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Workplace Insights

Why Interior Design Matters - Part 1 The Three Benefits Every Workplace Needs to Know

Interior design is often misunderstood as an aesthetic add-on in corporate workplace projects rather than a strategic discipline. When applied strategically, interior design proactively shapes how people work, connect, and feel, and can significantly influence productivity, engagement and organizational culture. In practice, interior design:

- Expresses a company's culture and values by translating brand identity into a physical experience.
- Fosters collaboration and connection, while also providing spaces for focus and privacy.
- Supports workplace work patterns and workflows through thoughtful, flexible, adaptable space planning.
- Creates intuitive, inclusive, and purpose-driven spaces that support diverse users and daily activities.
- Delivers long-term value by balancing aesthetics with durability, maintenance, and life-cycle cost considerations.

However, despite its impact, interior design is frequently underestimated. Below, we unpack three benefits realized when including corporate interior design into every project, and the deeper truths that reveal its essential role in workplace success:

- 1. Benefit #1: Design that shapes behavior.** Corporate interior design isn't about having a good eye (although that's certainly important): It's about having the training to shape environments that support human experience, fostering collaboration, reinforcing brand identity, and promoting well-being. Designers consider how space influences behavior, mood, productivity and interaction. Decisions around color, material and layout are informed by brand identity, wayfinding, acoustics, lighting, ergonomics and well-being – not personal preference. A particular shade of blue may be selected not because it looks nice but because it reinforces brand values, reduces visual fatigue, or creates a sense of calm and clarity.
- 2. Benefit #2: A human-centered approach.** Interior Designers focus on how people move through the space, perform tasks, collaborate, and feel throughout the workday. Through visioning sessions, programming, and iterative design, interior designers help clients define not only how a space should look, but how it should function and feel – translating workplace strategy, culture, and brand into every experience.

3. Benefit #3: Intentional finish selection. Material selection, a critical part of the job, is driven by purpose, not preference. Corporate interior designers evaluate every finish with intention, balancing aesthetics with performance to create spaces that are resilient, intuitive, and designed for longevity. This process includes assessing a number of key criteria, such as:

- Durability,
- Maintenance and long-term costs,
- Acoustic impact and overall comfort,
- Brand identity and design intent alignment,
- Traffic patterns,
- Budget considerations,
- User experience,
- Sustainability or environmental impact, and
- Code compliance and safety standards (including fire ratings, slip resistance, and ADA requirements).

These factors ensure that each material choice supports both the function and the future of the workplace.

In the next issue of Workplace Insights, we'll look at six best practices when working with interior design in the workplace. Stay tuned!

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CONTACT US

Direct any comments or questions to:
**Scott Schroeder, Senior Vice President,
Manager of Client Development**

Workplace and Science + Technology

sschroeder@hixson-inc.com

Phone: 513.241.1230

www.hixson-inc.com