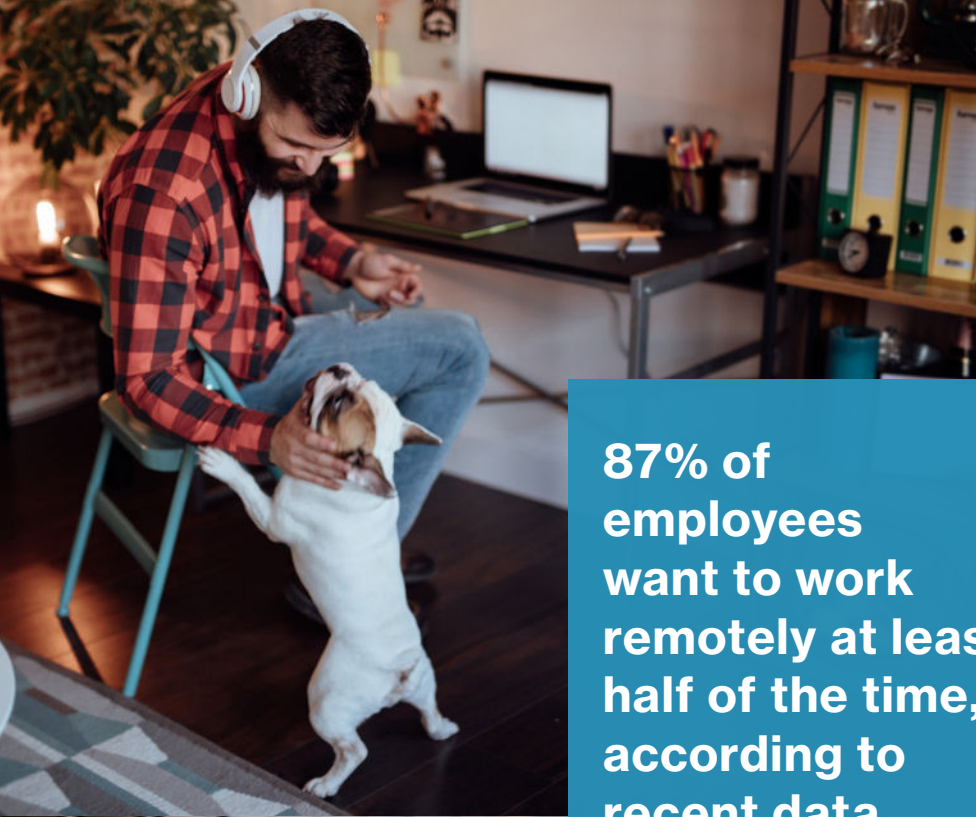




Improving the employee experience for a hybrid workforce

6 tactics to make the workplace support
your greatest asset—your people.



87% of employees want to work remotely at least half of the time, according to recent data.



Employees are becoming restless in their current positions. And they expect employers to provide more flexibility when it comes to where, when, and how employees work.

To combat the threat of a looming turnover, companies are actively redesigning the employee experience—everything from workplace culture to the physical work environment—in order to improve how engaged and satisfied employees feel while they're at work.

In this guide, we'll examine some of the changes you can make in the physical and digital workplace to have a direct impact on the employee experience.

1

Determine what your people need in a hybrid workplace

A successful hybrid strategy balances organizational needs (real estate, budget, industry) with employee needs (office seating, hybrid schedules, personal circumstances). But with **36% of American workers now looking for a new job**, employee feedback has never been more critical to an organizations' success.

Research continues to show that **hybrid workers crave flexibility, collaboration, and safe workspaces**. But preferences vary greatly when it comes to how much time employees should spend at the office.

Before you make any changes to your current strategy, gather data through employee surveys, pulse checks, team meetings, and one-on-ones, and create an employee experience plan that tailors initiatives to your people's unique set of needs.

To discover what employees need to thrive in the hybrid workplace, Sue Bingham, a consultant on high-performing workplaces, suggests that **discussions should go beyond what employees need in the physical workplace** by covering:

Place. Where do you feel most productive? How many days would you like to work in the office?

Processes. What tools would improve your experience? Should we make any adjustments over the next quarter in how we collaborate?

People. What are your goals for the near term and long term? What makes you feel valued at work?

Bingham is also quick to point out that companies who don't pay close attention to employee input in the era of hybrid work will likely risk greater turnover as a result. "With workers having so many options in terms of workplaces, they're unlikely to stay employed long at an organization that doesn't value their opinions."

No matter the hybrid work configurations they end up favoring, employers must get serious about adapting to employees' needs by soliciting their input along the way.

Sue Bingham

founder and principal of HPWP Group

Harvard Business Review

2

Give everyone peace of mind with a safer work environment

Safety in the workplace has always been essential to the employee experience. **Employees want to work in a safe work environment.** And they need to know that their employer complies with and follows the right protocols when incidents or illnesses happen.

The pandemic has simply reminded us of the importance of maintaining safety in the office as the world enters a new era of hybrid work.

Although workers have grown more confident that they can safely return to work, **PwC's Workforce Pulse Survey** (May 2020-2021) found that physical safety in the workplace is still employees' top priority post-pandemic.

And with varied jurisdictional workplace guidelines in place, **workers who want employers to enforce proof of vaccination and mask policies**, and **a federal vaccine mandate** that requires companies with 100 employees or more to test unvaccinated weekly workers weekly, updating and communicating your commitment to workplace safety will be crucial to maintaining a positive employee experience in the months and years ahead.

Best Practices

- Create a strategy that can easily handle variances in jurisdictional workplace guidelines that apply at each of your company's physical locations.
- Communicate your workplace safety to create trust that policies are in place and are being followed.
- Cater to everyone's comfort level with different setups on your floor plan. Distanced seats for people who need it, and group work zones for those who don't.
- Use mandatory wellness checks and badge access integrations to help people feel more comfortable coming into the workplace.
- Make sure workplace safety policies and protocols can't be circumnavigated.

Tools

Wellness Checks

Customizable wellness surveys can give everyone greater assurance when using the physical office. **Safeguard** integrates with Slack, Teams, and the OfficeSpace mobile app to help employees submit their wellness checks in seconds.

Badge Access

People can't enter the building until/unless they pass their wellness check. Consider a secure **building automation system**.

Interactive Office Maps

See who's in, help employees familiarize themselves with the office, and communicate floor plan changes in seconds with office maps that update in real-time.

Check-In

Know who was in the office each day and support contact tracing efforts as needed.

In June 2020, only 33% of employees felt safe working onsite based on the modifications their company made. By May 2021, 73% of employees said they would feel comfortable attending a meeting in a conference room with 10 people.

PwC Workforce Pulse Survey
(May 2020-2021)

3

Remove friction with technology

After a year of ever-changing restrictions, the last thing employees need right now is another set of workplace rules and procedures. The right set of tools can remove friction and give employees the tools they need to transition easily between the office and remote work as they choose.

When **Qualtrics surveyed nearly 14,000 full-time employees** from 27 countries to understand how the employee experience changed in 2021, they discovered that having the right tech had a huge impact on employee engagement:

91% engagement rate among people who have productivity-enabling tech

24% engagement rate among people who do not have productivity-enabling tech

The key to success is to make sure that the technology you use is the technology your employees actually need.

Qualtrics' 2022 Employee Experience

Trends report also identified a significant gap between what organizations thought they were delivering and what employees actually wanted when it came to hybrid work enablement.

Only 30% of respondents said their experience with their company's technology exceeded or greatly exceeded their expectations. While only 23% of respondents felt their experience working at their office exceeded or greatly exceeded their expectations.

If your employees are underwhelmed by (or simply not using) the current technology that's on offer, it's time to throw out the pre-pandemic playbook and determine what your people need to enjoy a frictionless workplace experience.

The employee experience is now deeply connected to the digital experience. If technology is hindering my productivity, it's nearly impossible for me to feel great about my overall experience.

Matt Evans

Senior EX Product Scientist
Qualtrics

Best Practices

- Cross-departmental collaboration. As you develop your strategy, ensure that **Facilities, HR, and IT work together** from the start.
- Set employees up for success. Check that every employee has proper IT infrastructure in place at the office and at home.
- Keep everyone connected, wherever work happens. Use workplace management software that **integrates with the other tools your people are already using** (e.g. Slack, Microsoft Teams, and Google Calendar) and a workplace mobile app.
- Aim for ease of use. Easy-to-use apps, platforms, and integrations go a long way to making life easier for employees.

Tools

Room and Space Booking

Help your people find the right rooms and spaces with intuitive booking software that works on desktop, mobile, and Slack.

Desk Booking


Make working in the hybrid workplace easier for everyone. Give your people safe, flexible seating that's easy to use via **desk booking software** that works on any device.

Slack & Teams Integrations

With **workplace software that integrates with Slack and Microsoft Teams**, everyone can find the people, places, and resources they need to stay productive via tools they already use.

Workplace Mobile App

Empower everyone to submit wellness checks and find, book, and connect with everything they need in real time with a **workplace mobile app** that's easy to use.

A man with curly hair and a beard, wearing a purple long-sleeved shirt, and a woman with dark hair, wearing a green button-down shirt, are looking at a tablet together. They are in a room with white bookshelves filled with books in the background. The man is pointing at the screen of the tablet, which the woman is holding. The lighting is soft and natural, suggesting an indoor office or library setting.

In facility management, it's our job to remove friction in the workplace. OfficeSpace gives our employees the ability to interact digitally with the workplace keeping employees engaged, happy with their work environment, and more productive in their day-to-day.

Scott Moitoza

Sr Director of Real-Estate and Facilities
Procore Technologies

4

Create the right mix of rooms and spaces

The pandemic has forced companies to rethink the purpose and meaning of the office.

The workplace that employees return to needs to offer people a better experience than what they have access to at home. Offices must be set up to give employees the rooms and spaces they need, for all of the different types of work that need to get done.

Assigned and bookable spaces for group work, ad-hoc collaboration, quiet work, and solitude should all have a place on your floor plan. The correct ratios will depend on your industry, whether your organization's approach to hybrid work is office-focused or remote-first, and direct feedback from your employees.

Spaces and rooms must be easy to search and book, whether employees are in the office, on the go, or at home. And to make offices more attractive to employees who choose to work there either occasionally or full-time, consider creating spaces for employees to socialize and meet, either in person or virtually.

Your employees have changed since the pandemic. Your office needs to change too. Get this aspect of the employee experience right, and your workplace could end up becoming a competitive advantage for years to come.

Best Practices

Although there's no one-size-fits-all solution to reimagining the workplace, one thing is clear: while your company's **hybrid work model** will give you clues on how to redesign the office for hybrid work, **you can't rely on your gut to make these changes effectively.**

Survey your employees to determine their needs. And use real-time workplace analytics to measure usage and optimize your setup as needed.

- **Make data-driven decisions.** Use online surveys to determine which spaces and rooms employees need the most.
- **Avoid pre-pandemic thinking.** Throw out the pre-pandemic playbook out the window and reimagine the workplace based on direct feedback from your employees.
- **Set every space up for success.** Ensure that rooms are equipped with the right tools and resources to accommodate meetings with on-site and offsite employees.
- **Measure usage and progress.** Use real-time reports like Occupancy and Booking Trends reports to see what's working and identify underutilized rooms and spaces.
- **Make sure your people are on board.** Check in with employees periodically to assess satisfaction levels and uncover additional space and room needs.

Tools

Stack Plans

With block and stack technology, you get a high-level view of how your teams are dispersed. And it's easy to quickly optimize wasted space, move entire teams and departments, and reorganize your entire portfolio.

Scenario Planning

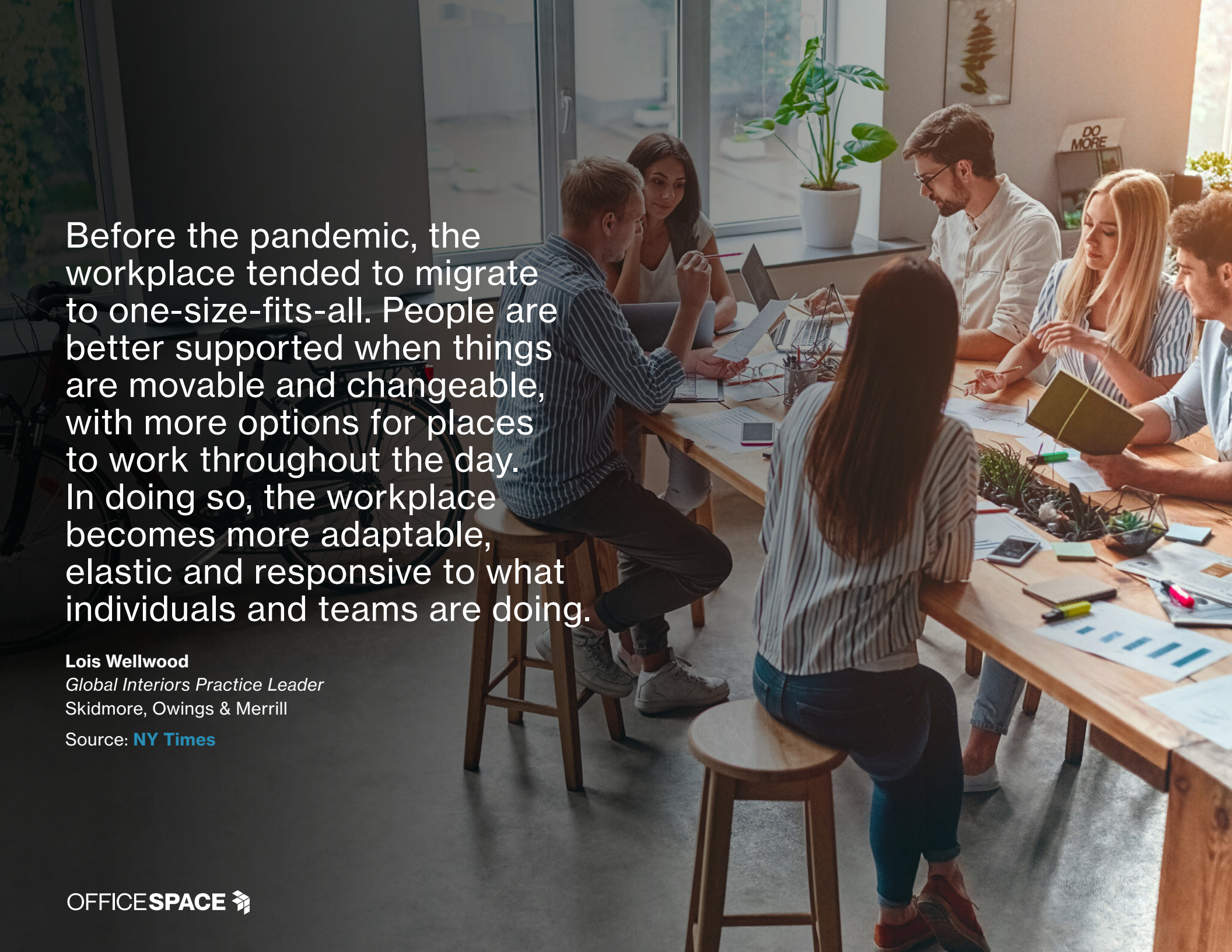
Stop managing floor plan changes with a spreadsheet. Virtual scenarios are the best way to reconfigure your workplace. Collaborate with teams, experiment with different options, and easily bring new floor plans to life.

Workplace Analytics

Detailed reports and analytics help you measure what matters and see what's happening in the workplace in real-time. Quickly access critical metrics like cost per employee, occupancy, and operational costs—all in one place.

Sensor Integrations

Turn your facility into a “smart” workplace with workplace sensors. Automate desk sharing, improve space utilization, and support employee well-being.



Before the pandemic, the workplace tended to migrate to one-size-fits-all. People are better supported when things are movable and changeable, with more options for places to work throughout the day. In doing so, the workplace becomes more adaptable, elastic and responsive to what individuals and teams are doing.

Lois Wellwood

Global Interiors Practice Leader
Skidmore, Owings & Merrill

Source: [NY Times](#)

5

Make flexible seating enhance company culture

Choice matters in a hybrid workplace. With everyone accessing the office for different reasons on hugely varied schedules, employees need a variety of seating options to get their work done.

Today, desks need to be safe and socially distanced (if required). And the process for booking desks needs to be quick, easy, and efficient for employees to use. But it's important to note that flexible seating can be—and should be—set up in a way that enhances your company culture, too.

Outdated workplace software—or worse, desks managed by manual systems and spreadsheets—can make booking and finding desks difficult for employees, degrading productivity and engagement in the process. If it's frustrating to book and use desks, employees may avoid the booking process or simply avoid working at the office altogether.

Advanced desk booking features like customizable booking and usage permissions, you can create a flexible seating experience that makes sense for individuals, not just your company. Set the number of desk reservations by floor or site to keep daily capacity at comfortable levels. Enable recurring and multi-day bookings to help employees plan ahead. Make desks available to select individuals or to groups of employees within a specific department to facilitate easier collaboration.

Choosing a desk booking platform that can support every type of flexible desk is also essential, as it allows you to offer the right combination of flexible seating on your floor plans to support your team's unique set of workstyles and needs.

HOT DESKS

Multiple employees can use the same hot desk at different time periods, without needing to book it in advance.

FREE ADDRESSING

Employees use any available desk. Sensors update the status of these desks in real-time.

DESK HOTELING

use office hoteling desks, but bookings must be made in advance.

ACTIVITY-BASED WORKING

Turn anything on your floor plan into a bookable activity-based workspace and customize how it's used.

If we don't give them (employees) a reason to commute in, they'll return to their basement to do their work.

Eric Gannon

Workplace Studio Leader
Gensler

SOURCE: [NY Times](#)

Best Practices

- **Mix and match desk types.** Give your people a range of seats to choose from—hot desks, hoteling desks, free addressing desks.
- **Lean into customization.** Choose booking permissions that match up with your company culture. If employees, make desks bookable on the spot (no approval required).
- **Aim for ease of use.** Make sure employees can find, book, and check into desks in seconds, wherever they are.
- **Give your people options.** Make it possible to find and book desks from any device (computer, mobile, tablet) and other tools that your people already use (Slack, Microsoft Teams, Workplace Mobile App, etc.)

Tools

Real-Time Booking Software

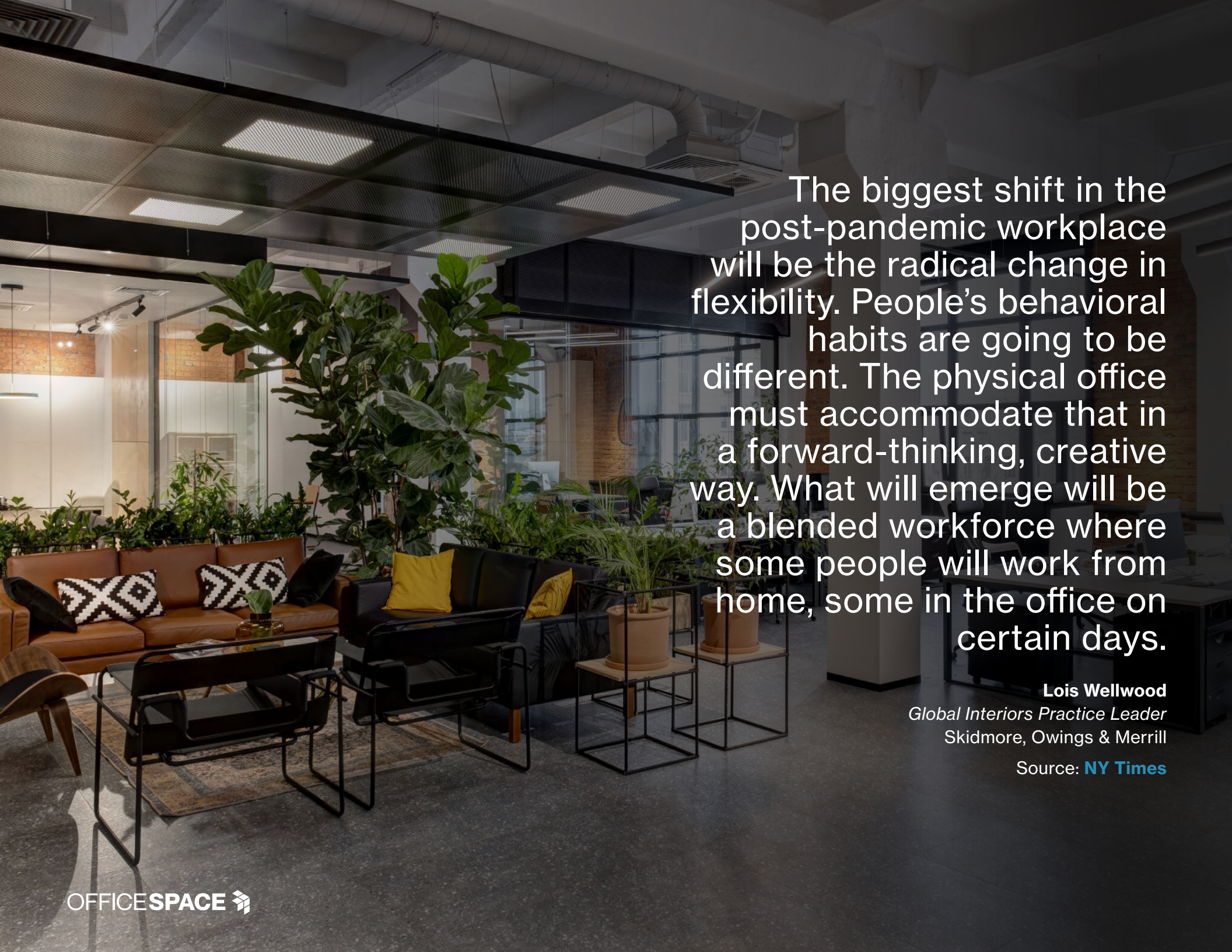
Empower employees with booking software that works on mobile, desktop, touchscreen kiosk, Slack, and Teams. Help everyone find, book, and check into desks in seconds.

Who's In?

With the right desk booking software in place, employees can see which co-workers are in the office on any given day and book a desk in seconds—no steep learning curve required.

Search Desks by Feature

Need a standing desk and an external monitor for the day? With intelligent search, everyone can search for seats by location and features to find the desk they need with interactive floor plans.

A modern office lounge area featuring a large brown leather sofa with patterned and solid-colored pillows, a black leather sofa with yellow pillows, and a black metal chair. A large green plant is in the center, and several smaller potted plants are on metal stands. The space has large windows, exposed ceiling pipes, and a concrete floor.

The biggest shift in the post-pandemic workplace will be the radical change in flexibility. People's behavioral habits are going to be different. The physical office must accommodate that in a forward-thinking, creative way. What will emerge will be a blended workforce where some people will work from home, some in the office on certain days.

Lois Wellwood

Global Interiors Practice Leader
Skidmore, Owings & Merrill

Source: **NY Times**

6

Give everyone the seating they need

When it comes to seating employees in a hybrid workplace, no two people's needs are the same. Some need assigned desks. But more and more, employees within each team have different seating needs. And it's a lot for workplace teams to contend with.

Until very recently, managing seating assignments, booking requests, and desk permissions was a painstaking, time-consuming process that added hours of work to a facility team's weekly workload.

Taking advantage of office neighborhoods can make it much easier to support employees and manage the extreme seating flexibility that the hybrid employee experience demands.

Neighborhoods give employees more say in where they sit and how they work while they're at the office.

Reduce administrative burden. Easily manage a variety of desk types within each team. Reduce the time it takes to maintain membership, capacity, and booking permissions for each neighborhood

Granular seating options. Give each individual team member the seat type and seat permissions they need within a team

Team-managed seating. Assign "seating captains" and empower teams to manage seat changes within their own groups

Customized office neighborhoods. Add employees to neighborhoods based on department, activity, job function, and more, to foster collaboration and provide seating for cross-functional teams

Easier workplace experience. Simplify how employees find seats in the office, whether they need to collaborate with others or focus on quiet work for the day

In-depth reporting. Use real-time reports to track neighborhood capacity and optimize as needed

OfficeSpace neighborhoods allows us to be very strategic about keeping departments together – giving team members the ability to easily book desks and sit with the people they work with.

Scott Moitoza

Sr Director of Real-Estate and Facilities
Procore Technologies

Best Practices

- **Assign seating captains.** Empower seating captains in each neighborhood to manage their own team's seating permissions and requests.
- **Test and iterate.** Start with one neighborhood and make sure it suits your people's needs before rolling it out company wide.
- **Communicate your approach.** If people don't know how to make the most out of office neighborhoods, they won't use them.
- **Get executive buy in.** Neighborhoods will change to the way the workplace is used. Make sure leadership is on board before moving ahead.

Tools

Team-Managed Seating

Neighborhood seating captains can approve seat changes and booking requests in seconds.

Multiple Seat Types

Create neighborhoods with any combination of seating—assigned, bookable, free addressing—and make sure every team has the setup they need.

Automated Permissions

When a new hire joins the company or an employee switches teams, OfficeSpace will automatically update which desks and neighborhoods each employee can use—saving you from hours of painstaking admin.

Neighborhood Reports

Set and track allocation, sharing ratio, and capacity targets for each neighborhood. See when and how desks are being used and optimize each neighborhood as needed.



It will take time to make hybrid work for your organization's unique set of needs. Although the path might not be clear, one thing is certain: with more employees demanding flexibility to work where they feel the most productive (and safe), companies that prioritize communication, collaboration, and connection, while actively cultivating employees' voice and input in workplace decisions will be best positioned to succeed with hybrid work.

It's time to create a better place for everyone.

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Ready to see OfficeSpace in action?

Book a demo and see how OfficeSpace can help you create a safe, productive hybrid workplace that makes sense for your company and your people.

[Request a demo →](#)