

Creating Authentic, Inspiring Spaces for Designers



An Interview with Autumn Gloetzner of DLR Group

This is the first in a series of interviews with architects and designers discussing the evolution of the workplace. There is a cultural movement in office design to create thoughtfully curated destinations that are more human-centered — focusing on design, materiality and performance. Emphasis is on the wellbeing of people and the intersection of physical, cognitive and emotional wellbeing at work. Here is what Autumn Gloetzner, senior designer with DLR Group, an integrated design firm in Houston, had to say about the role this cultural movement plays in the design of her team's office:

Steelcase 360: DLR Group's brand promise is to elevate the human experience through design. How do you accomplish this?

Autumn: At the core of an integrated design firm are collaborative, interdisciplinary teams composed of all project lifecycle stakeholders. These teams champion true collaboration, open information sharing, shared risk and reward, value-based decision making, and proficient use of technology to elevate design. The outcome is sustainable design of a high performance building for a sustainable future.

Steelcase 360: As a design firm, we would imagine your office needs to be especially inspirational. To achieve this, what were your goals when you began the planning process?

Autumn: Our primary goal was to create a design hub as well as a co-working space that we can share with our clients and industry partners. Co-working with our design partners will enable more connections, helping us to interact and build our community beyond our typical meetings with clients or design partners. We want to practice what we preach to our clients; we want to allow more choice in the workplace and create a place that will spark innovation and collaboration. We feel if we can create synergies with our partners we can create more unique and inspiring places.

Steelcase 360: How does the design of your office reflect your firm's culture?

Autumn: Our culture is very entrepreneurial, so we have created different spaces to allow for this — to inspire creativity. We also promote health and wellness by providing sit/stand desks and a variety of different seating options.



Steelcase 360: We love the fluid representation of Steelcase, Coalesse and turnstone furniture in your workspace. How do you balance aesthetically pleasing products with pieces that help people do their job well?

Autumn: By providing different types of spaces, we have choices. We can choose where and how we do our work. Offering choice drives performance.



Steelcase 360: Tell us about this graffiti-like mural — it really adds a uniqueness to your space.

Autumn: We commissioned a local graffiti artist to create a mural inspired by Houston and our commitment to our clients to listen.DESIGN.deliver. We have only one structural element within in our space and we wanted to embrace it, thus the mural completely covers that column. Because of the open design of our office, it is the focal point of our space.



Steelcase 360: Where do you, as a designer, find your inspiration?

Autumn: My inspiration typically comes from local surroundings and topography around a given site. I also find a lot of inspiration through product design.

Steelcase 360: What do you think the future of workspaces will look like?

Autumn: It will be increasingly mobile and a place where people want to be rather than feel they have to be. Spaces will be more urban in the sense of working near amenities and a blur between interior and exterior; these factors increase productivity and improve chance collaboration. People can access information and people from anywhere at any time. This will allow for more free addressing and fewer owned spaces.

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Autumn Gloetzner

Autumn Gloetzner is a Senior Designer with DLR Group. Visit dlrgroup.com to learn more and follow them on [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#) for updates.

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