

Designing for Focus Work

Course Numbers

AIA Course #: HAW591 - HSW

Project Planning & Design/Building Design

IDCEC Course #: 106849 - HSW

Subject Code: 4. Design Specialties/1. Corporate/Office

Course Description

Employers who are desperate to innovate often create open workplaces to initiate collaboration and feel justified by the cost savings earned from limiting the real estate dedicated to individual workspace. While open workplaces can support communication among team members, more recent research indicates that the costs to individual employee performance can outweigh the benefits of collaborative group work.

This 1-hour course will provide an understanding of how we focus—and what sabotages that focus—and will help you develop strategies for protecting focus work for different tasks and people.

Learning Objectives

- Define focus work in terms of individual thought processes.
- List what cognitive events sabotage focus work and in what order.
- Describe current research on the impact to focus work.
- Identify workplace and design strategies that protect and replenish focus work.

Course Outline

1. Introduction
2. Why Can't We Focus at Work?
3. Defining focus, sustained vs. controlled attention
4. What sabotages focus work and costs to productivity
5. Managing distractions, interference, and interruptions
6. Holistic approach for focus work (culture, norms/rules, technology, built environment)
7. Design solutions for focus