

The Future of the Office



Work happens in an integrated ecosystem with three physical locations: office, home, and third places. Based on our research, Haworth understands what activities can and should happen in each of these locations, with the office as the hub for culture, connection, and collaboration. To accommodate their hybrid work policies, business leaders are changing the office landscape—creating spaces that support both remote and in-person tasks and workstyles.



79%
of organizations have hybrid work policies

48%
of organizations state that acoustic distractions are an issue in their current offices

81%
of organizations have upgraded their video technology

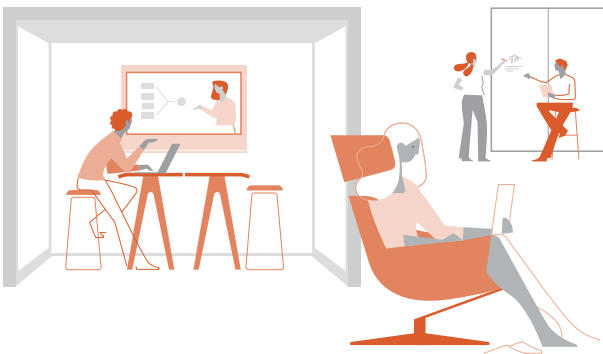
Source: Haworth Workplace Study: Understanding & Navigating Hybrid Work

5 Themes

To support the hybrid work model, changes are happening to help people be more effective and make spaces more efficient. Haworth has identified five themes, shown at the right, that organizations should consider as they plan their office design for the future. These emerged from a compilation of our own research, third-party research, and hundreds of conversations with our customers. While all five themes are important to everyone, each organization is unique in its approach—from culture and goals to geographic location and workforce demographics. It’s not a cookie-cutter paradigm—each is implementing a work from anywhere strategy in their own way.

Work Fluidly

Work from Anywhere is the ecosystem that gives organizations and employees choice in where and when work occurs. What we previously knew as the “office” has evolved into a place of social context—more collaborative than ever. After all, interaction with colleagues makes us happier and more engaged at work. These restorative activities are just as critical to the creative process as high-focus work—and significant for innovation to occur.



Immersive Technology

Every workspace must support technology for physical and virtual connections. Design must consider how technology interacts with the space and its in-person and virtual users. This applies to open and enclosed spaces, as well as individual, group, social, and restorative spaces. Organizations must also explore expanded technology tools to understand space usage—for user and facility performance.



More Collaboration

One of the main reasons people come to the office is to collaborate. People seek out both structured and serendipitous interactions. Being with others in the office is a top draw for employees. Integrating a variety of spaces for different types of collaboration creates desirable workspaces.



Space Shift

The average office space is no longer good enough. Activity-based, neighborhood planning and unassigned workpoints play a large role in supporting the hybrid workforce. While organizations are maintaining or reducing their real estate footprint, they are implementing a higher quality of space.



More Human

The overall approach to the workplace is centered around human performance. The design of the space is highly tuned for the human experience—supporting physical, emotional, and cognitive needs. Hospitality plays a larger role than ever in welcoming people to participate in the space.



Focus to Restore

The activities of the office range from focus, to group, social, and restorative. More spaces are being dedicated to recharging and well-being, but people still need space for deep focus. It’s a supportive balance of these spaces that make the best workplace.