

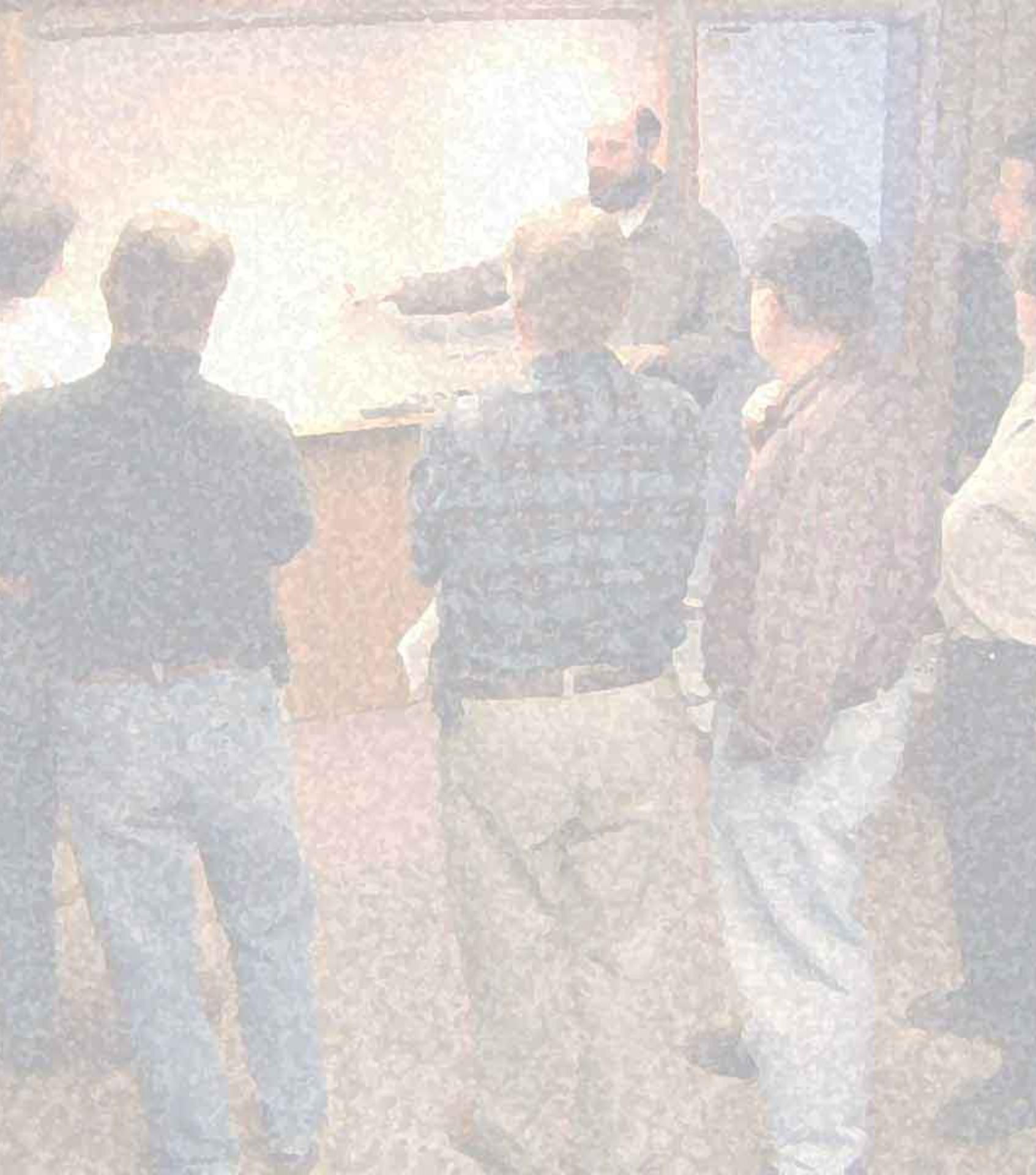


THE GOOD. THE BAD. THE OPEN PLAN

CREATING ENVIRONMENTS FOR COLLABORATIVE KNOWLEDGE WORK

JOE WRIGHT

@JOE_JAG



BUILD PROJECTS AROUND
MOTIVATED INDIVIDUALS. GIVE
THEM THE **ENVIRONMENT**
AND SUPPORT THEY NEED,
AND TRUST THEM TO GET THE
JOB DONE.

- 5TH PRINCIPLE OF THE AGILE MANIFESTO



FOR THE INTELLECTUAL WORK,
SEPARATE ROOMS ARE NECESSARY SO
THAT A PERSON WHO WORKS WITH
THEIR HEAD MAY NOT BE INTERRUPTED

- SIR CHARLES TREVELYAN - UK GOVERNMENT REPORT (1854)

BUT FOR THE MORE MECHANICAL WORK.
THE WORKING IN CONCERT OF A
NUMBER OF CLERKS IN THE SAME ROOM
UNDER PROPER SUPERINTENDENCE, IS
THE PROPER MODE OF MEETING IT

- SIR CHARLES TREVELYAN - UK GOVERNMENT REPORT (1854)





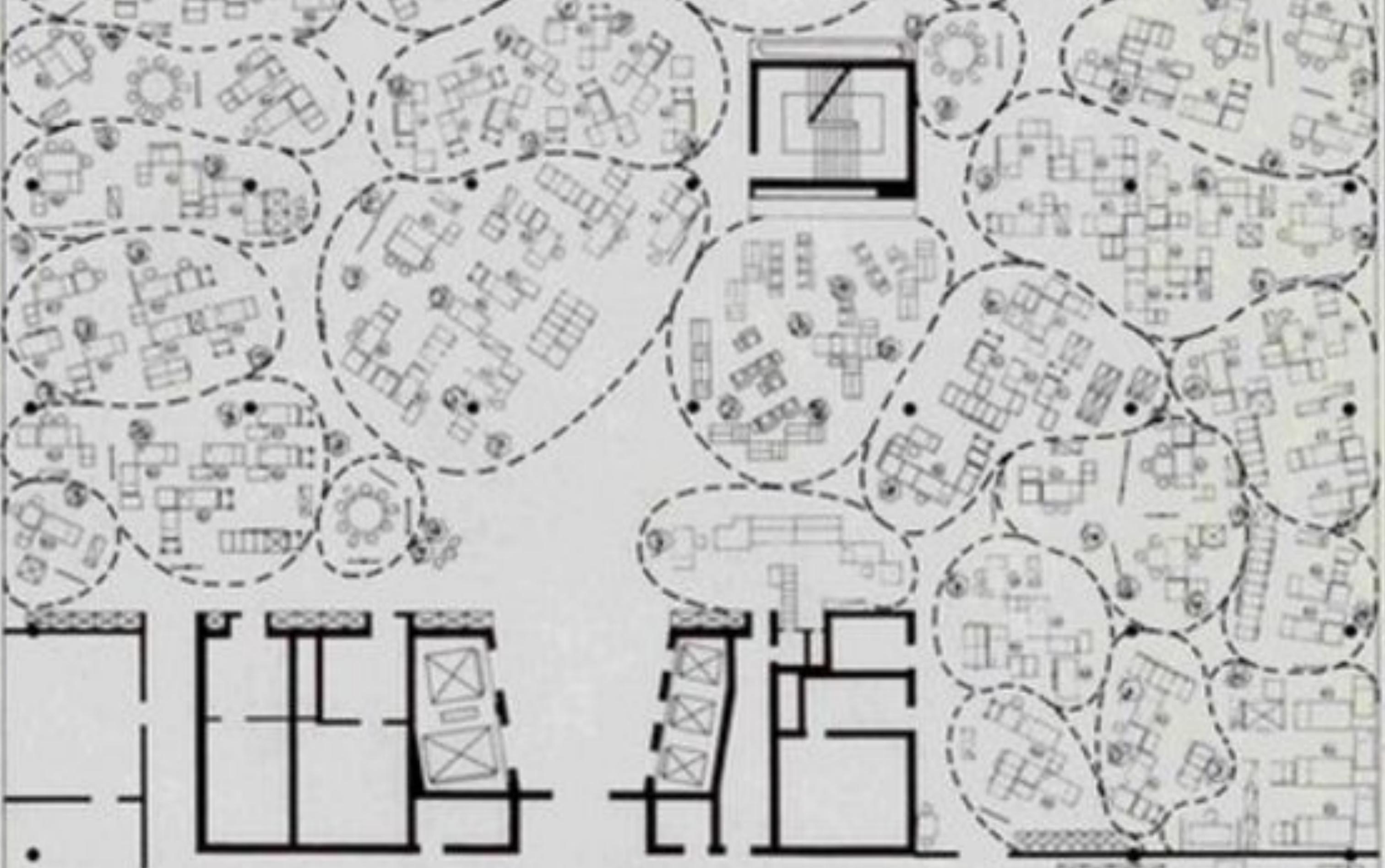








BUROLANDSCHAFT









RESEARCH FOUND

- PEOPLE SIT ALL DAY. AND THAT ISN'T HEALTHY.
- MOST PEOPLE NEED PLACES FOR BOTH PRIVATE AND COLLABORATIVE WORK.



OFFICES NEED TO HAVE

- FLEXIBLE INGREDIENTS, WITH ABILITY REARRANGE BASED ON OFFICE NEEDS.
- HEIGHT ADJUSTABLE, SIT-TO-STAND DESKS (HEALTH THROUGH BETTER BLOOD FLOW).
- DEDICATED AREAS FOR FOCUS, WITH ABILITY TO STILL SEE SURROUNDINGS.

of going open plan, especially if they are not actually going to have to brave the wide-open spaces themselves. MARCELLE BERNSTEIN reports on what life is really like for 1,200 workers in Britain's largest open-plan offices.

WOULD YOU LET YOUR DAUGHTER WORK IN AN OPEN PLAN?

Earlier this year Boots of Nottingham moved 1,200 of their office staff into magnificent new headquarters. They did so very quietly - no official opening, no ribbon-cutting, no champagne. But this building is the largest open-plan office block in the country and, as a centre for a big organisation, it is unique in Europe. The two-storey building took five years to plan and build, cost over £2 million and has five acres of wall-to-wall carpeting.

Now after nearly a year's experience, Boots feel their switch to open plan has paid off. Office output has gone up; staff, in full view of one another, work harder. There are far fewer inter-office memos because direct consultation is so much easier. Time-keeping has improved and there is less absenteeism. Boots say their staff have been impeccably turned out but concede that standards of dress and grooming are higher.

Delen Davies, a chatty blonde who has been with Boots for 34 years and is now their beauty

consultant, says: 'I think the girls are much more conscious of being on show, they take far more trouble with themselves. And you get to know people so quickly here.'

Looking round at the gleaming stretches of ceiling-high windows, calmed by the subtle décor carefully studded with plants, delighted by the vistas, coddled by the carpets and breathing filtered air, it is hard to believe this is an office. But it is, and so it's even harder to understand the rumble of grumbles beneath the general cries of delight. Some comments are really very reasonable. John Jarrett, the safety officer, says: 'You've got to develop a technique of ignoring what's going on around you. You need a concentration which shuts out your environment.'

Ivan Mitchell, Boots' own chief architect, sits in a private office with smoked glass walls through which he is clearly visible and says that he suffers from visual distraction. He has to confine



Colin Jones



Right: The punch card and data processing department on the lower floor, is staffed by 40 girls. The ceilings are 9ft 6in., rather lower than the upper floor, and there have been complaints of depression among those working here. Most of the noise from this department is absorbed by the ceilings: perforated metal panels filled with a compound of fibreglass and asbestos. This absorbs and muffles sound so effectively that it is impossible to hear a quiet conversation within a few feet. There have been difficulties: a noisy key-punching machine on the upper floor was placed near a senior executive; and the audio-typing department on the same floor was another source of complaint. The West Midlands Gas Board open-plan office at Solihull, which opened six years ago and houses more people than Boots' in a smaller space, found that the only way to solve this was by putting all noisy machines out of sight. The result is that the office is a noisy place, but the workers have a good time.



Tom Smith, market research analyst: 'I like the spaciousness. There are no draughts, I can work in shirt sleeves. The feeling of luxury has worn off to a certain extent, but you go to other offices and think "poor swines".'

Jill Arnold, insurance clerk: 'I think it's a marvellous building. I like the lightness. But I find the air-conditioning rather chilly. We were told we could wear summer clothes all year, but I've loads of sweaters on.'



Judy Turner, secretary: 'I'm for it, I like the atmosphere. There's a sort of go-ahead way of thinking here and it's nice to know that you're working in a building that's one of the most modern in the country.'

Geoffrey Stoer, of Inventory Management: 'I wouldn't go back to the old buildings for all the tea in China. I like the space, it's clean, I can work with my jacket off. There's just one thing - we'd all like the blinds up.'









THE CUBICLIZING OF PEOPLE IN MODERN
CORPORATIONS IS MONOLITHIC
INSANITY

- ROBERT PROPST

NOT ALL ORGANISATIONS ARE
INTELLIGENT. LOTS ARE RUN BY CRASS
PEOPLE WHO CAN TAKE THE SAME KIND
OF EQUIPMENT AND CREATE HELLHOLES.
THEY MAKE LITTLE BITTY CUBICLES
AND STUFF PEOPLE IN THEM. BARREN.
RAT-HOLE PLACES

- ROBERT PROPST



tens
BF 047

60 ft 20

SAFETY KREW
Safety Fit Seats











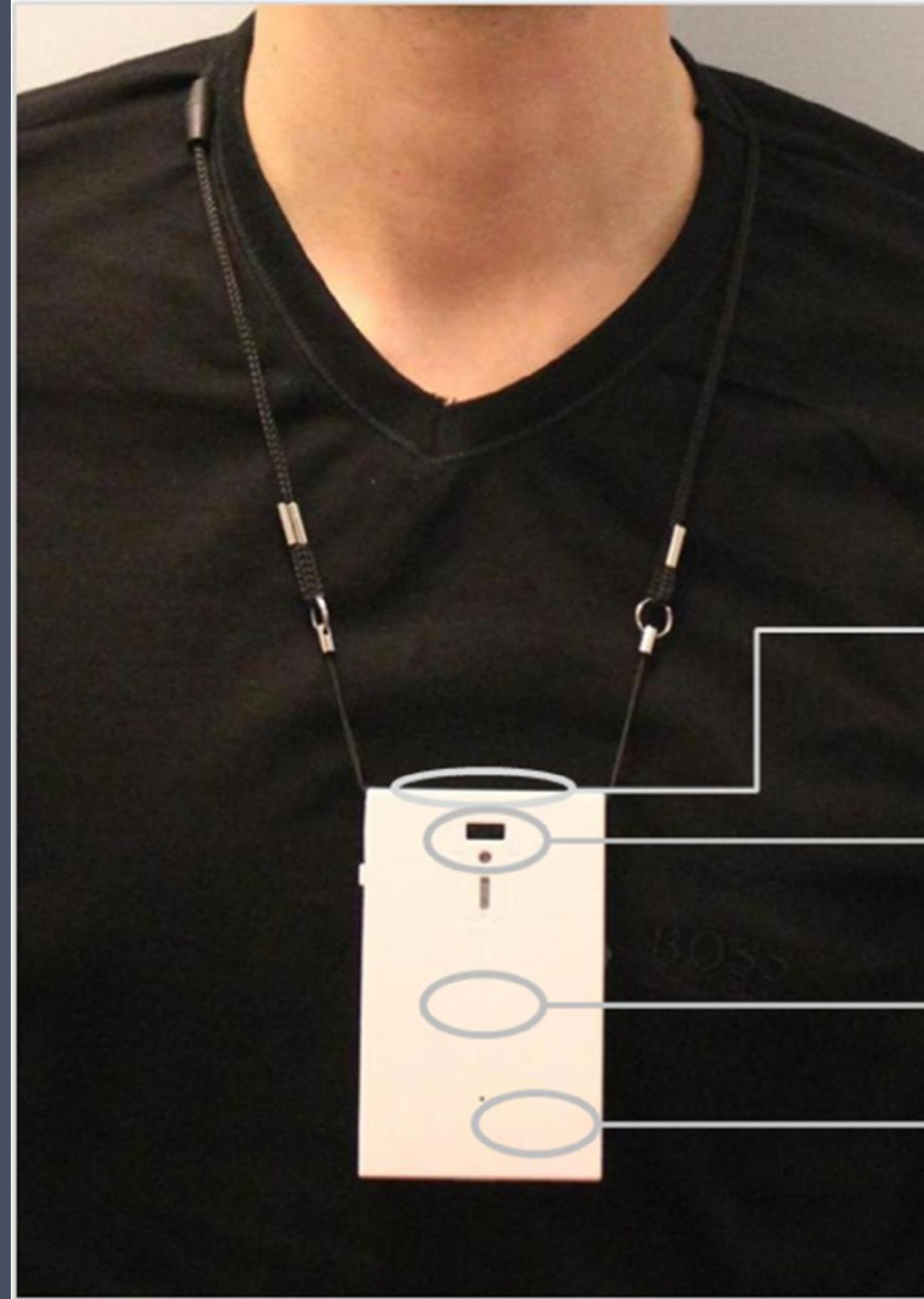


OPEN OFFICE BENEFITS

- COMMUNICATION 
- COLLABORATION 
- EQUALITY 
- HEALTH 
- COST 

COMMUNICATION

PEOPLE SITTING ALL TOGETHER WILL
HAVE MORE CHANCES TO COMMUNICATE

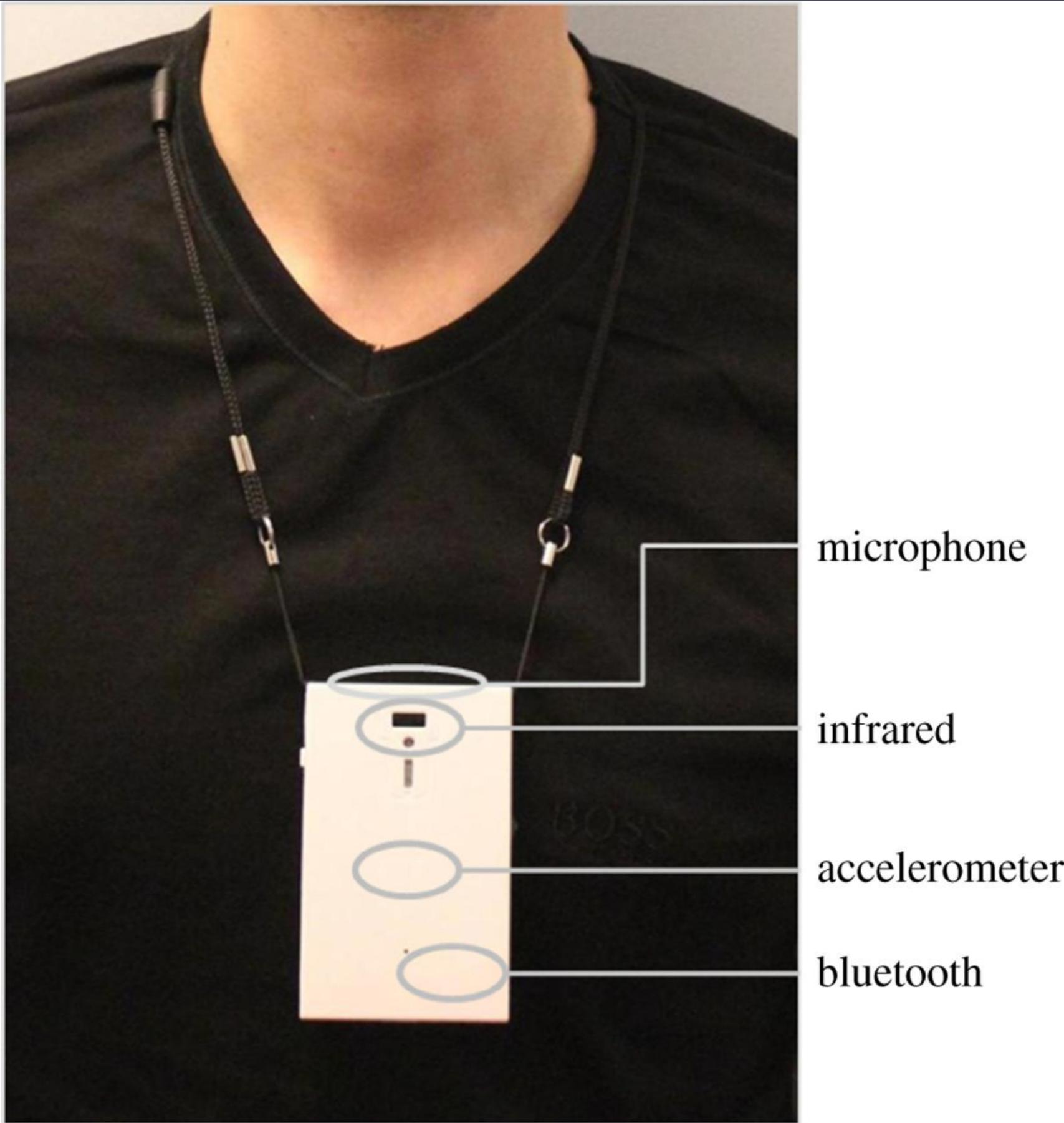


microphone

infrared

accelerometer

bluetooth



- › **73% LESS TIME SPENT IN FACE-TO-FACE INTERACTIONS**
- › **67% MORE EMAIL AND INSTANT MESSAGE INTERACTIONS**

OPEN OFFICE BENEFITS

- COMMUNICATION 
- COLLABORATION 
- EQUALITY 
- HEALTH 
- COST 

COLLABORATION

WORKING TOGETHER TO COMPLETE

A GOAL

MATTHEW DAVIS (2011)

HELPED:

- › A SYMBOLIC SENSE OF ORGANIZATIONAL MISSION

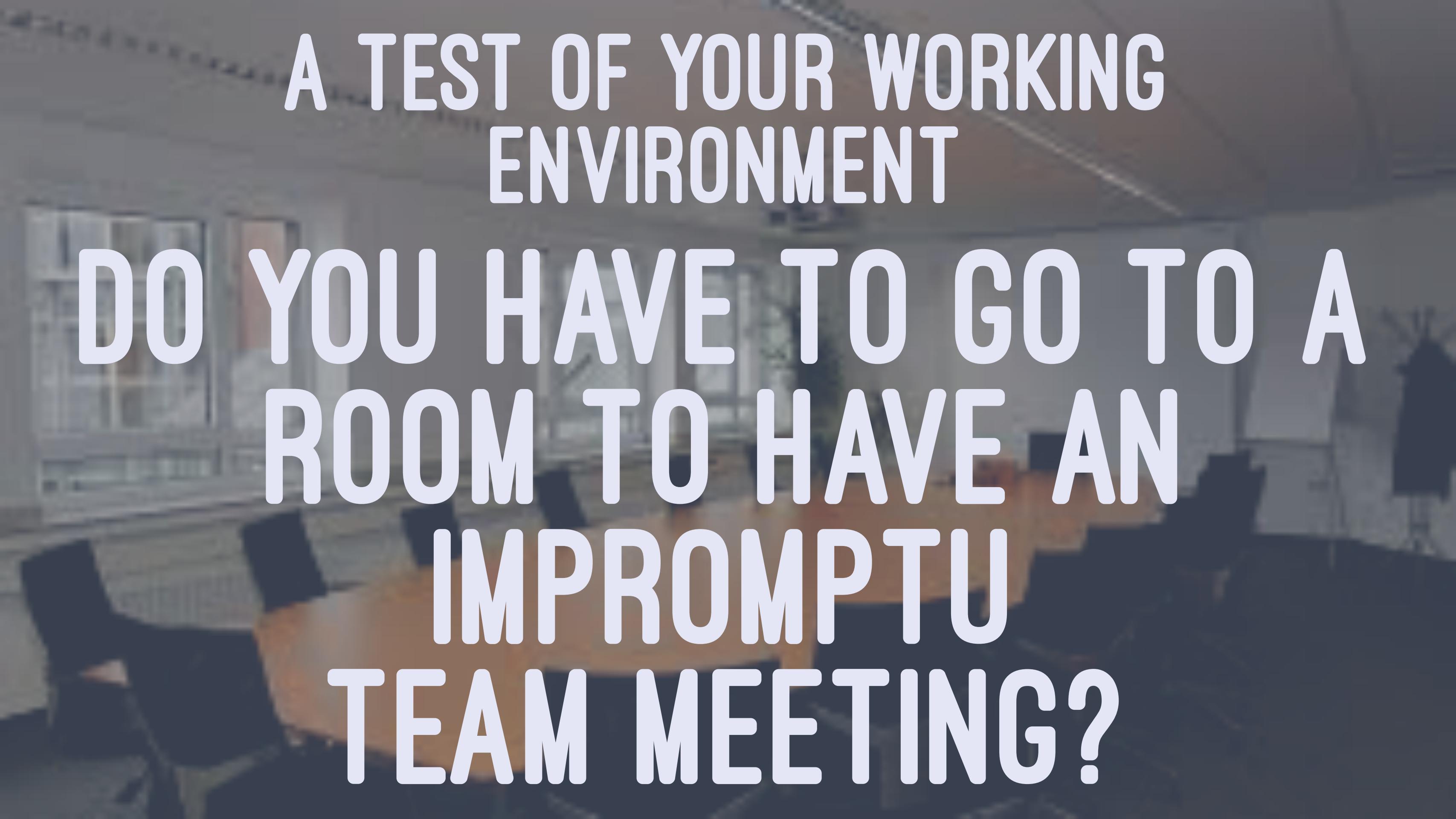
HURT:

- › ATTENTION SPANS, CREATIVE THINKING,
AND SATISFACTION.

COLLABORATION?

- › OVER 60% WEAR HEADPHONES IN OPEN-PLAN ENVIRONMENT
 - › ANXIOUS TO LOOK BUSY
- › HOTDESKING DISRUPTS TEAMS WORKING TOGETHER



A black and white photograph of a person sitting at a desk in a dimly lit room. The person is facing away from the camera, looking at a laptop screen. The room has a warm, ambient light coming from the side, creating a soft glow on the person's face and the desk area.

A TEST OF YOUR WORKING
ENVIRONMENT

DO YOU HAVE TO GO TO A
ROOM TO HAVE AN
IMPROPTU
TEAM MEETING?

OPEN OFFICE BENEFITS

- COMMUNICATION 
- COLLABORATION 
- EQUALITY 
- HEALTH 
- COST 

A close-up, slightly blurred photograph of a person's face in profile, facing right. The person has dark hair and appears to be wearing a light-colored shirt. The background is a soft-focus landscape with rolling hills or mountains under a cloudy sky.

**EQUALITY
REMOVING THE HIERARCHY OF OFFICES**

FELT EXPOSED IN CERTAIN SITUATIONS, FOR
EXAMPLE IF THEY HAD SOME BAD NEWS
AND FELT EMOTIONAL.

- ANGLIA RUSKIN UNIVERSITY (2018)

I HAVE BEEN STRUGGLING WITH ONE
PARTICULAR MALE EMPLOYEE WHO STARES
AT ME SEEMINGLY WITHOUT ANY CONCERN
FOR DISCRETION
I STRATEGIZE ALTERNATE ROUTES TO THE
RESTROOM SO I DON'T HAVE TO PASS HIS
DESK

- LAUREN T

IT SOUNDS RIDICULOUS BUT BECAUSE
EVERYONE WAS ALWAYS STARING AT ME AS
THEY WALKED BY, I FELT OBLIGATED TO
MAINTAIN A MORE FORMAL POSTURE ALL THE
TIME

- VERONICA G

MAKES ME SELF-CONSCIOUS ABOUT MY
CHOICE OF CLOTHING, AND DISTRACTS ME
FROM WHAT I SHOULD BE CONCENTRATING
ON AT WORK.

- ANON

Report: Netflix Bans Employees from Looking at Each Other for More Than Five Seconds

By KATHERINE TIMPF | June 14, 2018 4:17 PM



OPEN OFFICE BENEFITS

COMMUNICATION 

COLLABORATION 

EQUALITY 

HEALTH 

COST 



IT'S HEALTHIER THAN SITTING ISOLATED
ALL-DAY

IT'S TRUE!

20->32% MORE ACTIVE
OCCUPATIONAL & ENVIRONMENTAL
MEDICINE (2018)



DANISH MINISTRY OF
EMPLOYMENT (2013)

OCCUPANTS IN OPEN-PLAN OFFICES
(MORE THAN SIX PEOPLE) HAD 62%
MORE DAYS OF SICKNESS ABSENCE*

POTENTIAL REASONS

(SPECULATION)

- HIGHER NOISE EXPOSURE IN THE OPEN-PLAN OFFICE
 - MORE LIKELY TO BE EXPOSED TO VIRUSES
 - LACK OF PRIVACY CAUSES PROBLEMS AND SICKNESS
- REDUCED AUTONOMY, LEADING TO HIGHER STRESS LEVELS

OPEN OFFICE BENEFITS

COMMUNICATION 

COLLABORATION 

EQUALITY 

HEALTH 

COST 



COST

**REAL ESTATE IS A COST YOU CAN
REDUCE**



amc HD

OPEN OFFICE BENEFITS

COMMUNICATION 

COLLABORATION 

EQUALITY 

HEALTH 

COST 



**OPEN AND SHUT
CASE?**



Joe Wright @joe_jag · Oct 10, 2018

Work space offices seem to be designed to prevent folk from wanting to collaborate. Whoever promoted open plan office spaces has a lot to answer for

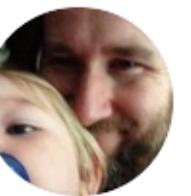
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10

23

↑

...



Chris McDermott ✅ @chrisvmcd · Oct 11, 2018

@menloprez would disagree.

In our circumstances I see Smart working as the culprit, not open plan. That is ALL about reducing costs and space utilisation

2

10

3

↑



Richard Sheridan

@menloprez

Replies to @SalFreudenberg, @joe_jag and @chrisvmcd

There is no one way to make this work. We didn't build an open office, we built an open culture. Our office is a physical reflection of our deeply held cultural beliefs: openness, transparency, collaboration, teamwork and safety.





Figure 1 Daily Stand Up



PRINT-ON™ Tabs
Speed Copiers and Offset Presses

SOMETIMES THE WORKSPACE WE BUILT
10 DAYS AGO IS NO LONGER THE RIGHT
WORKSPACE. SO WE CHANGE IT.

- LISAMARIE BABIK (MENLO)

**'I THINK THE PHYSICAL SPACE IS
CRITICAL... I THINK THE SPACE ENABLES
THE CULTURAL CHANGE.'**

- RICH SHERIDAN (MENLO)

THE
**EMPLOYEE
EXPERIENCE
ADVANTAGE**

HOW TO WIN THE WAR FOR TALENT BY GIVING
EMPLOYEES THE WORKSPACES THEY WANT, THE TOOLS
THEY NEED, AND A CULTURE THEY CAN CELEBRATE



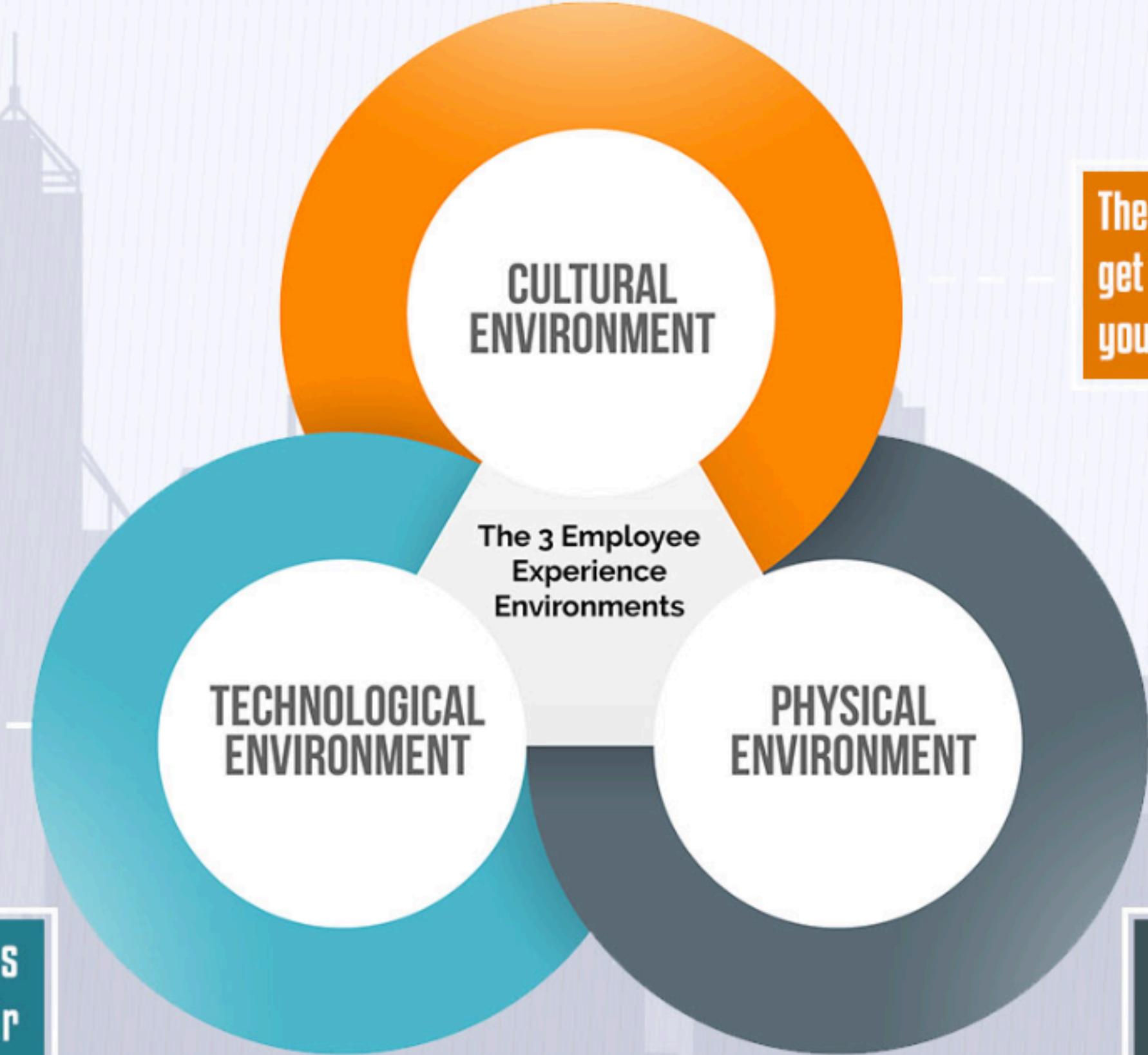
JACOB MORGAN

Foreword by MARSHALL GOLDSMITH
the World's #1 Ranked Leadership Thinker

WILEY

Evolution of Employee Experience





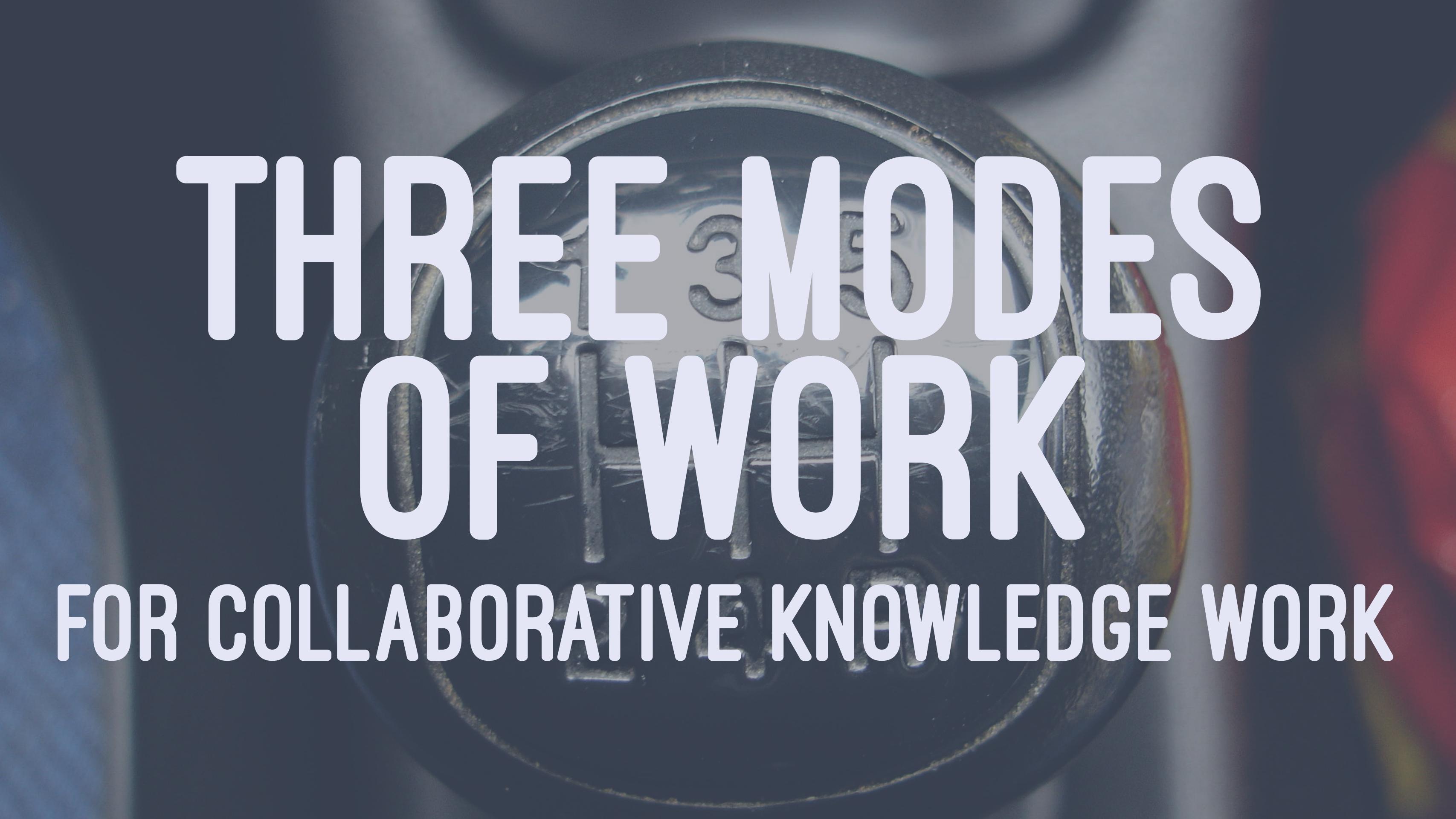
The tools employees
use to get their
jobs done

The feeling employees
get working for
your organization

The actual spaces
in which employees
work



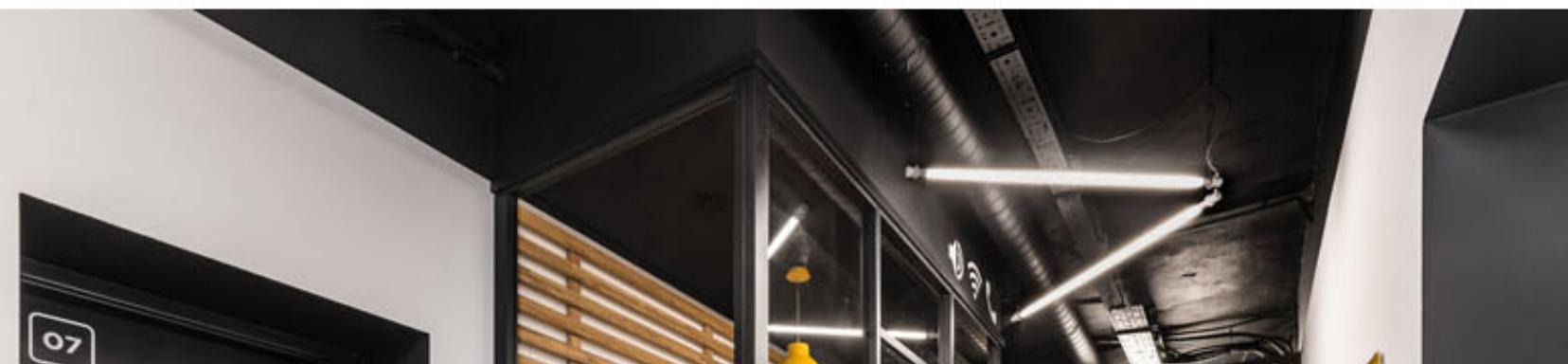
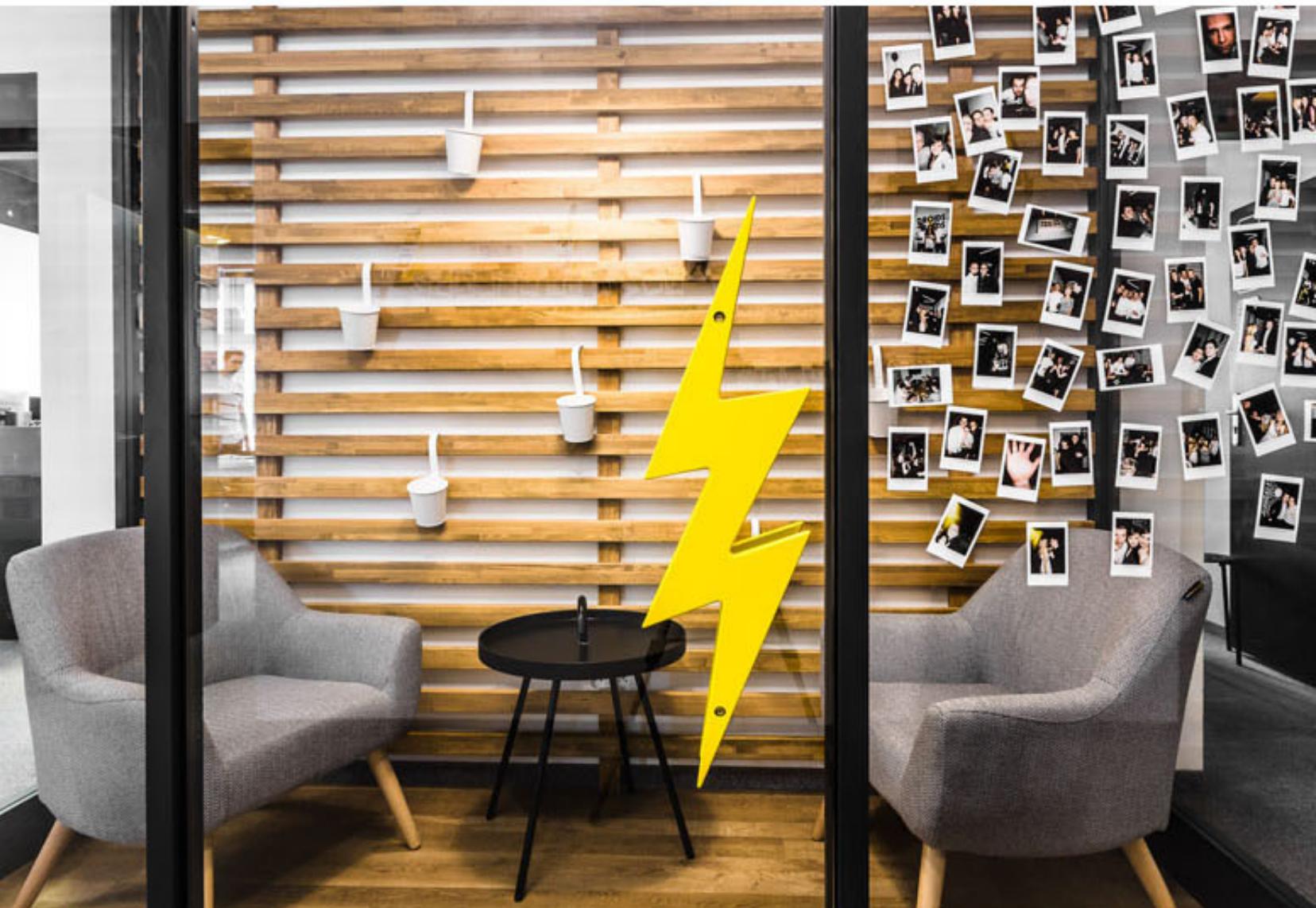
WE CAN DO SO
MUCH BETTER



THREE MODES OF WORK FOR COLLABORATIVE KNOWLEDGE WORK

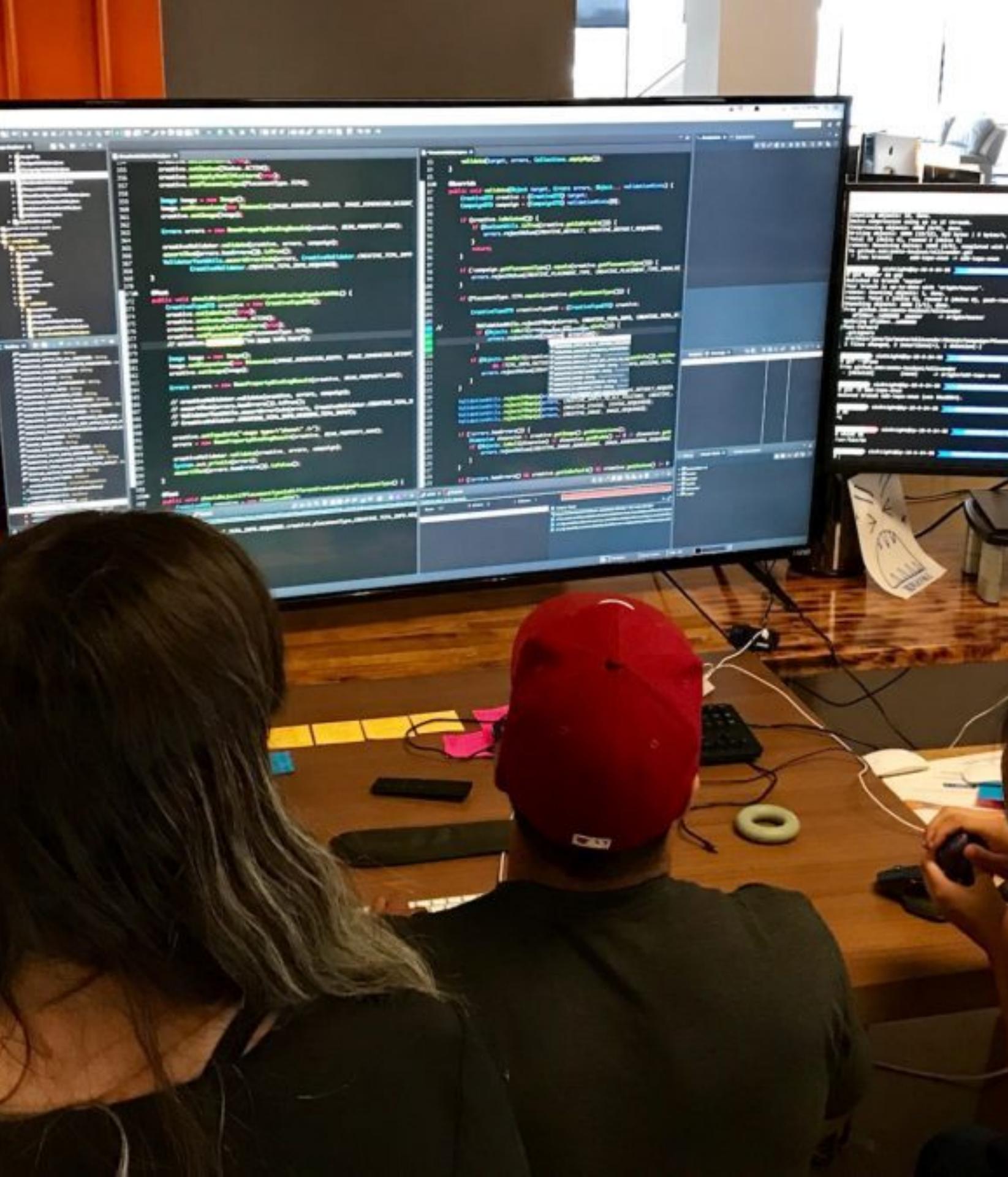
THE CAVE

- › 1 OR 2 PEOPLE
- › FOR CONCENTRATION AND PRIVACY
- › ENCLOSED. SMALL. DESK AND TWO CHAIRS



THE THEATRE

- SUBSET OF TEAM
- FOR EXPLICIT AND INCIDENTAL KNOWLEDGE SHARING
- ENCLOSED. LARGE DESK. SEATS 8 FOR LAPTOPS



THE LOUNGE

- › RELAX AND SOCIALISE
- › FOR INFORMAL WORK
- › SOFA. BOOKCASE. COFFEE MACHINE



PUTTING IT TOGETHER

- FOR A TEAM OF 8
- 2 CAVES (FOR SOLO/PAIR WORK)
- 1 THEATRE (FOR SUBSET TEAMWORK)
- 1 LOUNGE (FOR INFORMAL ACTIVITIES)



A cartoon character of Bob the Builder, wearing a yellow hard hat and blue overalls, stands with arms outstretched. In the background, there is a dark blue wall with a large yellow sign that reads "Bob the Builder" in a stylized font.

FIXING AN OPEN PLAN



NOISE

- THINK BUROLANDSCHAFT
- REMOVE A BANK OF DESKS TO MAKE SPACE
- PUT UP ACOUSTIC WALLS
- USE PLANTS AS A WALL
- CONSIDER ADDING 'PINK NOISE'

A photograph of two people working in a modern office environment. They are seated at a white desk inside a teal-colored modular cubicle. The cubicle has a glass partition on the left side. The person on the left is facing the camera, while the person on the right is facing away. They are looking at a laptop on the desk. The office has large windows in the background showing green trees. A potted plant is visible on the far left.

CREATE CAVES

- ALLOW SOLO WORK
- ALLOW PAIRS TO WORK

USE ADAPTABLE FURNITURE

- › ABOVE ALL. KEEP IT ADAPTABLE
- › USE TABLES WITH CASTERS
- › CONSIDER HAVING POWER SOCKETS ABOVE THE DESKS





TOGETHER WE CAN DO IT!

LABOR-

MANAGEMENT

KEEP 'EM
FIRING!



ORG LEADERS

- › USE CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGISTS
- › REALISE REDUCING SPACE PER EMPLOYEE COMES AT A HIGH COST



TEAM LEADERS

- › ASK TO REDESIGN YOUR AREA. ADD NOISE BARRIERS
 - › STEAL A ROOM





INDIVIDUALS

- > INFLUENCE YOUR LEADERS.
- > OFFER SOLUTIONS
- > USE THE EXAMPLES OF OTHER COMPANIES

The Isolator

By HUGO GERNSBACK

MEMBER AMERICAN PHYSICAL SOCIETY



The author at work in his private study aided by the Isolator. Outside noises being eliminated, the worker can concentrate with ease upon the subject at hand.

OFFICE SPACE
OFFICE SPACE



EMPLOYEE
SPACE

WHAT ARE YOUR
QUESTIONS?

@JOE_JAG - JOE WRIGHT

[HTTPS://GITHUB.COM/JOEJAG/THE_GOOD_THE_BAD_THE_OPENPLAN](https://github.com/joejag/the_good_the_bad_the_openplan)