

Fast Forward

Healthy, Sustaining Spaces

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Designing the workplace to support wellbeing is a recent focus of organizational behavior models and architectural practice. However, the intensification of work that comes with digital transformation means people will need new ways to maintain not only their physical wellbeing, but also to do their best thinking and feel an emotional connection to their work. Green walls to filter air, sleep pods and sensors to count employee's stair steps are already a reality in some workplaces.

As businesses plan for a more mobile workforce and increasingly rapid cycles of change, dedicated floors and wings for “resident employees” will give way to elastic concepts that invite change. Furniture will be light, mobile and modular. A diversity of bespoke products and materials—shade lamps, handsomely upholstered sofas, stools, hardwood tables—will make the workplace feel more like home. Your desk, if you choose one, will move according to the needs of a project cycle or team assignment. To assist with creative thinking, it may recline into recumbent positions associated with deep thought. To help your body get the exercise it needs to produce endorphins and burn cortisol, it may have pedals like a stationary bicycle. You'll see bright graphic murals and living walls of moss and succulents. Your back will feel better because you'll be standing, sitting, perching or moving for the better part of the day. You'll get more work done and feel better.

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