

The “Clubhouse” Office Design: The Modern Office Transformed

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The clubhouse office design is a new variation on the modern office that incorporates broad amenities with an open layout. The open layout itself has become increasingly controversial given some research revealing rampant issues.

However, with an understanding of the pros and cons, you can better figure out how to strategize implementation – and possibly blend your approach into a hybrid design.

Possible clubhouse office design pros

There is a wide range of benefits to this approach, according to designers and the many companies that are happy with their modern clubhouse environments:

Amenities

The clubhouse style is very focused on amenities, with them often taking up nearly half the square feet. This transition to more amenity space aligns with a trend in leadership to shift more concern from real estate costs to the preferences of their staff.

Sunlight

Organizations often are able to get much better sunlight throughout their office by pulling down the cubicle partitions and opting out on walls. Research from Northwestern University found that lack of daylight at work resulted in more sleep disturbances and lower quality of life. "The extent to which daylight exposure impacts office workers is remarkable," noted study co-author Ivy Cheung.

Authenticity

You design a space that is authentic to your company culture through a clubhouse. It is authentic because it arises naturally from the needs of your staff. It is human-centered.

Collaboration

A core argument for an open office is that it enhances collaboration, since you are bringing people face-to-face. In the same manner, you break down hierarchical barriers.

Possible clubhouse office design cons

It is important to understand potential issues to resolve with this design model. A clubhouse style does have its challenges. A few key ones are:

Difficulty focusing

Research has indicated a 15% to 28% decline in productivity when the open office is implemented.

Drop in face-to-face talking

A 2018 study showed there is 73% less one-on-one communication, while emailing and messaging rise 67%, in open vs. traditional offices.

Possible health impact

An Australian health management study published in 2008 showed rises in stress and blood pressure. (However, the sunlight benefits above would improve health.)

Executives performing support work

A final interesting aspect is that executives have been performing more support work since the advent of computing, a trend British journalist Oliver Burkeman believes is exacerbated by the open office.

Lack of practicality

Clearly function and efficiency are central, and those core elements can be sidelined in the drive for an office that is highly likable.

Clubhouse or convention?

The way you choose to lay out your office does not need to be exclusive to a traditional or innovative office design approach. At Beaux-Arts Group, we create unique, high-performance workplace interiors that address the dynamic needs of our clients. [Contact us](#) to learn more.