

Designing an effective breakout space: A Guide to modern workspaces

1 year ago



Insight from Jeni Wilkie director of Eatock Design and Build

As workplaces evolve to accommodate the changing needs and preferences of employees, the concept of the traditional office layout is undergoing a significant transformation – and a key element to get right is [creating a functional and relaxing breakout space](#).

[Employees are now returning to the office more frequently](#), but they still crave an element of home comfort. [Office design has a material impact on the health, wellbeing and](#)

[productivity of its occupants](#), and an office breakout space is the perfect section of the workplace to create a comfortable area and welcome workers back to the office. By carefully considering the furniture, lighting and layout choices, these spaces can not only provide employees with an area to unwind but also foster collaboration and creativity.

Understanding the importance of breakout spaces

In today's fast-paced work environment, employees seek a balance between productivity and relaxation, and your office needs to adapt to these evolving dynamics of the modern workforce.

Breakout spaces serve many purposes, including providing a space for informal catch-ups and meetings, a space to greet visitors and clients, and a relaxing area for employees at lunchtime. Recognising the significance of these spaces is crucial for organisations aiming to enhance employee satisfaction and wellbeing, as they also encourage movability and offer an alternative space for employees to concentrate or simply take a break from their desks.

The benefits of an effective breakout room

Although traditional workplace culture has perpetuated the belief that being chained to your desk means staff are being productive, this stigma is thankfully disappearing. It is now widely recognised that for most people when they have [alternative spaces in their office, their creativity will bloom](#). Most people's best ideas don't come from sitting sedentary at a desk all day, they happen when people have moved away from a common setting. Having a breakout space in the office enhances innovation and productivity and even leads to impromptu meetings. This is why it has now become one of the most important considerations in office design.

As many businesses now recognise that focusing on [staff wellbeing increases staff retention, productivity and absenteeism](#), they are looking for ways to design a vibrant and positive workplace. An office breakout room will encourage staff to spend more time away from the glare of the computer screen and move about throughout the day, reducing stress levels and improving wellbeing.

Key elements of an effective breakout space

Flexible furniture

Opt for comfortable and versatile furniture that encourages relaxation and socialisation. Consider incorporating a mix of seating options, such as sofas, lounge chairs, bean bags, and tables of various heights to accommodate different activities. Soft furnishings with cushions and rugs can also enhance a more relaxed area, away from a traditional desk setting.

Ergonomic design

Attention should be paid to ergonomics when selecting furniture and décor to promote good posture and overall wellbeing. Adjustable desks and chairs can provide employees with flexibility, and furniture that can be moved will also create a hackable space that can adapt to the workforce's needs over time and be moved during relocations.

Strategic design

Lighting is key to dictating the aesthetic of interiors, so it should also be a consideration when designing the perfect breakout space. Choose adjustable lighting, as this can be altered to people's preferences and individual needs to create a flexible workspace. Natural light should also be maximised wherever possible to create a bright and inviting atmosphere.

Creating an office breakout room dedicated to relaxation is not just a luxury, but a necessity in today's fast-paced work environments. As people are now returning to the office more, breakout spaces are key for welcoming your team back. Investing in the creation of functional and relaxing breakout spaces demonstrates a commitment to employee wellbeing and encourages a more vibrant and collaborative workplace environment.