



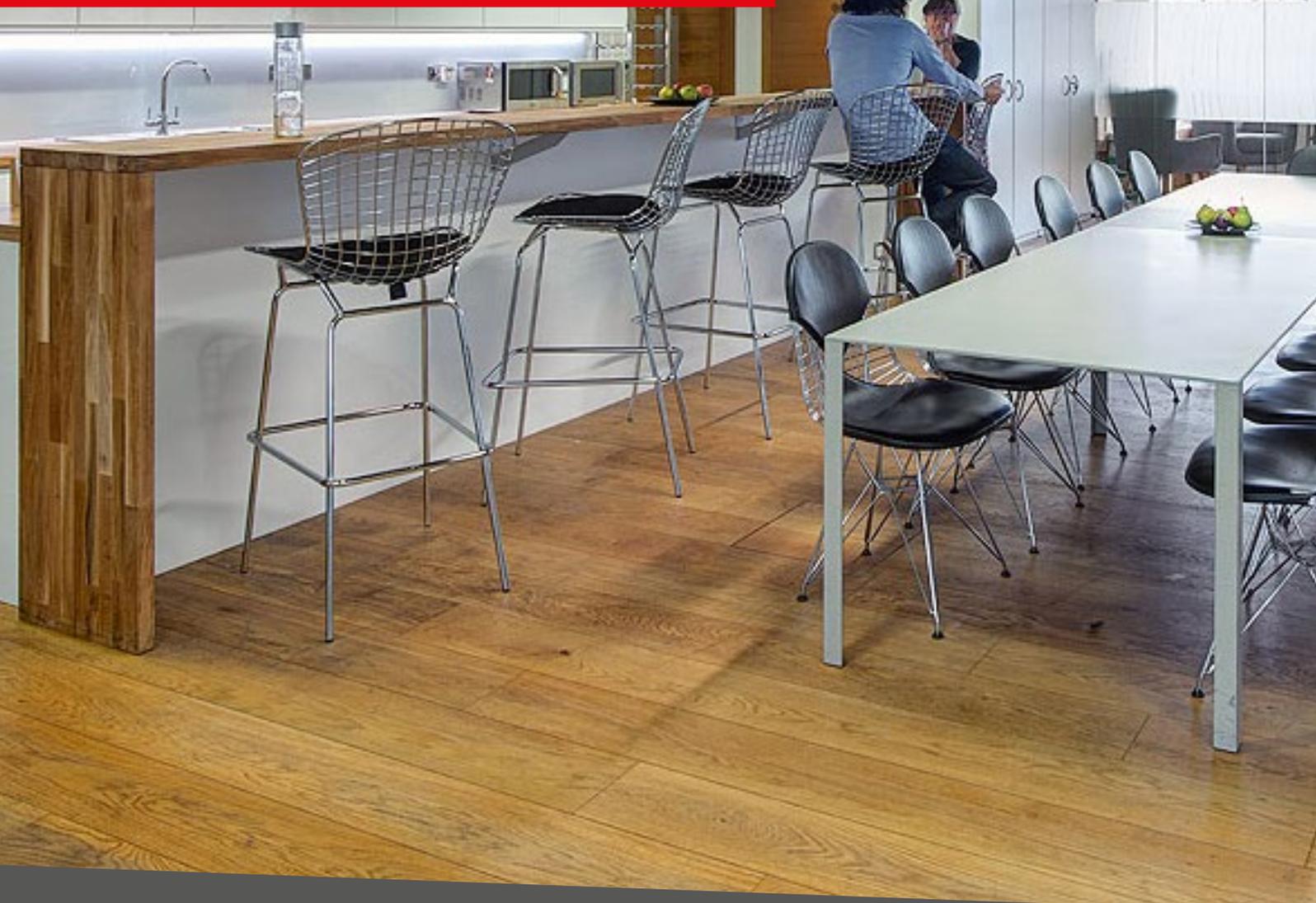
How to Design an Office Everyone Loves (*Even the FD*)

ACOBS

Your Key Points Guide to
Designing a Kick-Ass Office

GCWS

WARNING: This ebook can help you to design an amazing office, avoid costly mistakes, and create a workspace that motivates and energises your team. Only to be consumed by people who love design.



A photograph of a modern office interior. In the foreground, there is a dark blue armchair with wooden legs and a potted plant with long green leaves. The floor is made of light-colored wood-look planks. In the background, there is a glass-walled meeting room with a white door. The glass has several green circular stickers on it. The ceiling is white with a grid pattern and a large rectangular skylight. The overall atmosphere is bright and professional.

“Good design is not just how something looks, it’s how it works too.”

Moving into a new office – or refurbishing your current one – is no small task. It can be stressful, time consuming and expensive. But – and it’s a big but – when you unveil your new office and everyone’s delighted, you’re going to feel great. We call this the Champagne moment, when the works are completed and everyone walks in to a chorus of wows!

The best way to achieve this sort of reaction is to perfect the design, because that’s what people will see every day.

This ebook looks at what you can do to get the best possible design outcome for your office refurbishment project.

We do hope you find it useful.



Contents

#1: How to Create a Stellar Design Brief	5
Hint: It's Just a Conversation.	
#2: 5 Questions to Ask Your Co-Workers	8
It's not all about you.	
#3: How to Rock Your Mood Board!	11
It's scrap book time.	
#4: How to Make Work Work for Everyone	15
You need to think about inclusivity.	
#5: Cool Designs for Office Introverts	18
Designing for all types of people.	
#6: If Only We Could Design For All Five Senses	21
Is there such a thing as a 5D office?	
#7: How To Do ... Forever Designs	26
Make sure your office is designed to last.	
If in Doubt: Talk to An Expert	30



How to Create a Stellar Design Brief

Not sure what you want in terms of an office design? Perfect – that's what we're here for! And it all starts with a bloomin' good chinwag.

We know, we know. You've been given the thrilling / terrifying (delete as appropriate) task of sorting out your office refurbishment. And what you're really wondering is, how do you explain your ideas to a design company when you haven't a clue how the process works?

We're telling you that you don't need to worry about that.

Before we get into the details of writing a design brief, we want to explain about why we need a brief in the first place.

It's pretty simple. At least, it is if you've ever pushed a trolley round a supermarket.

Hint: It's starts with a good conversation.

Eh. What's a Design Brief Got to Do With Tesco?

Starting an interior fit out project without a design brief is a bit like going to Tesco without a shopping list. Instead of buying meat, milk and vegetables, you stuff your basket with muffins, two packets of BOGOF pretzels and a £35 self-cleaning litter box.

And nothing to cook for tea.

By cruel twist of irony, you've also managed to blow a massive slice of your food budget on a toilet for the cat (cue embarrassed silence). They have ways of making you spend, these supermarkets.

A design brief works much the same way. Unless you have a reasonably good idea of the why, what and when for the project, you might miss some of the things that are important to you, and you could end up blowing cash on stuff that you really didn't need.

The Nuts and Bolts

Now you know what a design brief is, how do you go about writing one? The good news is, if you scribble some notes in answer to the following questions, your design brief will be 90% done. (The other 10% will be extracted by force when we come to interrogate meet you....only kidding!)

Who are you and what do you do?

Tell us what your company looks like, feels like, tastes like (not literally, we don't need to lick your CEO). What's your vibe? Tell us like you just met us at a party, and not at a conference trying to sell us something!

Who's your customer?

Do you help tech start ups? Cash-strapped SMEs? Clerkenwell hipsters? What image do you need to portray to them – high end, approachable, bold?



What are your business goals?

Are you growing / downsizing/ rebranding? Are you thinking about introducing hot-desking or changing your way of working? Why are you searching for office design and fit out companies now?

What's the design direction?

Earthy, mellow, rustic? Bright, bold, urban? Smoking jackets and havana cigars? The more specific you can be the better. Have you got some pictures to show us?

What about the practical stuff?

Think about computers, printers, AV equipment, wireless networks, video conferencing facilities, storage, breakout rooms, bathrooms, kitchens and the like. Your colleagues won't thank you if there's nowhere to pee.

What makes you gag?

Seriously, there's always something that you really couldn't stand to see in your design (tartan-themed bathroom suite anyone?) This will tell us what to sidestep and will avoid disappointment.

What's the budget?

If the results doesn't justify the investment, your FD might pull the plug on the project. A ballpark figure will work at this stage so your designer can make sure that she gives you realistic value without over or under-promising on the design.

Wow, that's a lot of questions.

It is. That's why we and every other worth-their-salt design company in London will give you a template brief to fill out.

These documents are useful because they trigger all the things you might not have thought of and ultimately save you time and money.

But.....(there's always a but, right?)

The perfect design brief is the Goldilocks brief – not too long, not too short, but just right. Problem is, it's all too easy, for both designers and their clients, to get lost in facts while creating a design brief. When we ask people to write down what they do, they panic and get all spreadsheetsy on us with jargon like "solutions," or "generate increased ROI."

Hang on, take a breath

Sitting down with you, over a cuppa and a packet of hobnobs, and having a chinwag about where you want to go and what it is you're dreaming about informs us so much more than any template or form.

Here's an example conversation that makes us do a happy dance.

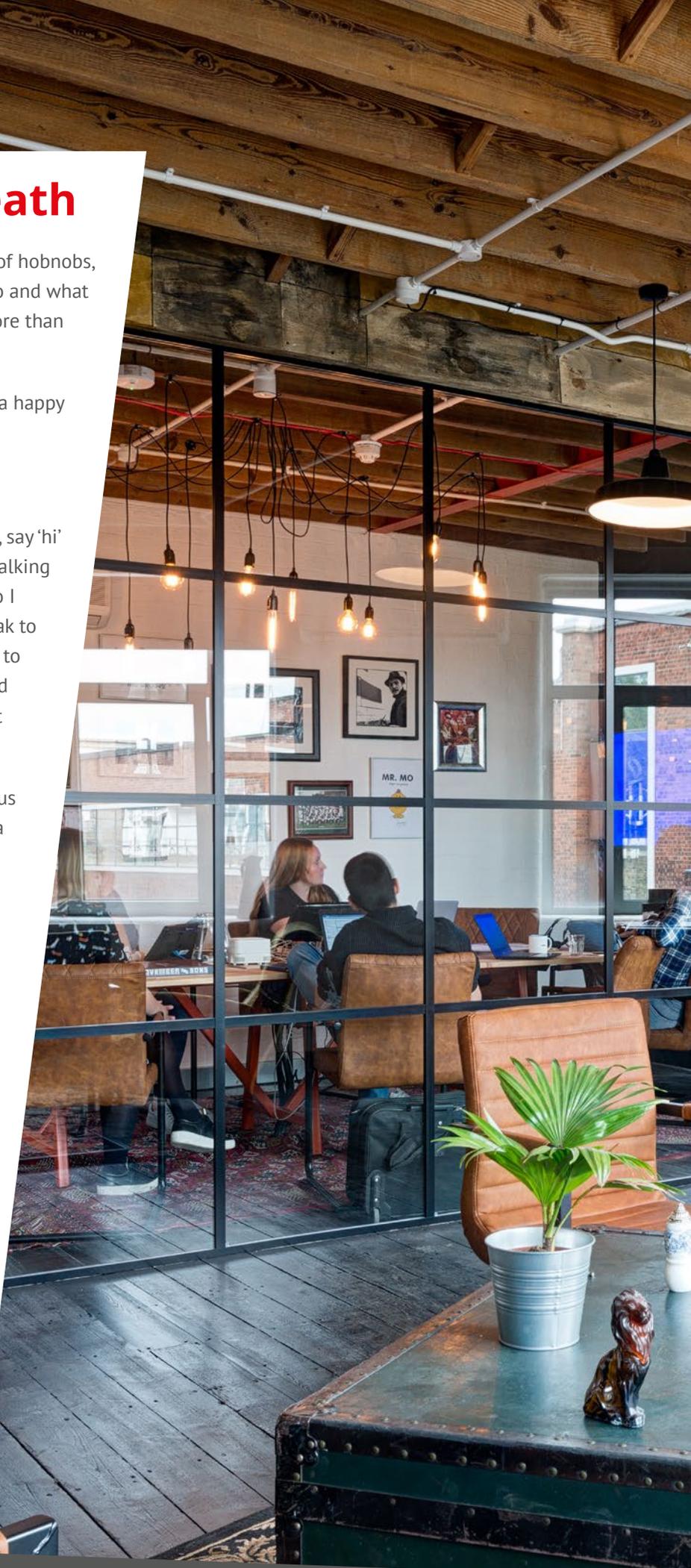
Us: "So, Emily, tell us about your dream day."

You: "Oh, well I get to work and find myself a desk, say 'hi' to my colleagues on the way. I hear some people talking about a project I've been doing a bit of work on, so I catch up with them about that. But I've got to speak to an important client in an hour; I've got some prep to do and I'm a bit distracted. So, I grab my laptop and move into a private room. I shut the door and start working."

We love conversations like this because they give us so much information. In the time it takes to slurp a cup of PG, we've learned that you love the idea of open plan working, but worry that you might not be able to concentrate. Already we have the start of a design solution – creating quiet focus rooms within a plug and play office landscape. And we brewed this idea without an Excel spreadsheet in sight. Hurray!

So next time you're asked, "What's the design brief?" don't panic. All you need to know is what the dream is. We'll take it from there.

Oh, but is it that simple. Have you thought about what your colleagues want from their brand spanking new office?





#2

5 Questions to Ask Your Co-workers When Planning Your Dream Office Design?

Forget Tough Mudder. Collaboratively designing your office refurbishment is the absolute best in team bonding!

Office furniture, check. Wall colour, check. Flooring, check. Opinions of your co-workers?

Uh-oh. That's not so easy to get right.

Somebody will always be hankering after a nice, quiet corner office while others (usually the boys) will yearn for a beer-on-tap, levitating desk type environment that's the latest buzzword on cool. You can't please all your precious peeps, all the time ... but you can definitely optimise the office design so that everyone's pretty chuffed with the results.

1. Where do you do your best work?

Everyone has a go-to spot in the office where they can escape from the chaos, dig in and get great work done. It might be their assigned desk, but it could just as easily be a conference room with a white board, a kitchen with a Nespresso machine or, ahem, the local pub.

If you're an office full of nomads, then you might want to take away assigned desks and focus on hot desks and touchdown stations. They say that sitting is the new smoking, so it's a good idea to factor in some standing desks as well.

2. How helpful is it to be close to your co-workers?

Chatty types find that the buzz of people working around them stimulates their creative juices better than the office with its cubicle wall. Quiet lovers need sound-soaking private spaces where they can work without others interrupting their chi. There's no war between these two extremes – it's perfectly possible to design work areas for all personalities (cue the cheer from introverts!)

Speaking to your colleagues will give you a good idea of where to stop the pendulum swinging between a fully collaborative office and one that gives you a bit of privacy to study up on your animal GIFs.

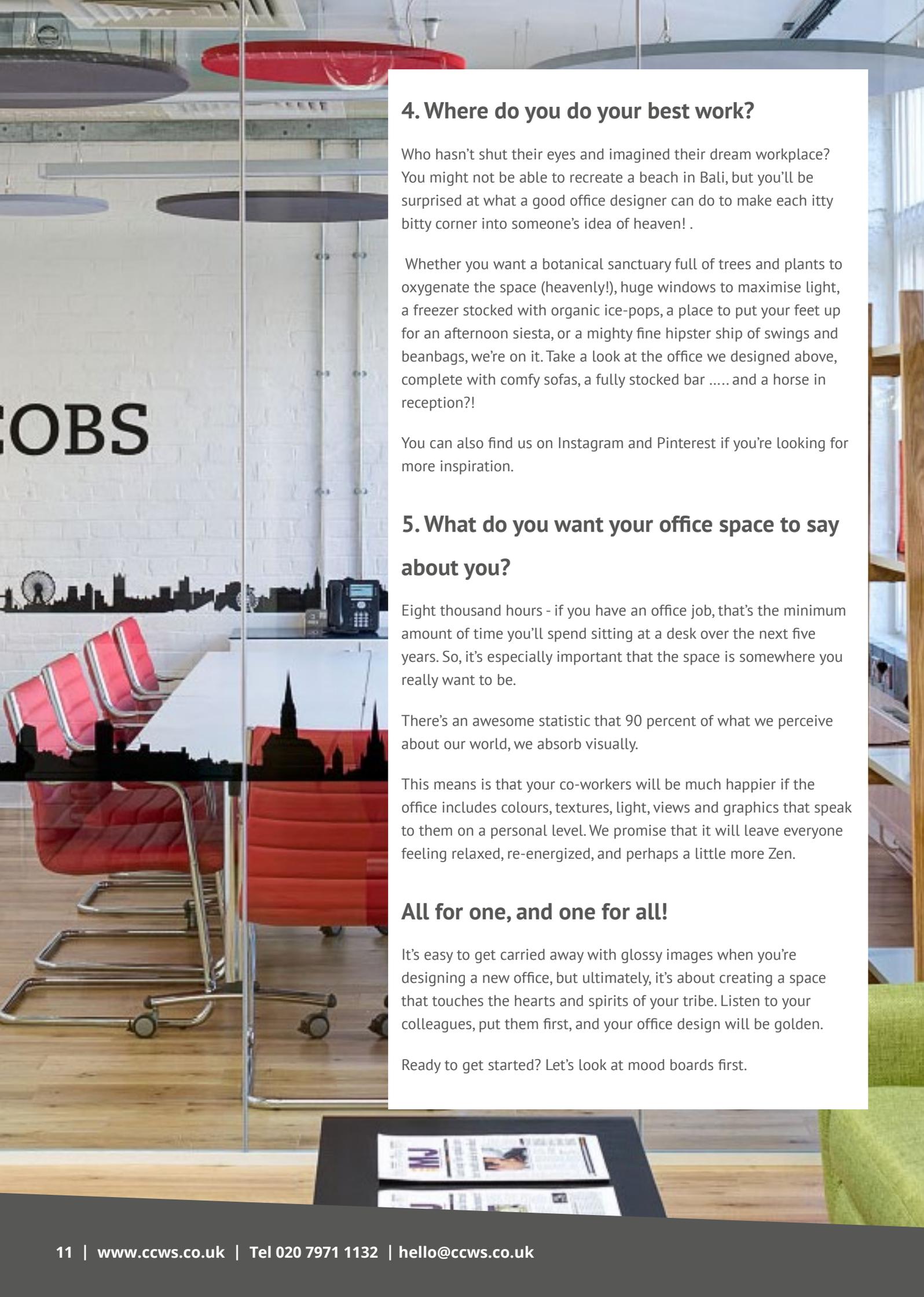
Use their feedback to create the right mix of stand-up tables, break-out room, libraries, outdoor spaces, nooks and crannies to achieve calm, tranquility and focus.

3. What's your biggest workplace hassle?

You're not afraid of the truth ... so pop on your detective badge and figure out what it is about your current office that gets on people's goat. Maybe there isn't enough natural light, maybe there's no space to relieve tension, or maybe your pinchy-clippy things are going missing all the bloomin' time.

Make a note of everything, even if irritations seem unrelated to your office's interior design. A savvy commercial office fit out team can fix of bunch of behind-the-scenes frustrations with a smarter layout for your office.





4. Where do you do your best work?

Who hasn't shut their eyes and imagined their dream workplace? You might not be able to recreate a beach in Bali, but you'll be surprised at what a good office designer can do to make each itty bitty corner into someone's idea of heaven! .

Whether you want a botanical sanctuary full of trees and plants to oxygenate the space (heavenly!), huge windows to maximise light, a freezer stocked with organic ice-pops, a place to put your feet up for an afternoon siesta, or a mighty fine hipster ship of swings and beanbags, we're on it. Take a look at the office we designed above, complete with comfy sofas, a fully stocked bar and a horse in reception?!

You can also find us on Instagram and Pinterest if you're looking for more inspiration.

5. What do you want your office space to say about you?

Eight thousand hours - if you have an office job, that's the minimum amount of time you'll spend sitting at a desk over the next five years. So, it's especially important that the space is somewhere you really want to be.

There's an awesome statistic that 90 percent of what we perceive about our world, we absorb visually.

This means is that your co-workers will be much happier if the office includes colours, textures, light, views and graphics that speak to them on a personal level. We promise that it will leave everyone feeling relaxed, re-energized, and perhaps a little more Zen.

All for one, and one for all!

It's easy to get carried away with glossy images when you're designing a new office, but ultimately, it's about creating a space that touches the hearts and spirits of your tribe. Listen to your colleagues, put them first, and your office design will be golden.

Ready to get started? Let's look at mood boards first.



#3

How to Rock Your Mood Board!

Have you suddenly started noticing the doors in Levi's changing rooms? Caught yourself checking out the mood lighting instead of your significant other when out for a romantic dinner? Spending hours and hours on Pinterest until you can't see straight and your head is smoking?

Congratulations, you're thinking like a designer!

If you're like us, you have a tendency to find design inspiration everywhere – which is a wonderful trait to have. But inspiration can be such a fleeting thing. Unless you capture and log the thing that caught your eye, there's a chance it will be lost forever.

That's where a mood board comes in.

Mood Board Basics

A mood board is a collage of inspiration. It can include just about anything - colours, images, graphics, cloth samples,

illustrations, plants, metallics, descriptive words – even noises (bubble wrap, sweet wrappers) or smell (leather, perfume). There are really no limits to the imagination, as long as it tells the story of how you want your office refurbishment to look.

Starting the design process with a mood board is a good idea for two reasons:

1. It helps to organise your thoughts.

It's easy to have your head turned when you're organising an office refurbishment – there are so many amazing images out there, it's easy to get distracted and overwhelmed. Mood boarding allows you to heap all your ideas in one place so you can quickly see what goes together and what doesn't.

2. You know what they say about pictures painting a thousand words?

Creating a mood board to present to your designer gives her a really clear idea of the direction you want the design to take. It's one thing to have a bunch of office fit out ideas whirling round your head; it's quite another to extract that design awesomeness from your brain in a way a designer can understand! A mood board gets you both on the same page.



Now that you have a good grasp of what a mood board is, let's take a look at how to create one.

Tip #1: Get the right tools

Pinterest is the obvious place for browsing images and creating a quick-and-easy mood board. The big plus is that others will have done a lot of the curating for you, and there's terrific search functionality to uncover colour palettes and different office fit out ideas that align with what you're looking to create. The drawback? Pinterest works exclusively for images.

Some people – like us – like to include offline elements in our mood boards; we find that rad mixes of fabrics, textures and so on adds the extra kick. If you've gathered some tactile elements, go crazy with the safety scissors and create a collage right there on your desk!

It might seem like a ludicrously old-fashioned thing to do, but emotions-wise, it can really spark a reaction. Just be careful with your pinkies on those blades...

Tip #2: Keep your eye on the brand

Interiors don't happen in isolation. They begin with a vision, based on your culture or brand. Ask yourself, what values does your company signify? Integrity, accountability, teamwork? Passion, diversity, the boss is always right? (Just kidding!) the vibe for your office

refurbishment, it's a good idea to start with these values and find imagery that matches up. For example, you might include furniture made from sustainable materials if you're an ethical company, or graphic art and feature walls if your company has a creative culture.

Instead of including specific office fit out ideas, play with images that are more thematic. The images above of icons with 'taches for men's charity Movember served as their own sort of inspiration board and provided a real jumping off point for our designer. So good, we had to resist the temptation to put these chaps in every room!

Tip #3: Use all your senses

If you're struggling to come up with office fit out ideas, go for a walk and notice things. Notice the grass in the park, the sky, the clouds and the shrubs. Take photos of concrete, rusty metal, tree bark and other textures that catch your eye. Smell the lavender... and the diesel if you're in London. What colours and sensations grab you? How do these things make you feel?

Remember, it's not called a mood board for nothing. Think of the last time you saw a gallery exhibition and it really touched you. When putting together mood boards, you're trying to create the same sensation. Look at your images as a whole like a painting. Hang them on the wall and go back a few steps. Are your images more than just eye candy? Do they capture the way you'd like your office to feel?



Tip #4: Do more than one

Designers often come up with two or three different concepts for an office design project, so don't feel you have to restrict yourself to a single mood board. If you're struggling to choose between a modern look with cool tones and clean lines, or a retro feel with curves and distressed textures, then make a board for both. Remember, you're only information gathering at this stage. Your designer will help you find the common thread and tie your office fit out ideas together into a cohesive whole.

Tip #5: Add some explanations

If you're gathering images from the internet to create your mood board, remember to write why exactly you selected a picture. For example, did you like the image

composition, the materials, the tonality, the colour palette or simply the first impression? Words are powerful tools. Writing short descriptions on your mood board can help clarify something that your image doesn't communicate.

Now we're definitely in the mood(board) – are you ready to give it a go? (Not sorry. lame puns make us happy!) If you're not sure where to start, take a look around our Pinterest boards for some inspiration. We can't wait to see your ideas!

Once you've got your mood boards laid out, it's time to engage a specialist office interior designer. You could (and should) talk to us but you can also see some of our design thinking and experiences by reading on.

We hope you're finding this useful so far? You can call us any time on 020 7971 1132 if you want some advice, tailored just for you.

#4

How to Make Work Work for Everyone

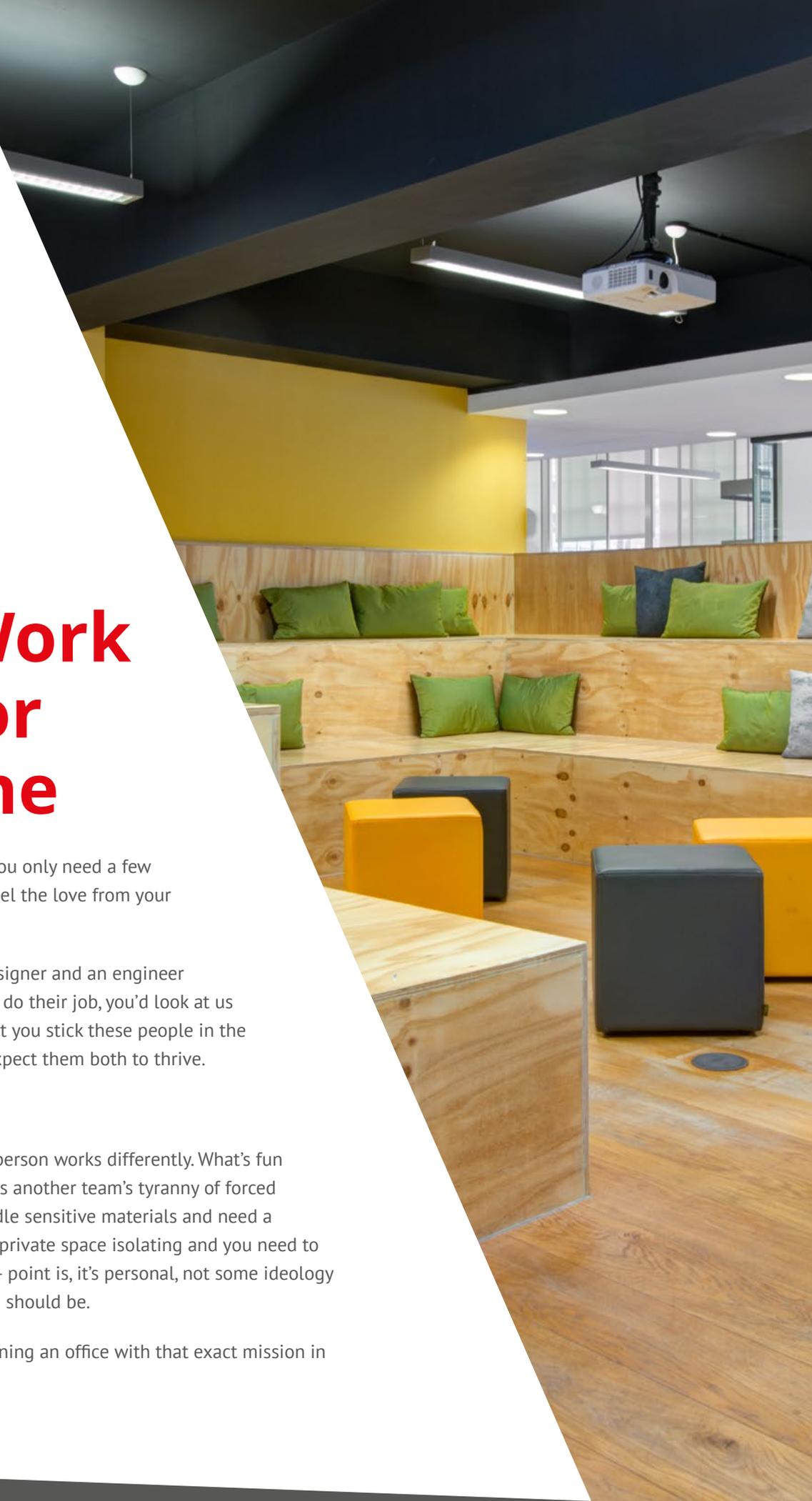
Equality is the new black. And you only need a few simple things for everyone to feel the love from your London office fit out.

If we told you that a graphic designer and an engineer needed the exact same skills to do their job, you'd look at us like we were cray-cray, right? Yet you stick these people in the same office environment and expect them both to thrive.

How does that work?

Everyone is different and each person works differently. What's fun and motivational for one team is another team's tyranny of forced hula hooping. Some of you handle sensitive materials and need a private space. Some of you find private space isolating and you need to be in constant communication – point is, it's personal, not some ideology about how office interior design should be.

Here are 10 principles for designing an office with that exact mission in mind.





#1. Give people lots of mediums to express themselves

Write on the walls. Scribble on the windows. Pin up lots of graph paper. There's something really satisfying about seeing people's ideas wherever you walk like a continuous brainstorm. Plus, it's a great way to customise your own little corner of the office.

#2. Let there be (natural) light.

Prisons have tiny windows for a reason – to cut contact with the outside world. Don't make your people feel like prisoners. Exposure to daylight makes people happier, healthier and more creative. So, ditch the heavy blinds and let natural light bounce around the room. No one ever asks for less natural light, not even the work-all-night vampires.

#3. Let departments customise their own space.

Your "departments" may consist of two or three people working in side by side in a single open-plan space, but these team structures should still drive their own office interior design. London creatives may need to be in constant collaboration, so give them an area behind a sliding door where they can communicate without distracting others. Your legal people may need a private office for making sensitive phone calls. Try to adapt the space to the person rather than the person to the space.

#4. Use lots of glass.

We love glass panels. They give a sense of transparency which is an important value in most organisations. Plus, they let you create a private space for meetings and quiet work without feeling like you're cut off from the rest of the office. Glass allows for natural light to flow through, too, and you can etch or paint on it to display your branding.

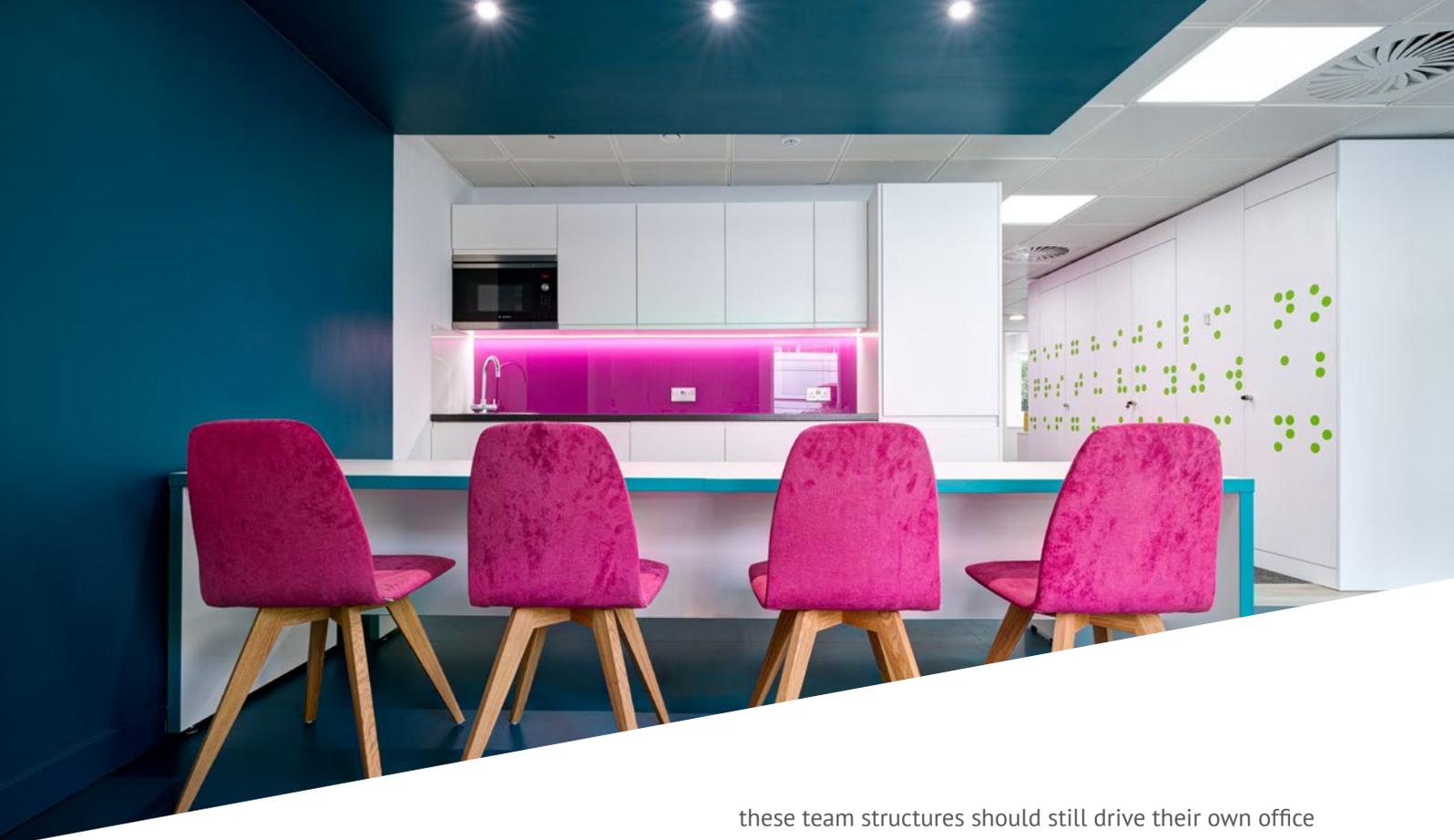
#5. Provide multiple communal spaces.

There are some parts of the office where no one would expect privacy anyway, so make these areas as sociable and welcoming as possible. For example, a cosy sitting area, kitchen or bar are fantastic places for people to socialise, brainstorm and take a break from thinking time.

#6. For goodness sake, move.

You've probably heard about the life-extending benefits of exercise (!) so think about incorporating a number of key spaces that get people moving throughout the day – desk to collaboration area to kitchen to stadium seating. Use wheels to whizz around the healthiest office interior design in London!

Or, ban the chairs! Make it easy for people to have walking meetings or throw in some sit-stand desks for maximum health and wellbeing.



#7. Unify spaces through branding.

While it's motivating to give teams something unique in their own area, you must also make sure all areas are in contact with each other so it's clear you're all operating under the same flag. Make sure the company logo is visually present everywhere and unify the neighbourhoods through common colour schemes.

#8. Let people control their environment.

No matter how laid back your people are, it will all kick off in the thermostat wars. You know, the one where a chilly woman and a sweltering man are constantly battling over the temperature dial; up, down, up again? This little tyranny plays out in every office everyday, and it's just one example of how much happier your people would be if you let them control their own environment.

#9. Get everyone involved from the beginning.

Your "departments" may consist of two or three people working in side by side in a single open-plan space, but

these team structures should still drive their own office interior design. London creatives may need to be in constant collaboration, so give them an area behind a sliding door where they can communicate without distracting others. Your legal people may need a private office for making sensitive phone calls. Try to adapt the space to the person rather than the person to the space.

#10. Plan for weird habits..

Apparently, some people like to clean their fingernails with business cards or spend their break doing pull-ups in the loo. We're not judging. If that's what makes people work better, it pays to give them a private space where they can indulge their habits away from prying eyes. It's a small gesture, but it makes a difference.

What about the introverts?

Now we've given you some ideas for how to design with inclusivity in mind, there's one group of people that you might need to think more carefully about – the office introverts. Every office has people that are work better with some alone time and you'll find out if you complete the steps in section 2 earlier on.

So, how do you cater for their needs too?



#5

Cool Designs for Office Introverts

Open plan meccas are tough on introverts. So how do you give them space to do their best work?

Picture this: there's a colleague sitting opposite you in your open plan office. She's deep in thought, with a furrowed brow, head resting on her hands, her elbows on her desk. She seems pretty down, so you ask if she's okay.

"Oh yes, I'm fine," she says. "I'm just trying to block out the noise so I can focus."

Introverts are not shy, or lonely, or antisocial creatures, despite the stereotypical view that others may have of them. They simply feel better when spending stretches of quiet time alone. Too much noise, too many distractions – even if it's just a tap on the shoulder – can drain their energy pretty quickly..

Which basically means they're going to be stressed out, burned out and totally miserable in whizzy collaborative spaces with ping pong balls flying over their heads.

We know you respect your people and you want to do your best for them. So here's a breakdown of our favourite introvert-friendly features so you can deliver an office fit out that your quiet ones will adore.



Same Activity, Two Approaches

What bugs introverts the most about the trend for open-plan working is that it gives them limited options for quiet work. Get it right with areas that are laid out for different activities; some collaborative, some solitary. But even then, there's an assumption that sticking a cosy chair in a low-traffic area will give introverts all the calm space they need to make a private phone call or relax. It's good.... but it's not quite perfect.

For example: introverts enjoy collaborative work just as much as extroverts do. But whereas an extrovert's idea of collaboration may involve multitudes of people around a large table in the middle of the open-plan floor space, an introvert will prefer an intimate huddle room with just enough space for two people and their laptops, cosy as two peas in a pod. Same activity...two very different design solutions.

Screen the Visuals and Block Out Sounds

Glass screens are gorgeous, but introverts can still see everything outside. So why not try a couple of different setups that heighten privacy? Opaque glass is an obvious solution, but there's a whole range of high-backed "acoustic" furniture that provides optical screening and blocks out background noise.

From wing-back couches to office dens, phone pods to acoustic desk screens, manufacturers are introducing new privacy concepts every year to meet growing demand. And you get tons of style for your pound.

Sophia Dembling, the writer behind Psychology Today's "The Introvert's Corner," once said a ringing phone is like someone running up from behind and yelling, "Boo!" That's why some workplaces have even introduced silent, phone-free areas which might feature a massage chair and aromatherapy – a place of refuge.

Pretty much what every introvert wants then....bravo!



Wheels Are Your Best Friend

We love modular furniture – that’s stuff on wheels – because it serves so many purposes. Placing a series of high-backed sofas throughout the office is simple and cost effective. When someone needs to be with their own thoughts, they can roll one around to face a wall or window. This creates a visual barrier from the rest of the office, and it’s comfy as heck too.

Put a couple of sofas together facing one another and you’ve created an intimate “room within a room” completely free from audiovisual distraction. For introverts, these arrangements score on every front:

- Acoustic privacy – they cut out noise.
- Visual privacy – no one can see you.
- Territorial privacy – it’s a space to call your own.
- Information privacy – you can discuss things in confidence.

Plus, it’s a social signal, letting others that the person doesn’t wish to be interrupted. Shhhhh.

Love Your Nooks and Crannies

Introverts will tell you that all private areas are good, but some spaces are just really good for thinking. These areas tend to have dimmer lighting and are tucked away in little nooks and crannies that are easy to gravitate towards when someone needs a break. Because they’re so small and only semi-permanent, you can easily personalise these spaces

with pics, plants, books – whatever you need to feel the benefits.

Some companies have gone so far as to hide top-secret privacy nooks throughout the building. Who wouldn’t want to to slink around through unmarked doors to a dim-lit corner with a powerpoint, comfy sofa and endless, delicious solitude?

What’s the Downside?

Here’s the best bit – there isn’t one. All of these options retain the good things about open-plan offices, and there are simply no drawbacks to a workspace that gives people choice. No introvert left behind.

(Just don’t even think about hot desking. Seriously. Your introverts will thank you.)

OK so let’s do a quick recap.

You’ve put your brief together; canvassed your colleagues to get their input; created your mood board; started thinking about how to please your whole team and the introverts too.

What else is there to do? How about thinking in four dimensions? Yes, that’s right, you can think about all five of your senses for your office design brief. Here’s how.

If Only We Could Design For All Five Senses...

#6

Guess what? We can! Here's some idea for making your office look, smell, sound, feel and even taste good, too!

Good design looks great, yes – but why shouldn't it also feel great, smell great and sound great?

After all, supermarkets lure you in with the smell of fresh-baked bread. Pot Noodles are devoid of all nutritional content but people love them because they smell, taste and sound so darn good. Slurp!

Up 'til now, we office fit out companies have focused on making things look pretty, with just a bit of texture thrown in to tickle the sense of touch. We've ignored the other three senses. And that means you're getting only a fraction of the experience that you could be getting from your interior fit out.

Well, hold on to your ears/noses/tongues people, because that's all about to change. Here's how to involve all five senses and create real impact in your office design.



The Sense of Sight

Every single part of design deals with your sense of sight. Colour, balance, contrast, space, proportion, rhythm, repetition – everything matters. That’s why it’s important to examine all the details when revamping a space.

Take the above reception area, for example. Its ceilings are gigantic and scale is mega-important when making design selections. You need oversized, dramatic lighting to feel proportionate to the ultra-high ceilings. We also had to think about break ups. We don’t mean cry-your-heart-out romantic break ups – we’re talking about breaking up that enormous floor space with some stunning geometric lighting strips. It’s the shape and symmetry that gives this office its mood of sophistication. Hell to the yes!

Here’s another office that juxtaposes different shapes – sinuous and geometric – to create “visual tension.” This is a fancy way of saying that it stops your office interior from looking samey and boring.

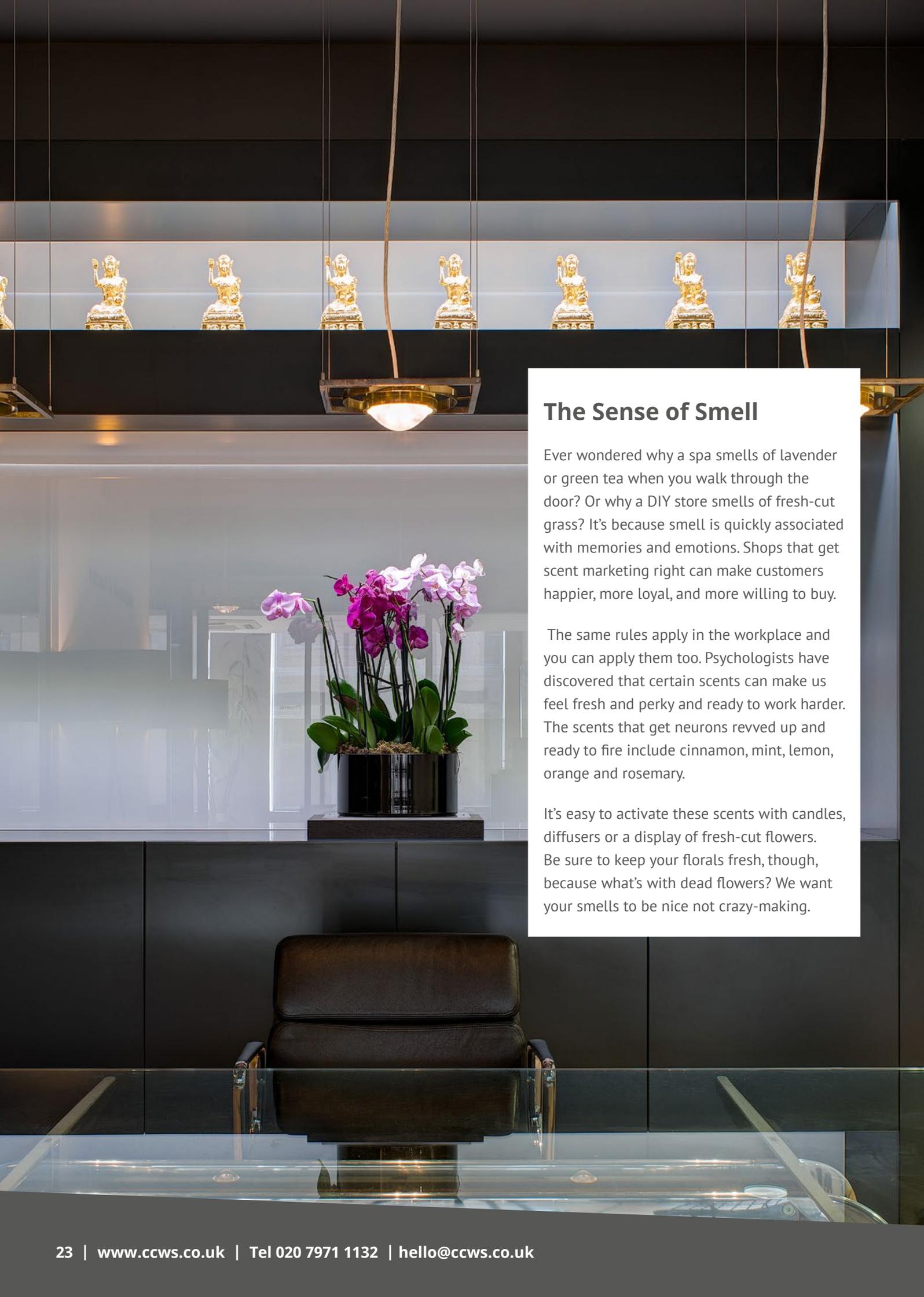
We freaking love the bold orange wall and turquoise area rug (subtlety has never really been our thing). Tip from the pros: beige is boring and makes your office look like it’s a celeb in rehab.

The Sense of Touch

Texture has a huge role to play in office design because it’s so closely associated with comfort and warmth... or the opposite. We’re seeing a huge trend for urban-cool metal and glass features at the moment. These materials give your office a visual wow, but they can be cold and sterile. It’s not until you add some beautiful mohairs, wools, rough-hewn wood or squishy bean bags that your interior fit out becomes really inviting. If you’re gonna go for texture kid, go big.

Other elements that can add texture to an office space include:

- Rugs, carpets and room dividers in kickass fabrics.
- Walls and furniture with complementary surfaces. Be it smooth, rough and glossy (oh my!), the texture of surfaces we touch greatly affects our enjoyment of the workspace.
- Sculptures, wallpaper and linger-on-the-fingers artwork like the smooth ‘n’ scratchy scribble boards in the above design.
- Flowers and plants. Aside from providing texture, nature also provides colour and a gorgeous scent for the ultimate multi-sensory experience. The beauty of nature is very powerful to people. Which leads us to



The Sense of Smell

Ever wondered why a spa smells of lavender or green tea when you walk through the door? Or why a DIY store smells of fresh-cut grass? It's because smell is quickly associated with memories and emotions. Shops that get scent marketing right can make customers happier, more loyal, and more willing to buy.

The same rules apply in the workplace and you can apply them too. Psychologists have discovered that certain scents can make us feel fresh and perky and ready to work harder. The scents that get neurons revved up and ready to fire include cinnamon, mint, lemon, orange and rosemary.

It's easy to activate these scents with candles, diffusers or a display of fresh-cut flowers. Be sure to keep your florals fresh, though, because what's with dead flowers? We want your smells to be nice not crazy-making.



The Sense of Taste

We don't usually go round licking furniture, which means that taste is an elusive element to incorporate into your design. Luckily, you don't have to be too literal to achieve taste in your interior fit out. Simply having a kitchen area, or fresh fruit on display, is an indication that something good is coming to tempt the palate. Food can motivate your people to gather together, take a break, and get a bit more intimate with each other.

If you haven't got the space for a kitchen, how about this shelf display? Those little pots of beans and mustard transform a boring white shelf into a kickass colourful display with an offbeat edge that's tasty, delightful ... and a little unexpected. Totally our jam. (Groan).



The Sense of Hearing

Hands up who has suffered from noise pollution in the workplace?

While sound is incredible for creating a mood, sometimes, it's the absence of sound that makes the difference. A noisy workplace can make us feel overwhelmed and confused while a place enveloped with silence can make us feel relaxed and focused on the task at hand. If your office feels like a coughing, munching, clacky-heeled echo chamber, no worries. We can organise an acoustic survey to make sure you get exactly the right noise level.

Rocking out more your bag? These shelf speakers are design objects that happen to put out high-quality sound. So really, when it comes to the sense of hearing, the only limit is your imagination.

It's time to awaken the senses!

Your new office is a blank slate to be filled with mind-blowing results. So don't just design for the eyes! When you create experiences that touch on every emotion, one

sense at a time, you can create a space that doesn't just look good, but functions well and feels amazing. Makes sense to us

Feeling inspired? Check out our instagram for examples of multi-sensory offices, and watch us in action, too!

Right, I know, this is a seriously long ebook. But we're onto the last section.

You know that office refurbishments are expensive, so would you like to know how to keep the FD happy?

Of course you do. Well, it's all to do with designing for longevity. Read on my pretties, for the last bit is all about future proofing your office design.



How To Do... Forever Designs

It's easy to create an office fit out and design when there are just the five of you on beanbags in your meditation yurt. But what if you hire more people?

Growth is tricky when you're designing an office because you have to constantly re-imagine what your space will look like in a few years time. Do you have enough tech-pacity to connect everybody? Is there room for an extra employee or two?

If your company is in a growth state of mind, looking forward, thinking smart, then read on. Here are design ideas that will grow and flex with your business.



Walls Come Tumbling Down

Traditional private-office-and-cubicle arrangements can be large, unwieldy and all kinds of miserable for the people who work in them. They can also seriously limit the number of people you can comfortably house. That's why savvy businesses choose cosmo-cool shared space instead of dedicated space.

In this arrangement for our clients at Currency Cloud, employees sit at long, curvy counters so you can fit plenty of people in without the need for additional real estate. Partitions are few, views are wide, and everyone (not just the boss) gets to admire the City of London from those spectacular windows.

Not A Centimetre Wasted

Not all work spaces are created equal. Some make workers happy and creative and get used every day. Others, like formal boardrooms, sit there collecting dust while people buzz around them. When you consider the sky-high cost of London real estate (whisper the word 'rent' to your FD and watch her cry like a baby), it makes sense to make every inch count.

Future proof your office design by including an always-jamming mix of 'neighbourhoods' – small rooms and open floors defined by lightweight and movable furniture with wheels, movable wall dividers, huddle rooms and amphitheatre seating so it's easy for people to move around, change seats, change teams; they can just plug and play.

Warning: you may struggle to keep your derriere at your desk, on account of the all hip 'hoods to work here!

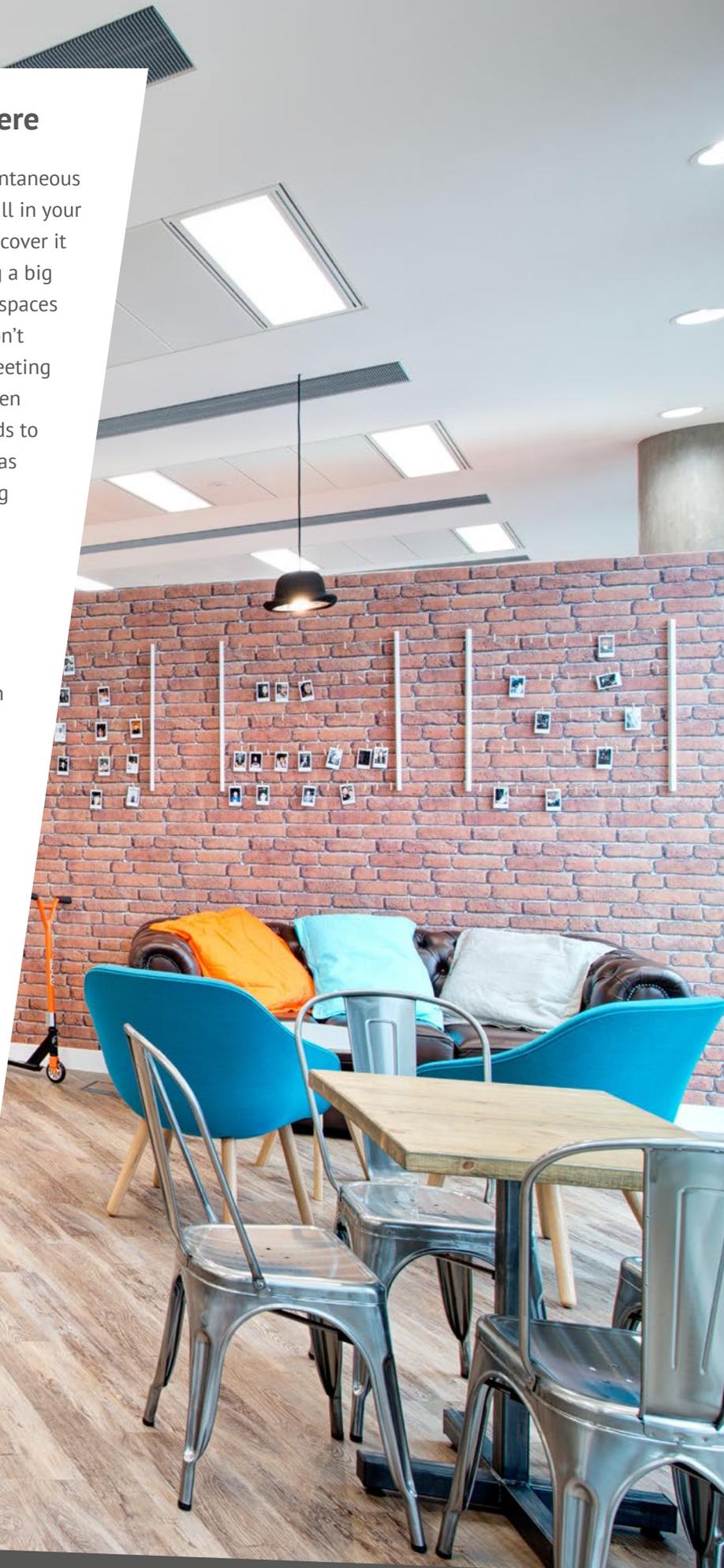
Write, Draw and Scribble Everywhere

In need of an erasable scribble board for some spontaneous brainstorming? Well, you're in luck! Every single wall in your office design could become a meeting space if you cover it with chalk boards or wipe-clean paint. We're seeing a big trend in pop-up meeting rooms – employees want spaces that can be used quickly and informally and you don't have to waste precious real estate on dedicated meeting rooms that only get used once a month. You can even use movable screens that double up as white boards to section off large areas. Or how about sketching ideas straight onto glass windows – talk about a meeting room with a view!

Hello, Experiences

Wellbeing at work is a huge office design trend, so get ahead of the curve and provide employees with features that unchain them from their desks. Bean bags, work pods and even hammocks take mobility trends to the next level, and allow your people to not only move around, but to take their work space with them!

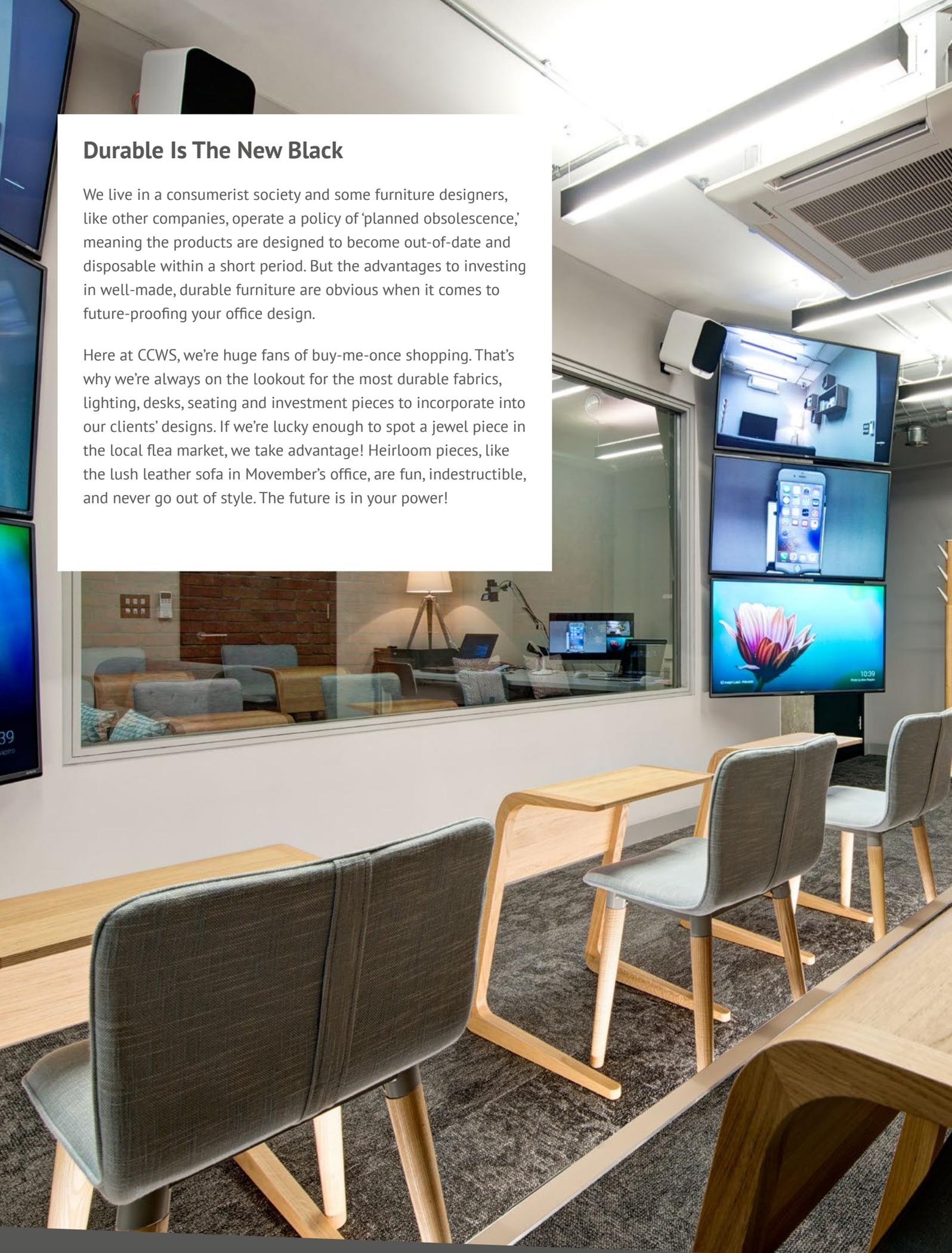
The way to a worker's creativity is through her stomach, so think about installing a kitchen areas that flex as a work space, where employees can meet, share food and gather for Monday-morning meetings. Experiences draw in bright young things and let's face it – they make work the better part of the day.



Durable Is The New Black

We live in a consumerist society and some furniture designers, like other companies, operate a policy of 'planned obsolescence,' meaning the products are designed to become out-of-date and disposable within a short period. But the advantages to investing in well-made, durable furniture are obvious when it comes to future-proofing your office design.

Here at CCWS, we're huge fans of buy-me-once shopping. That's why we're always on the lookout for the most durable fabrics, lighting, desks, seating and investment pieces to incorporate into our clients' designs. If we're lucky enough to spot a jewel piece in the local flea market, we take advantage! Heirloom pieces, like the lush leather sofa in Movember's office, are fun, indestructible, and never go out of style. The future is in your power!





If in Doubt: Talk to An Expert

This ebook has laid out some of the key facets of great office interior design. In our experience – and we have a lot – there's a big different between good and great design. Not just in how it looks, but how well it is used and its effect on the people working there.

The brutally honest truth is that not all office interior design and build contractors are great at design. With the right partner by your side, it is much easier to create a space that energises and motivates. An office you're happy to show off to your clients, partners, investors and hell, anyone who you can drag in off the street to be wowed.

To find out more about how you can get a kick-ass office for your team, talk to our Creative Director Amy Elliot. Amy will set you straight and get you moving towards office nirvana. She'll probably take you for a pint too.

To talk to Amy, pick up the phone and dial 020 7971 1132.



CCWS

www.ccws.co.uk | Tel 020 7971 1132 | hello@ccws.co.uk