

OFFICE REDEFINED

Office Redefined (one-hour course)

Speaker: Jeff Reuschel

Subject Code Index: 1. Theory and Creativity; 2. Design Creativity and 4. Psychology

IIDA Course #5516, W

AIA Course #HAW550, including Health, Safety, Welfare

Course Description: What is your definition of an office and what does it do for you? This presentation challenges current assumptions and beliefs. This is accomplished through a series of images of traditional and non-traditional offices and through some interactive exercises with the audience. Once our perceptions of what an office is are sufficiently battered, a new definition is offered as a more useful replacement. This replacement includes four categories of “affordance” which provide a framework from which to design offices or judge how well our existing offices measure up.

This course will cover the following objectives:

- Shift perceptions about office definitions, functions, and expectations
- Establish an alternative theory of “officing” from a more science-based perspective
- Define and assess how our current spaces support work life

Course outline:

1. The program begins by establishing a baseline of what most of us think an office is. This includes a brief verbal survey of the audience followed by a visual review of some typical and some non-typical offices. The purpose of this portion of the presentation is to establish the fact that we do not consider what offices are and what they should do for us broadly enough.
2. We then shift to proposing a definition of office organized into four categories of affordance. These categories provide the context for describing in detail what we should not only expect, but demand from the spaces we create and inhabit. Each category is defined and the importance of each is emphasized.
3. Next, we observe a series of images of offices taken from the Ground Zero Study (a visual library of individual office spaces accompanied by background data on the inhabitant) which was initiated by the presenter. Other visuals are also used to help explain the affordance concepts. The audience is also asked to participate in 2-3 minute interactive segments which further illuminate some of the concepts.
4. Summary and conclusions