



YOUR WORKING ENVIRONMENT

DESIGNING, BUILDING AND
MANAGING BETTER SPACES



LIFE IS BETTER
FILTERED



INTRODUCTION

It's estimated that professionals **spend over 90,000 hours in the office over their lifetime¹** and **44% are at their desks for over seven hours a day²**. As those who design, build or manage office spaces will know, ensuring the working environment promotes a healthy, happy and sustainable workforce is key. Futureproofing workspaces with effective facilities, as well as innovations in office culture and environment, will help boost employee productivity and overall business success.

However, the modern-day office is changing, due to evolving expectations of employees, emergence of new technologies and the growing preference for agile working. A pressing question for the corporate and build sectors is how to ensure an office building is geared up to meet the needs of the millennial workforce and future sustainability targets.

Digging deeper into the issue, we have identified emerging trends, employee

demands in the workplace and gathered the latest advice from industry experts on how to create an aspirational working environment.

As part of this, we conducted our own independent research, which surveyed 1,000 UK office workers to determine which elements they would like to 'filter out' from their working lives that distract them from their passions or limit their efficiency. We also asked 1,000 facilities managers (FMs) what is important to their office space and what they'd like to see implemented to help improve employee health and wellbeing, satisfaction and productivity.

From nap pods and treadmill desks, to flexible working spaces and hydration stations, we investigate what's a passing fad, what's here to stay and what will guarantee a happy, healthy and productive workforce. **After all, a 1% happier workforce could boost the UK economy by £24 billion a year³.**

SO, WHAT DO EMPLOYEES WANT FROM THEIR WORKPLACE?

We asked, 'what are the key ingredients for a healthy, happy workforce?' and the top results are⁴:

61%
flexible working and
comfortable office space

43%
access to outside
space and natural light

1 in 3
said onsite hydration
areas with sparkling water



1 Psychology Today (2011), Happiness at Work
2 3GEM in collaboration with BRITA Professional (2018)
3 Psychological Technologies (2017)
4 3GEM in collaboration with BRITA Professional (2018)

EMPLOYEE HAPPINESS AND PRODUCTIVITY

The link between employee satisfaction and productivity has been explored for decades. The Hawthorne studies, a series of influential experiments from the 1930s, are some of the first findings that exposed this concept on factory outputs. Conditions such as working hours, lighting and break times were tested and, in all cases, productivity improved⁵.

To support today's businesses looking to increase productivity levels, nurture employee loyalty and attract talented people, building designers and contractors need to incorporate small changes to the workplace that can help make employees feel valued. After all, happy employees have shown to be up to 20% more effective in the workplace than unhappy employees⁶.

The normal 'work day' is changing and for many the traditional nine to five concept is becoming obsolete. Changeable working hours and control over where employees work are some of the most impactful occupational adjustments to emerge in

recent years. The need for more freedom has derived from a growing desire to define a working arrangement that suits an individual's lifestyle.

By 2025, 50% of the workforce will be millennials⁷, a generation known for expecting more dynamic working environments. To keep pace with this movement, office spaces are increasingly being designed to create a productive environment, with facilities that enable independent working as well as creative spaces for collaboration.

According to FMs, **65% believe both natural lighting and flexible working hours are the most effective initiatives to fulfil this generation's needs, followed closely by having filtered water readily available (64%) and a comfortable work or desk area (52%)**. Moving away from the traditional office set up, FMs are also looking to implement (or would like to feature in their buildings) outdoor meeting spaces, flexible working and on-site childcare facilities⁸.

THE TOP THREE THINGS THAT IMPACT PRODUCTIVITY

According to office workers, the biggest aspects of an office environment that affect productivity are⁹:

Not enough drinking water

Varying temperature conditions

Unnatural lighting

IT ALL STARTS WITH A BREW

With 71% of office workers saying that having high-quality coffee and tea available at work improves their working day¹⁰, businesses need equipment that quenches this thirst but also makes business sense. From the perspective of FMs, 44% say faulty equipment and regular maintenance are the top factors they'd like to 'filter out' of their working lives¹¹.

A common problem for buildings with coffee machines or instant hot water taps, for example, is the build-up of internal limescale. This can lead to breakdowns, limited efficiency and affect the taste of drinks made. If not dealt with properly, this can result in a maintenance headache for FMs, not to mention dissatisfied employees. With only 12% of office workers stating they have high-quality hot beverage machines at work¹², there is a clear disconnect in the workplace when it comes to the hot drinks facilities available and those desired.

Water quality has a huge part to play when it comes to the lifespan of equipment. Using a water filter can help keep beverage equipment in peak condition by minimising the risk of limescale deposits. Businesses can reduce the chance of premature machinery breakdowns as maintenance is performed on a preventative basis. What's more, replacing the kettle with an instant boiling water tap not only gives employees the choice of boiling, still and sparkling water on-demand, but it can help businesses make energy savings in the long term. This is largely due to the fact that you only use the water you need, eliminating the risk of wasting unnecessary water and energy. As such, over a quarter of FMs said that having boiling water on-demand is more efficient and 38% said the reduction of energy costs appeals to them most¹³.

5 The Economist (2008), The Hawthorne Effect

6 Deloitte Global Human Capital Trends (2017), Rewriting the Rules for the Digital Age

7 PWC (2017), Future Workforce

8 3GEM in collaboration with BRITA Professional (2018)

9 3GEM in collaboration with BRITA Professional (2018)

10 3GEM in collaboration with BRITA Professional (2018)

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12 3GEM in collaboration with BRITA Professional (2018)

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SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

Some 76% of millennials consider a company's social and environmental commitments when deciding where to work and nearly two-thirds (64%) won't take a job if a potential employer doesn't have strong corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices¹⁴. It's safe to say that ensuring a building and the businesses within it are operating as sustainably as possible is a top consideration, not only for FMs but for those designing and building work spaces.

With hundreds of different sustainable initiatives to choose from, we spoke to facilities managers to find out exactly what their CSR targets are focussed on. Some 65% said employees' health and wellbeing (including hydration), 63% said lowering energy consumption and 61% said to reduce waste levels¹⁵.

For any of these goals, success cannot be achieved in isolation. Employees of all levels need to be engaged with the initiatives. This will also improve the satisfaction and mental wellbeing of employees, as 88% say their job is more fulfilling when they're provided with opportunities to make a positive impact on social and environmental issues¹⁶.

14 Sustainable Brands (2016), 3/4 Millennials Would Take A Pay Cut To Work For A Socially Responsible Company
15 3GEM in collaboration with BRITA Professional (2018)
16 Sustainable Brands (2016), 3/4 Millennials Would Take A Pay Cut To Work For A Socially Responsible Company



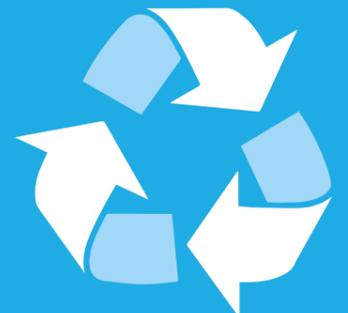
Steve Malkin Founder of The Planet Mark™

An international sustainability certification programme recognising commitment to continuous improvement in sustainability – advised:

“To help reduce waste levels, we always recommend asking your waste management companies to provide promotional materials to get employees involved in waste reduction campaigns. They can also give you monthly performance figures to show employees how they're contributing to the business' overarching goals. Visually representing how much waste is being thrown away in a week is also an attention-grabbing way to kick-start an internal recycling initiative.”

The water facilities will also have a significant impact on waste levels. Steve continued:

“We recommend businesses install water filtration systems and give all employees personal reusable water bottles, as part of their sustainability programmes. Not only does this help encourage employees to drink more water, it also eliminates the need for single-use plastic bottles – something which is high on the agenda for the Government and industries across the country.”



OVER HALF of office workers drink less than the recommended daily amount of water (two litres)

OVER A THIRD of office workers say not drinking enough water impacts their productivity

83% of Facilities Managers think providing filtered water is seen as an added benefit by employees

61% of Facilities Managers believe water stations are key to improving employee productivity

1 IN 3 office workers would like filtered still and sparkling water on tap in the office to improve the working environment

55% of offices provide employees with bottled water vs just 12% of offices which provide reusable water bottles

76% of millennials consider a company's social and environmental commitments when deciding where to work¹⁴

HEALTH AND HYDRATION

Encouraging a healthy and happy workforce is something that businesses across the country are working hard to nurture. Today, recruiting and retaining talented people relies as heavily on a company's cultural and physical attributes as it does pay packages and progression opportunities. To remain competitive, businesses must implement and communicate the specific qualities that make them distinctive.

High on the agenda is health and wellbeing, social good initiatives, flexible working policies and top-of-the-range facilities, which help to make the organisation a more attractive place to work. However, with so many stakeholders involved, it's no surprise that those responsible for designing, building and managing office spaces will have different opinions on what employees need and expect.

As such, there is no 'one-size-fits-all' solution to improving welfare in the workplace. One of the biggest challenges faced by those in charge of implementing these initiatives is making it accessible, operational and practical for everyone, whether that's the senior management team, the workforce, including casual employees and junior members of the team.

Those in control of health and wellbeing initiatives will know that encouraging employees to drink more water is a priority. We're all aware of the benefits of staying hydrated, which include preventing headaches and increased concentration levels, to name a few.

Our research found that over a third of office workers say not drinking enough water impacts their productivity¹⁷. Despite this, it also revealed that over half of office workers drink less than the recommended daily amount of water (2 litres)¹⁸. This poses an important question of what impact this is having on employee happiness, health and efficiency.

The barriers that stop us drinking enough water can be attributed to a range of different reasons. First and foremost, our busy lives can sometimes cause us to forget to stay hydrated, even if water is readily available or there's a full glass on our desk. One way FMs could address this is by setting up daily reminders for the workforce, or regularly communicate the benefits of drinking water, so that hydration stays front of mind. Another big factor is the temptation to choose fizzy drinks however, adding fruit such as cucumber or lemon can give water flavour, while keeping sugar intake down. Fruit stations could be incorporated into office water provision to make it easy and hassle free for employees to add a flourish of flavour.

¹⁷ 3GEM in collaboration with BRITA Professional (2018)
¹⁸ Ibid



When it comes to the physical water facilities, our research shows that **88% of offices provide tap water as one of the main drinking provisions**, even though **83% of FMs stated that offering filtered water in addition to tap water is seen as an added benefit to employees**. What's more, **77% of FMs say that having fresh, filtered water readily available on all floors and close to desks is key to ensuring a healthy and happy workforce¹⁸**.

What's equally important when encouraging employees to drink more water is the standard of water on-site. With quality and mineral content varying drastically between regions, and even street to street, the first step for those in charge of the construction and management of office spaces is to understand the particular characteristics of their water supply. For example, a hard water

supply with high levels of alkalinity will taste heavy, chalky and flat. Water filters reduce the carbonate hardness (in both hard and soft water supplies) by eliminating any substances that can influence the taste, appearance and odour. Equally, it's often assumed that soft water doesn't need a filter but this isn't the case (soft water still contains chlorine and other impurities that can have a substantial impact on the taste).

Another way to encourage employees to drink more water, is to incorporate the water provision into a social area with comfy chairs for people to relax, take some time away from their desk and rehydrate. Functional spaces such as this help to empower employees to take responsibility for their own wellbeing, not just at work but in their home lives too.

THE TOP SIX THINGS EMPLOYEES WANT FROM THEIR WORKPLACE²⁰

- Quiet zones
- Filtered water dispensers for still and sparkling water
- Flexible working spaces
- On-site restaurant
- Chill out areas for informal meetings or socialising
- Nap pods

²⁰ 3GEM in collaboration with BRITA Professional (2018)



PUTTING THIS INTO PRACTICE



Paula Brockwell

Expert advice from Lead Psychologist and Head of Client Experience at Robertson Cooper

“Office environments, such as air and water quality, need to be carefully managed. Especially in city offices where a high number of factors can affect this’.”

To encourage healthy hydration, drinking water needs to be made readily available and as appealing as possible to the workforce.

Having high-quality, sustainable water facilities in place is just the first hurdle. Encouraging the whole workforce to drink more water comes down to the office environment and culture too.

“Policing people doesn’t help,” said Paula. “Helping employees make healthy changes, such as drinking more water or going for a walk, relies on communicating the benefits of doing so.

“Don’t let water facilities and other health and wellbeing measures convert into ‘passive characteristics’ of the office space, where they eventually become part of the furniture.

“My advice to facilities managers looking to make a significant difference, is to offer incentives and rewards for the people already succeeding or actively making a change. For example, people who are bringing in a reusable bottle need to be recognised. A bit of healthy competition goes a long way too – introducing a social element, such as a competition, helps make a noise about the initiative you’re trying to promote.”

Paula continued: “Health and happiness policies make total business sense if they are carried out effectively. Businesses shouldn’t spend money on these facilities and then expect employees to benefit from it straight away, a mutual responsibility has to be communicated to the workforce. Businesses are doing this to help their employees lead more healthy and happy lives, in return their employees will be well-equipped to deliver results.”

THE FUTURE

Overall, we've seen the workplace experience a significant shift in recent years and this is only set to continue. This transformation is not just limited to evolving technology but it also encompasses social, environmental and economic changes in equal measures. We've seen that businesses now need to adopt a new way of thinking and promote a culture of productivity that resonates with the new mindset and behaviours of today's workforce.

Beyond this, these changes need to make total sense across the board, from employees, to business owners and building contractors. For those responsible for the construction and management of office spaces, the next step is to evaluate the impact of current office environments, measure the performance and ask whether it's designed for the future by making a positive difference to the workforce's behaviour, health and productivity.



YOUR WATER FILTRATION PARTNER

Sarah Taylor, MD of BRITA UK

In a world that's constantly evolving and altering the way we work, the traditional office environment is being turned on its head. At BRITA, we've developed this report to provide insight and inspiration on the changing workplace to help our customers create engaging office spaces that will power businesses forward.

It's widely understood that effective working spaces are integral to employee wellbeing and the overall success of a business. We embarked on this research to take a closer look at what employees want from their workplace and identify which facilities and cultural aspects will help improve their wellbeing, increase efficiency and limit distractions. The results highlighted key emerging trends and, in particular, we found that hydration is essential to supporting happy and productive workforces. That's why our aim is to work in partnership with the industry to ensure that sustainable water is high on the agenda.

BRITA was founded more than 50 years ago and we have established ourselves as one of the leading

experts in the field of water filtration. Our products are designed to produce the best filtered water for food and beverage preparation by removing particles, metals, minerals and chlorine that have an unfavourable impact on the taste, appearance and aroma. With proactive servicing we are committed to making it easy for operators to look after the quality of their water, so that it enhances the customer experience and protects the equipment.

BRITA has always manufactured systems that are sustainably-minded. By eliminating the need to purchase unsustainable pre-bottled water or single-use plastic cups, our customers can significantly reduce their impact on the environment.

If you're responsible for designing, building or managing office spaces and would like to gain more advice on finding the right water filtration solution for your building, please contact a BRITA Professional expert at:

www.vivreau.co.uk
0845 674 9655

LIFE IS BETTER FILTERED: WHAT'S COMING UP?

This spring, 'Life is Better Filtered' will be revealing the top sustainability challenges.

Watch this space...



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