

The Impact of Workplace Design on Gender Differences

Human Performance Topic

(one-hour course)

Subject code index: 1.4 Theory and Creativity-Psychology

IIDA Course #7044

AIA Course #HAW520, including health, safety, welfare

Course Description: It has been said that “Men are from Mars and women are from Venus.” This course will discuss: 1) The impact of office design on both genders, 2) how men and women relate to one another in an office environment, and 3) why each gender prefers a certain office layout or furniture arrangement.

This course will cover the following objectives:

- Discuss workplace design, in general.
- Understand the differences between men and women as they relate to their preferred styles of interaction with each other.
- Learn ways to ensure that office furniture supports, rather than inhibits, the way men and women inherently relate to one another.

Course Outline:

1. Review historical data:
 - Numbers of men and women “white collar” workers in the United States
 - Numbers of men and women managers in “white collar” positions in the United States
2. Definitions of workplace, workplace design, gender and gender differences, interactive styles.
 - Historical, cultural, and gender differences as they relate to personal space.
 - What is biology and what is cultural?
3. What current and past literature says about workplace design, gender, and, interactive styles
4. Gender studies, focus groups, and case studies.
 - Differences between “traditional lay-outs” versus “non-traditional lay-outs” of offices and how they support or hinder communication based on research.
 - Survey results
5. Summary and Conclusions: discuss the “office of the future” and how it can support both genders.