2019 office décor trends - tips to keep pace

By Leon Breytenbach   1 Mar 2019

Décor trends evolve continually, and it is not financially viable to redecorate your office space with every new trend. However, more millennials hold senior positions, Generation Z is also entering the workplace and technology is developing exponentially; the stereotypical office of yesteryear is becoming a memory as office décor needs to keep pace with the modern world. By choosing well-designed office accessories that can be revamped from time to time with small changes and additions, your décor should last for a number of years.

Image source: www.unsplash.com

Looking after your workforce

Attractive, functional office space can increase your employee productivity by about 20%, according to the World Green Building Council, which reports that overwhelming evidence shows a link between office design, productivity and employee health. Facilities such as break rooms, coffee and snacks on call, gyms, spas, flexitime, and similar perks prove helpful in retaining top-notch employees. Today's workforce requires a workspace where they are happy to spend a third of their working week. They no longer merely want a job, but expect a positive work experience – a place where they can perform productively and enjoy doing their work. In return, the employer will have a more engaged staff showing greater productivity and less downtime due to absenteeism.

Technology streaks ahead

The technological revolution continues to accelerate, forcing office design to keep up and incorporate the latest devices, while being flexible. While offices once had problems keeping all the electrical cords tidy, now many devices are cordless and use Wi-Fi. Magnetic cable management equipment, Bluetooth-enabled standing-desk controllers connecting to mobile apps, table-top embedded personal assistant touchscreens, and air-charging ports for mobile devices are just a few of the modern office necessities. Ergonomic desks and chairs are important, especially for those who spend long hours in front of a computer or laptop. Height-adjustable desks allow people to sit or stand as they feel inclined, encouraging better focus and healthier posture.

Layout and décor

Office design is intrinsic to personal as well as organisational productivity. Open plan offices gave way to cubicles, but neither proved successful – firstly, because it allowed too many distractions and the second, because staff felt boxed in. Where individual workspace is required, glass dividers allow eye contact with colleagues, do not block light, keep out a reasonable amount of noise, yet encourage a feeling of connection with the office community. Flexible spaces for creative team meetings will not replace formal conference rooms but are achieved with furniture which may be easily pushed together or separated as the need arises.

Colours, textures, patterns and art

Single-colour décor is out. Cheerful colours, unusual textures and geographic designs are in. Bright pops of colour lift the spirits, while interesting designs give a change of scenery to invigorate a tired brain. Tastefully incorporating a variety of textures such as wood grain, shiny or matte metallic finishes, mirrors, woven fabrics, and a mixture of old and contemporary furniture helps to keep the scene fresh and inspiring. Murals and exciting art also help to break the tedium of single-colour areas. Scenes from nature are particularly good at refreshing tired employees.

Plants have a dual purpose

Incorporating plants – whether conventional office plants such as palms, philodendrons, ficus and dracaenas or flowering plants like chrysanthemums, orchids, anthuriums and bromeliads – will lift the spirits and increase energy in the office. Millennials and Generation Z are very aware of nature and its influence on their well-being. They want to bring the outdoors inside and plants help to do this, while greatly improving the air quality. Water features and living walls are also becoming increasingly popular, as are outdoor break areas with attractively designed gardens.

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Storage and lighting

Well-designed storage spaces are essential in order to conceal the office clutter of stationery, files, etc. A minimalist style makes the space appear larger and more manageable. Storage areas can also be colour-coded to make a bright statement within a busy workspace. Natural light is always best for mental well-being, so it is wise to incorporate as much as possible. Overhead lights can be cold and sterile, but they are still necessary; however, desk lamps are trending at present to allow each employee to personalise their lighting requirements.

2019 and beyond

Your office décor should reflect your company's brand and culture, be up to date and attractive to your target market, and most of all, show you are cognisant of the trend for green building practices. Supplementing your power needs with solar energy, installing a grey water reclamation system, employing an efficient waste recycling system and reducing your carbon footprint as far as possible will not only save you money, and impress clients and employees, but it will also be helping to save the planet; this is crucial in 2019 and going into the future.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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