces allow for collaborate conversations and quick in-person tête-à-tête that may have otherwise occurred via email or the phone.

Stairways to health

To encourage employees to use the stairs instead of the elevator, some companies are designating certain stairwells as "stairways to health." Adorned with colorful paint or bright murals, and featuring upbeat music, as well as Wi-Fi for wireless devices, these stairs make it fun to get in a little cardio when going to and from work.

Ergonomic chairs

While ergonomic chairs are almost a given in most workspaces these days, there are new models that are even more back- and bottom-friendly. Newer types of chairs improve circulation by ensuring knees and hips are not pinched. Better arm supports help the neck and shoulders remain properly aligned and pain-free.

Garbage and recycling stations

What does garbage have to do with wellness? Some businesses are taking trashcans out of the cubicle in favor of garbage and recycling stations, which require employees to get up and walk to dispose of trash. Even those few extra steps can burn a couple of calories in addition to getting the blood flowing to the brain, which can increase productivity and creativity.

A healthy option for every office and budget

With so many outside-of-the box (or cubicle) ways to promote employee wellness, consider your type of work, your building, and your budget to determine which options will best-meet your goals. drb Business Interiors can partner with your company to bring your ideas for good health to fruition; [contact us](#) to learn more and discuss your unique vision.