

The CONNECTOR

Good Interior Planning & Design Improves Companies Bottom Line

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Studies have found that proper lighting levels, reduced noise, pleasing colors, user friendly work surfaces and equipment, all reduce stress and fatigue in the office environment. People are working longer and more stressful hours. To keep worker performance high and satisfy government regulations, proper planning and design of the office interiors are essential in improving a company's bottom line.

I often hear many of the same concerns business owners and managers express toward their office interiors. Not enough work surface, inadequate storage, poor adjacency, depressing atmosphere, and employee fatigue, the list goes on. Poor interior planning and their environments result in higher employee turnover, low morale, and increased insurance claims.

There are many aspects to consider when planning the office for success and increased worker performance. **Affrunti Design Management**, a full service interiors firm, takes the approach of providing an environment that maximizes adaptability and still remains people friendly. The following are elements, which effect worker performance and ways to improve them.

- 1.) **Areas** with no clear direction as to layout or adjacencies can reduce a worker's efficiency by as much as thirty percent. Proper layout of workers, departments and their support adjacencies is the most important factor when planning office space.
- 2.) **Workstation** standards for size and work surface should be researched for both function and cost reduction. There are however, a percentage of workers that require non-standard elements and these areas should be addressed for increased job performance.
- 3.) **Light** is an important factor for making people feel good about their environment. Atriums, light wells, and glass block all lend themselves to accomplishing this task and is also an energy saver by reducing the amount of artificial light.

4.) **Color** will affect the mood and efficiency of a worker. Color combinations along with locations will improve or decrease productivity. Provide proper colors for the appropriate locations.

5.) **Noise** is distracting. Whether it be the factory or office environment, too much noise is a detriment to work. The use of acoustical sound absorption panels will reduce the level of noise.

6.) **Scent** will also influence a person's emotion. Plants will achieve a pleasant aroma along with a natural air cleanser.

All of these elements used properly will produce a well-planned and designed office. The key is to apply these elements in a manner that is stimulating and cost effective. Remember, in many cases the success of a company's bottom line reflects the environment in which it provides for its workers.