





# WORKPLACE WELLNESS

National Workplace Wellbeing Day is a day employers should use to reflect on the previous two years and the sacrifices their staff may have made to help their businesses throughout a difficult trading period. It's likely staff are feeling stressed from the upheaval of Covid 19 on their working and personal lives.

**W**ith little investment the wellness of your employees can have significant results. Wellness doesn't need to be expensive to be effective. The benefits far exceed the cost. A healthy employee can perform better physically with higher energy levels. They are also more efficient and focused.





# BRINGS TEAMS TOGETHER AND BUILDS MORALE

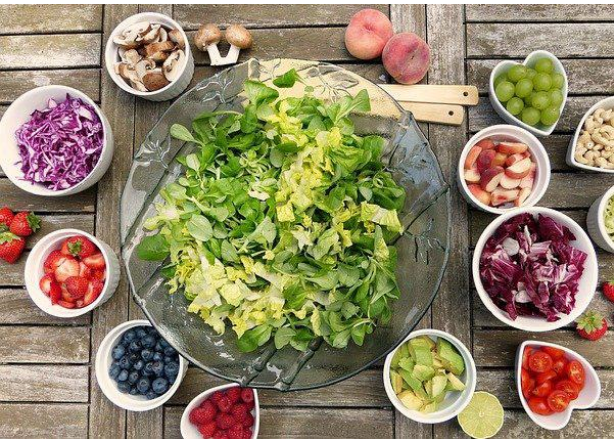
A team that builds camaraderie by engaging in wellness actives both inside and outside the work place are more likely to have better project engagement and common goals. In this current climate this may mean steps challenges or virtual 10Ks to incentivise team to get fresh air and create a team like environment. A prize or charity donation could be offered to the winning team.



# DECREASES WORK-RELATED STRESS

Happier employee enjoying increased fitness and healthy eating can reduce stress, if possible a company can implement mindfulness and meditation, this will also help people with focusing on tasks.

With the implementation of the above points your company should see noticeable jumps in staff retention, productivity and employees who enjoy the work they do in the environment they are in.



# HOW TO GET STARTED WITH WORKPLACE WELLNESS GOALS

Getting staff on-board can be the biggest barrier, that’s why it is so important to explain the benefits that they themselves will get out of wellness initiatives. If staff don’t engage with wellness programmes then they just won’t work. We suggest slowly introducing wellness initiatives into their work day. This could be something as simple as introducing free fresh fruit to all staff in the canteen or a slightly more drastic approach of eliminating/reducing vending machines or sugary content in vending machines.

Research shows that when people are constantly interrupted by phone calls, checking their emails and jumping from task to task they become less productive. Single-Task Focus instead of Multitasking has been proven to be a more productive manner to get jobs done. Also, encouraging people to get away from their desks every now and then will ensure that they come back refreshed and refocused. This means introducing sit/stand desks so that staff are not sitting all day and taking regular breaks.

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Wellness of your employees can have significant results, it doesn’t need to be expensive to be effective



# WALKING MEETINGS:

A healthy alternative to being stuck in a boardroom is to allocate time and people to walking meetings. Getting outside and discussing weekly sales projections, marketing strategies and production meetings is a fantastic way to get some fresh air into your system while also getting exercise. Taking staff out of a typical meeting room can also help the flow of ideas as we step away from what is seen as a conventional meeting area and are in a less formal setting where people can be more open.



# WALKING TO WORK AND THE BIKE TO WORK SCHEMES:

Do you live in a walkable distance to work? Try mixing public transport and walking as a means to getting to work instead of sitting in endless ques of traffic. The Bike to Work Scheme is a tax incentive scheme to encourage employees to cycle to work. Employees repay the cost in regular instalments from their gross salary.

You are not liable for tax, PRSI or the Universal Social Charge on your repayments. In short, it means you can get a mid to high end bike for a lot less.

# ON-SITE YOGA CLASSES FOR STRESS RELIEF

This is an option for larger companies. But the benefits can be incredible for fitness and mindfulness. After you have a number of functioning wellness initiatives, survey your employees to find out what is and isn't working.

Different initiatives will work for different company sizes and abilities so it's best to try multiple approaches and not to expect everything to work. The feedback will be beneficial for adapting your wellbeing programme in the future.





A woman with blonde hair tied back, wearing a colorful patterned top and white shoes, is standing at a white adjustable desk. She is looking down at her hands on the desk surface. The desk has a grey privacy screen behind it with a white storage unit attached. The background is a brick wall.

## ACHIEVE WORKPLACE WELLNESS THROUGH ERGONOMICS

Stop putting your health at risk, get off the kitchen table and surround yourself with ergonomic solutions. Your back will thank us for it.

Lower your risk of heart disease weight gain and obesity

Weight gain is ultimately caused by taking in more calories than you burn, exercise is the most effective way to burn calories quickly, but simply choosing to stand instead of sitting can also be beneficial.

In fact, when compared to an afternoon of sedentary (sitting) work, an equal amount of time spent standing has been shown to burn over 170 additional calories. That's almost 1000 extra calories burned each week from simply changing your work style and standing for portions of the work day.

This caloric difference could be one of the reasons why sitting longer is so strongly linked to obesity and metabolic disease.

Scientists have developed a much greater understanding of the effects of sitting on heart health, with prolonged sedentary time thought to increase the risk of heart disease by up to 147%. Undoing the damage of a sedentary workday would require over an hour of intense gym work in order to see benefits.

There is no doubt that spending more time on your feet is beneficial for heart health.

A bright, modern office lounge area with large floor-to-ceiling windows on the right side. The floor is covered in green patterned carpet tiles. In the center, there is a large blue beanbag chair, a green and white mushroom-shaped stool, and a blue cylindrical ottoman. To the right, there is an orange and white modern chair and another orange ottoman. Potted plants are placed around the room.

## WELLNESS ROOMS

A great example of workplace wellness is the Engine Lease Finance Wellness Room at their Shannon, Co. Clare headquarters.

The client wanted to utilize this bright airy space for employees' wellbeing activities.

M2 Office Interiors were tasked with creating meditation booths, yoga practice area and a relaxation zone. Furniture type & colour was chosen for comfort and in bright colours to create a fun environment. The whole focus of this area was to create a space where staff can destress and refocus in order to maximise their potential while giving them the health and wellbeing support they need.





# ERGONOMIC CHAIRS

The Diffrient World chair has just two manual settings—one each for seat height and seat depth. All other fittings and adjustments are automatic. We highly recommend seeing the chair in action for yourself as text simply doesn't do the mechanical achievement justice.

With its weight-sensitive recline, the Diffrient World chair automatically supports every user at every recline position. And its Form-Sensing Mesh Technology provides tailor-made lumbar support without the need for external devices or manual controls. In short, the chair will use your own body to achieve effortless ergonomic comfort every time you sit down.



# MONITOR ARMS

Monitor arms and mounts clear up clutter on the workspace to improve comfort, health, and productivity. Stop straining your body to adapt to your screen position, have it be flexible and move to its best possible ergonomic status.

The M2 Monitor arms design team's award-winning innovations are backed by their thorough research into workplace trends and by working closely with Humanscale's inhouse team of ergonomics consultants.



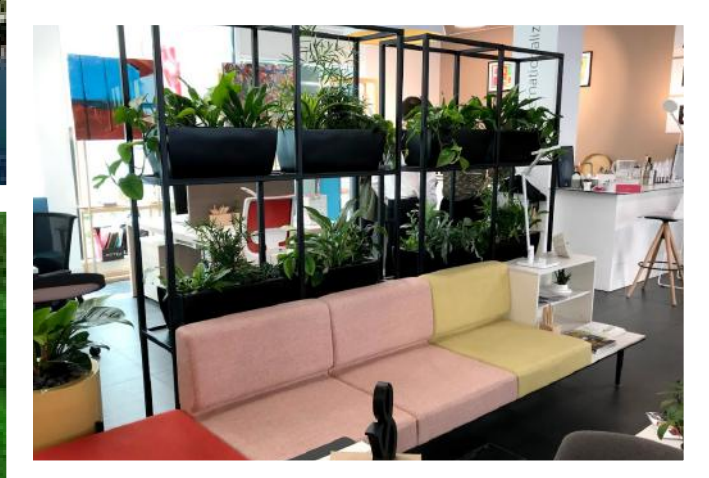
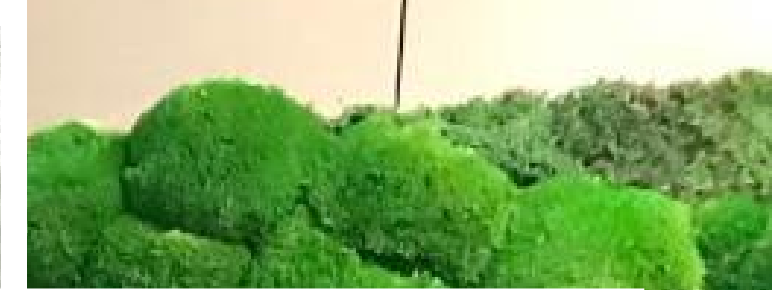


# BIOPHILIC DESIGN AND WELLBEING



When we incorporate biophilic design into our buildings, we engage our senses which brings us into the moment and supports emotional well-being. Biophilic design can help reduce stress, create a calm working environment, and increase social connectivity. This in turn can have a positive impact on the financial wellbeing of a company as it will lead to a more focused, happy and productive workforce.

Biophilic design principals in workplace settings, foster a strong sense of connection, sense of order and sense of safety. Therefore, helping staff more easily aspire to the higher levels of wellbeing, and achievement.



**Sensory Experience:** Biophilic design is all about engaging the senses, introduce regional physical elements that encourage staff to pause, reflect on the moment, and visually appreciate their surroundings.

Examples of biophilic design include green walls, plants, wood grain design, natural lighting and mimicking natural patterns in carpet tiling, furniture design and placement.

Integrate fascinating designs such as fractals to evoke a state of wonder, ambiguity, and discovery. This engagement will improve your state of emotional wellbeing.

**Sunlight is Key:** Incorporate strategies that provide people access to sunlight throughout the day. Daylight supports emotional wellbeing by aligning our circadian rhythms—our body's internal clock. It will also help sustain the growth of plants and office greenery. It is this reason that natural light is key to any workplace design. Maximise windows and skylights. Use mirrors adjacent to natural light sources to help bounce the light around a room.

**Various Space Types:** It is no secret that workplace design has changed dramatically over the past 10 years part is due to employee and employer expectation and part due to recent work wide events. The result is a vastly different workplace for the better. It is now the norm to have multiple meeting areas, chill out zones and independent workspaces so that staff can enjoy a space and work on a task in diverse locations.

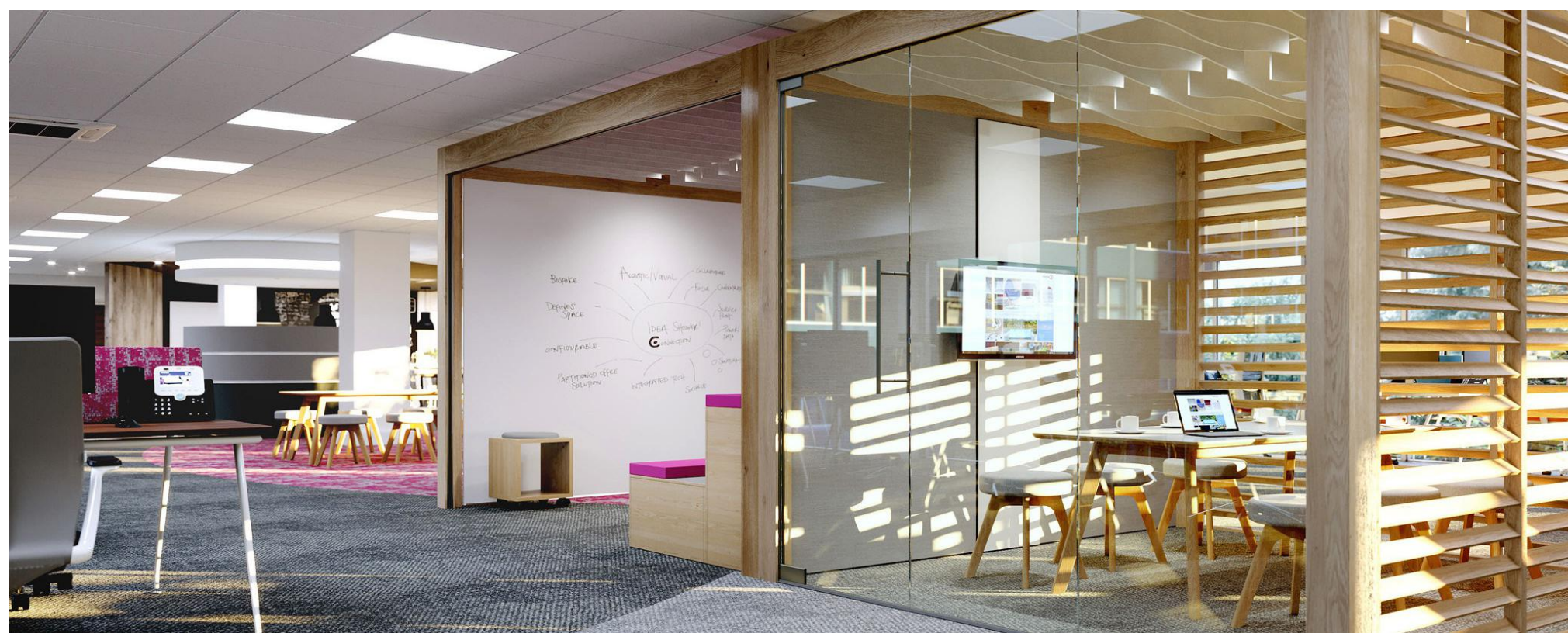
**Design for Prospect and Refuge** by integrating a range of open and closed spaces that allow for clear sight lines throughout the space, which provides prospect and a sense of safety. Smaller enclosed spaces such as booth seating and one-person study rooms with semi-transparent doors are examples of areas of refuge which provide security and comfort.

Undoubtedly, our workplace will have an impact us. We will feel it. The practice of biophilic design for emotional wellbeing is growing, and the results are undeniable.





# STAFF RETENTION THROUGH WORKPLACE DESIGN



The labour market shortage caused by Covid-19 has created a perfect storm for hiring. For certain skillsets, it's safe to say that it's definitely an employee's market out there. Navigating the hiring crisis, businesses face a strategic challenge of how to not only attract the right person and talent, but also, how to keep them.

One simple solution is to make your workplace a people-first office that are in tune with hybrid working models.

The pandemic has transformed employees expectations and showed that traditional ways of working are outdated. It's time to usher in flexible working as the norm.



# FAST TRACK CHANGE TO A HYBRID OFFICE

Supporting a hybrid workforce may require your organization to embrace new solutions, offering greater flexibility is vital but it means redesigning the 'traditional' office. Employee-driven spaces will be the main focus of most office layouts and refurbishments going forward and companies who successfully do this can use this design trend to retain staff.

The hybrid workplace of the future is an immersive hub with a variety of appealing spaces that inspire collaboration, creativity, wellness, connectivity and motivation. Staff working remotely should feel equally included and heard through seamless virtual communication, allowing teams to collaborate regardless of their location. This requires investment in tools and furniture such as cloud-based platforms, acoustic booths, zoom rooms and high-end video conferencing to drive collaboration.



# EMPLOYEE-LED DESIGN DECISIONS

For a hybrid office to work it needs multi-functional and agile spaces that cater for everything from scrum meetings to brainstorming, to private video calls or relaxation.

For instance, have you considered working a multifunctional wellness room into your office design? This space can be used for likes of yoga classes, relaxation area or gym. Its vital to keep inclusion at the heart of any hybrid working plan. Different groups will have different challenges, and all should be included and considered. The transformation process must include dialogue and partnership, with the outcome being positive for all employee groups, as well as for the business. Engaging with employee groups and individuals will enable understanding of the specific challenges and development of appropriate solutions. You need to really know your workforce, how they work and what is expected of them before you put any plan in place.

Companies have a tremendous opportunity to ask their employees what they need to feel and perform at their best. There is no one size fits all plan when it comes to hybrid working. That's the essence of a hybrid strategy – a truly thoughtful approach to design that creates a positive employee experience and should help with staff retention. The hybrid work model is the desired work model for most organizations and employees, post pandemic.

It is a long-term solution for many industries and businesses. The future of work is now, don't get left behind.





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