

Beyond the Desk.

Exploring the Future of Workspaces

Beyond Aesthetics: The Rise of Wellness-Centric Workplace Design

In today's workplace environment, the notion of a "workspace" has matured into something far more considered: a destination engineered for human thriving rather than mere occupancy. Below, we explore what wellness-centric design means, and how acoustics, ergonomics and colour become key instruments in this intentional approach.

What is wellness-centric design?

Wellness-centric design places the well-being of people at the heart of every decision: spatial layout, materials, furniture, light, sound, movement and colour. This extends beyond aesthetics into creating environments that support physical health (posture, movement, comfort), mental and emotional wellness (calm, focus, connection) and social wellbeing (community, agency, flexibility). It aligns with globally recognised standards such as the WELL Building Standard, which emphasises measurable building features that influence occupant health and wellness.

In short: well-designed workplaces don't simply accommodate people, they enable them to feel better, work better and stay better.

Acoustics: the invisible architecture of wellness

Sound often goes unseen, until it's overwhelming. But acoustic comfort is a critical pillar of wellbeing-oriented design: when noise is uncontrolled, concentration suffers, stress rises, and fatigue accumulates. In shared workspaces, this is especially acute. As one expert article notes: "Harsh, echoing interiors create mental fatigue, increase stress levels, and hinder concentration."

Wellness-centric design in action prioritises

- **Zoning and layout:** separating collaborative zones from quiet focus areas, using buffer spaces and acoustic transition zones.
- **Acoustic treatment:** wall panels, ceiling baffles, soft finishes, and materials that absorb reverberation rather than reflect it.
- **User experience:** designing for both visibility and calm, so that quiet zones are both accessible for focussed work and decompression.

In execution this means furniture and interior systems are specified with acoustics in mind, fixed desks, modular components and furniture clusters are not only visually coherent but contribute to acoustic separation and comfort.

Ergonomics: the foundation of physical wellbeing

In the wellness-centric workplace, ergonomics is non-negotiable. It's about supporting the body in real use scenarios and creating a work-setting that promotes health, not discomfort. Ergonomic design reduces the risk of musculoskeletal disorders, supports movement, and improves endurance of focus. Contributors within an ergonomic set up include,



Workstation configuration: correct monitor height, keyboard position, chair support.

Movement support: defaults that encourage posture change, choice of seating/standing, and layouts that enable micro-movement or transitions.

Furniture integration: selecting desks, chairs and systems that are built for comfort and durability and adjust to the individual across the workday.

Colour: the language of mood and identity

While ergonomics and acoustics address the functional dimension of wellness, colour addresses the emotional and psychological. In a wellness-centric environment, colour becomes a strategic element for mood, focus, connection and brand expression.

Integrating colour involves:

- **Palette selection:** Calm neutral tones for focus zones, accent colours in social or collaborative zones to stimulate connection.
- **Material layering:** Textures and finishes that marry colour with tactility, supporting both affinity and comfort.
- **Brand coherence:** Using colour not merely decoratively, but to reflect organisational identity and values, turning the workspace into a cultural expression of care.

Furniture finishes, frames and worktops support the palette and keep the environment consistent, calm and wellness aware.

Bringing it together: the OLG approach

At OLG we view wellness-centric design as a wholistic approach to the workspace, furniture, finishes, colour and technology all working in together.

- **Desking:** integrated cable management, acoustic partitions and finishes that absorb sound and define zones without visual clutter.
- **Ergonomics:** high-performing furniture that supports posture, movement and comfort, essential in hybrid schedules.
- **Colour:** a coherent aesthetic that connects fixed and height-adjustable furniture, enabling mixed-mode workspaces that feel unified and wellness-aware.

By treating furniture and interior systems as enablers of wellness, we help organisations create offices people genuinely want to attend.