

Is a boring workspace affecting your employees?

Boredom in the workplace has a multitude of negative physiological and psychological health impacts and, from a business perspective, can lead to frustration and loss of productivity. In addition, bored employees are twice as likely to leave their job, according to a study by Udemy.



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In a recent poll commissioned by Mindspace, 31% of millennial employees said that they find their current workplace boring and uninspiring. 21% of millennials say they have rejected job offers because of uninspiring workplaces. Boredom at work is often related to doing the same thing over and over again. In fact, in a 2017 survey of 1,200 professionals, the main reason people said they were bored was because they do and see the same thing every day.

Variety is the spice of life

This is where well-designed workplaces come in. Most office spaces have moved beyond the drab cubicle, and companies are now seriously embracing the impact of design as part of the drive to avoid monotony. Central to workspace design is the need for the fast, efficient and flexible use of space that allows for people to gather together in an instant and break away and reconfigure at a moment's notice. Workspace design cannot afford to be prescriptive or rigid.

Agile offices – flexible spaces which incorporate different areas for different types of work – are a very popular response to the problems with the rigid, traditional format of office work.

Whether through rearranging furniture layouts, breakaway groups, co-working spaces, having different work spaces to choose from in the office, agile offices are a way of keeping things fresh and employees motivated by giving them options in terms of how to work.

"Implementing flexible working spaces gives employees a sense of ownership over their work environment. This is especially important because boredom also frequently arises when people feel a lack of control over their time, activities and environment," says David Fish, MD of [AngelShack](#), a South African manufacturer and supplier of work place solutions.

Allowing employees more autonomy in their work roles has proven results: higher engagement, motivation and job satisfaction. So in addition to offering a variety of work spaces, it is crucial that agile workplaces consciously empower employees to choose where and how they work."

"If we make our business environments more conducive to interest and excitement it will lead to boosted innovation, creativity and productivity. The goal is to minimise the instances of boredom, which often comes from badly designed work environments," adds Fish.

Here are five additional tips and suggestions from Fish to help conquer boredom in the office workspace and ensure a healthier state of mind.

1. Force yourself to be curious

Boredom is often a loss of curiosity. If you catch yourself bored with a project, stop to read for a bit or watch an interesting clip on YouTube, even in the middle of the day. Search for something far away from work, yet linked to the same battery crucial to that work.

2. Listen to music

Listen to music for 10 to 15 minutes before you tackle your to-do list. When you listen to music, your brain releases dopamine and possibly serotonin. Both of these neurotransmitters elevate your mood.

3. Take time out - to play

Feeling bored, frustrated, or stuck at work is no fun. So try doing something deliberately amusing. How about a game of putt-putt in the office? Employees can navigate treacherous obstacles like the photocopy machine, the reception area and the recycling centre. Each hole needs a plastic cup with a company value, theme or story topic on it. Once an employee hits the ball into the hole they have to pause and tell others nearby a short story about what the value/theme/story means to them.

4. Take a hike

If you've hit a roadblock on a project, grab your laptop and move to another room or space. Sometimes a simple change in scenery can reignite those brain cells.

5. Change your physical environment

Perhaps, you need a change of scenery. Our environment can change our mood. Try using fresh new colours, as they can evoke feelings of happiness.

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