

JULY 2025



Workplace Insights

Top Takeaways from NeoCon 2025

Hixson Interior Designer Allee Amstutz and Interior Design Co-op Amy Hudek attended NeoCon 2025 and Design Days, held at The Mart and Fulton Market in Chicago in June. In addition to learning about the latest trends in interior design, Allee and Amy returned with fresh perspectives on new ways to support Hixson's clients. Some of their key takeaways included:

- 1. Design for Neurodiversity.** A standout moment for both Allee and Amy was attending the panel discussion, "The Brain Works in the Workplace: Decoding Neurodiversity," moderated by Dr. Tracy Brower. "The session emphasized that no two individuals are alike, and design must reflect that diversity," said Allee. "In particular, speakers discussed the need to design with intention, empower users by accommodating differing workstyles, and maintaining cultural awareness when designing."
- 2. Color at Work.** Bright, playful colors were everywhere - from chair bases to table legs - used not just for aesthetics but for branding and even wayfinding. "Imagine a "red zone" for collaboration, visually defined by red-accented furniture," said Amy.

- 3. Exploring Other Shapes.** Designers moved beyond rectangles and circles, embracing polygons, trapezoids, and curves. "Whether it was a table for a conference room shaped like a trapezoid, chairs with unique curved lines, or credenzas with angular edges, these unexpected forms sparked new ideas for collaboration areas and hybrid workspaces," said Allee.
- 4. Thinking Flexibly.** Flexibility...giving people the choice to create a work environment that is conducive for them...was a recurring theme. "Adjustable tables, portable technology, and mobile furniture allow spaces to adapt quickly to changing needs," said Amy.

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5. Highlighting Lighting and Acoustics. Lighting and acoustics were showstoppers this year, with integrated solutions that support both aesthetics and function. “One of the key benefits of the show was being able to meet with clients while there and let them experience some of the elements we were considering for a project, said Allee. “It’s one thing to show a rendering or an image, but there is nothing like seeing and experiencing it in person.”

6. Remaining at the Forefront: Sustainability and Biophilia. With more clients having a focus on sustainability, this remains a core theme at this show. “Manufacturers are embedding environmental responsibility into their brands,” said Amy. Plus, Allee explained how manufacturers create an experience for the individual to walk through when visiting the showroom. “Many showrooms were telling stories of Biophilia, referencing patterns and forms found in nature like I’ve never seen before.” said Allee.



Designing for What’s Next

From neurodiversity and cultural awareness to flexibility, sustainability, and integrated technology, NeoCon offered a look into what we can expect for commercial Interior Design in 2025, an expectation that is moving toward more inclusive, intentional, and human-centered environments. For Hixson, these insights served as both inspiration and as tools we can use to help our clients create spaces that enhance the user experience and support the work that happens within the spaces we design.

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