

# OFFICE SPACE

WHAT EMPLOYEES REALLY THINK

JANUARY  
2020



**Workers just want  
to be productive**

What really motivates employees? Free gourmet lunch?  
Game room? Nap pods? Nah.





## Office Environment Plays a Critical role in **Retaining & Attracting Top Talent**

The latest economic indicators for Denver show that the market remains hot. While that's generally positive, it also puts pressure on local businesses trying to capture top talent and retain employees. **To keep up, management needs to consider all aspects of the employee experience.**

Compensation, benefits, stock options, vacation time... yes, these are all important factors for employees. But what becomes even more important in the day-to-day routine? **Office design.**

The next generation of spaces will need to focus on employee engagement strategies and human performance, with an increased awareness of the changes going on in the work experience.

To support our local customers, Interior Construction Specialists commissioned a study in late 2019 to ask Denver employees—**what do you really value in your office spaces? What do you need and what do you want?**

\* Study conducted by independent research firm of 325 Denver-based office workers. It has a +/- 4.38% margin of error at the 95% confidence level.



# EMPLOYEES SAY OFFICE SPACE IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN...

- Vacation days
- Their boss
- Retirement benefits
- Job title
- Job seniority
- Getting promoted
- Their annual review

## WHAT RANKS HIGHER?

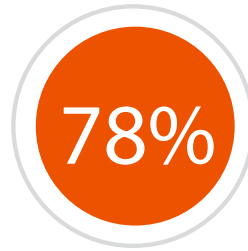
- Salary
- Working hours
- Healthcare benefits
- Commute





# WHAT EMPLOYEES WANT MOST

- ◉ Many windows to the outside
- ◉ Private, quiet spaces to work
- ◉ Natural lighting
- ◉ Free snacks and drinks
- ◉ Ergonomic desks and chairs



WINDOWS,  
NATURAL  
LIGHT



QUIET,  
PRIVATE  
SPACE



FREE  
SNACKS &  
DRINKS

In an open office, focus rooms or even small conference rooms can be a great way to give employees lots of natural light and an as-needed, quiet place to work.





## SURPRISINGLY, NOT A BIG DEAL

Although it sounds cool, most survey respondents said an area where they can play games like ping pong and pool didn't really matter to them. Items that scored low on the work-happiness scale:

- |                                 |    |
|---------------------------------|----|
| ○ Informal meeting areas        | 2% |
| ○ Games like ping pong and pool | 4% |
| ○ Clean eating area             | 6% |
| ○ Close access to dining        | 6% |
| ○ Security that controls access | 8% |

More than being pampered, employees want their immediate work area to be bright, and comfortable.



# What Contributes to a Productive Workplace?

Want to make a top performer happy? Increase his/her productivity by minimizing office distractions. Also make sure the temperature and air circulation are optimal. And get rid of clutter.

## HOURS OF PRODUCTIVE WORK BASED ON OFFICE TYPE



OPEN OFFICE

5

CUBICLE

6

CLOSED OFFICE

6

*35% of respondents said ergonomic desks and chairs were important to productivity.*



Only 10% of Denver employees surveyed would rather work at Starbucks than their office – but 50% would prefer to work at home.

# TOP COMPLAINTS

Too many distractions is the No. 1 complaint of Denver top performers – and **conversations by nearby co-workers is the top distraction.**



## Too many distractions

95% of Denver employees say office distractions negatively affect their productivity.

Men are 25% more likely than women to become distracted at work.

## Too cold

Arguments about the temperature setting happen in 63% of Denver offices. Women are more likely to complain about the office being too cold, but both genders list it as a top complaint.

## No place for private conversation

Finding a place to have a private phone call or personal conversation is a major challenge for many workers.

While Denver's top performers do just that...perform, they're as bothered by work interruptions as anyone else. Find ways to help minimize talking distractions and use that as a recruiting tool.



A modern office interior with a high ceiling, large windows, and a central atrium. People are seen sitting on modular furniture, working on laptops and tablets. The space is bright and open, with a mix of grey and white furniture.

# More Stats

**69%** of employees will tolerate a boring meeting if there's food

**19%** of employees try to avoid using the bathroom at their office

**19%** of employees are concerned for their safety if they are alone in the office at night

**52%** of employees have lied when asked "How was your weekend?" because they didn't want to admit how boring it really was

**59%** of employees would quit their job tomorrow if they won the lottery



# Survey Results

## Q1. Does your physical office environment make you happy?

Options	# of Responses	Percentage
Definitely	106	32.62%
Probably	137	42.15%
I don't know	22	6.77%
Probably not	46	14.15%
Definitely not	14	4.31%

## Q2. Which best describes your office?

Options	# of Responses	Percentage
Open office with exposed desks	145	44.62%
Closed offices	84	25.85%
Cubicles	83	25.54%
Other	13	4.00%

## Q3. Which of the following office features make the biggest difference to your happiness at work? Select up to 3.

Options	# of Responses	Percentage
Many windows to outside	174	54.21%
Private spaces for quiet work	91	28.35%
Natural lighting	75	23.36%
Free snacks and drinks	61	19.00%
Ergonomic desks and chairs	58	18.07%
Close parking	55	17.13%
Air circulation	53	16.51%
No clutter	47	14.64%
Walkable spaces outside	45	14.02%
Open spaces	38	11.84%
Private stalls in bathroom	36	11.21%
Common areas for mingling	29	9.03%
Colorful environment	27	8.41%
Dogs allowed	27	8.41%
High ceilings	25	7.79%
Security that controls access inside	25	7.79%
Close access to dining	20	6.23%
Clean eating area	20	6.23%
Games like pool and ping pong	14	4.36%
Informal meeting areas	7	2.18%
Other	5	1.56%

## Survey Results

**Q4. Which of the following make the biggest difference to your productivity at work?  
Select up to 3.**

Options	# of Responses	Percentage
Private, quiet spaces for work	149	47.00%
Ergonomic desks and chairs	107	33.75%
Many windows to outside	96	30.28%
Natural lighting	86	27.13%
No clutter	69	21.77%
Air circulation	59	18.61%
Free snacks and drinks	42	13.25%
Open spaces	37	11.67%
Common areas for mingling	32	10.09%
Walkable spaces outside	28	8.83%
Colorful environment	26	8.20%
Informal meeting areas	24	7.57%
Close parking	23	7.26%
Security that controls access inside	19	5.99%
Clean eating area	17	5.36%
High ceilings	14	4.42%
Dogs allowed	14	4.42%
Private stalls in bathroom	11	3.47%
Close access to dining	10	3.15%
Games like pool and ping pong	5	1.58%
Other	2	0.63%



## Survey Results

**Q5. Does your current office setting have any of the following? Select all that apply.**

Options	# of Responses	Percentage
Many windows to outside	146	46.95%
Close parking	81	26.05%
Air circulation	65	20.90%
Private spaces for quiet work	64	20.58%
Common areas for mingling	54	17.36%
Walkable spaces outside	52	16.72%
Private stalls in bathroom	49	15.76%
Ergonomic desks and chairs	48	15.43%
Natural lighting	48	15.43%
High ceilings	42	13.50%
Security that controls access inside	39	12.54%
Free snacks and drinks	37	11.90%
Open spaces	32	10.29%
Close access to dining	31	9.97%
No clutter	21	6.75%
Informal meeting areas	21	6.75%
Clean eating area	20	6.43%
Colorful environment	19	6.11%
Dogs allowed	14	4.50%
Games like pool and ping pong	12	3.86%
Other	2	0.64%

**Q6. Given the choice, would you rather work more often at your office, or at any of the following settings?**

Options	# of Responses	Percentage
At home	194	50.39%
None - I'd rather work at my office	76	19.74%
A Starbucks or similar public place	37	9.61%
A library	28	7.27%
A co-working space	28	7.27%
Outside	22	5.71%

## Survey Results

**Q7. Have you ever made up an excuse to leave the office because you needed to get out of your office environment?**

Options	# of Responses	Percentage
Definitely	110	35.37%
Probably	96	30.87%
Probably not	52	16.72%
Definitely not	42	13.50%
I don't know	11	3.54%

**Q8. What are you top complaints, if any, about your office setting?**

Options	# of Responses	Percentage
Too many distractions	100	32.36%
Too cold	92	29.77%
Too noisy	76	24.60%
No place for private conversation	53	17.15%
Poor lighting	44	14.24%
Stuffy	43	13.92%
Too crowded	41	13.27%
Too hot	39	12.62%
Lack of parking	38	12.30%
None of these	35	11.33%
Bad wifi or data	34	11.00%
Strange smells from kitchen	19	6.15%
Dirty	18	5.83%
Cluttered	18	5.83%
Too empty	16	5.18%
No privacy in bathroom	13	4.21%
Other	5	1.62%

**Q9. Is your office restroom “gross”?**

Options	# of Responses	Percentage
No	256	82.85%
Yes	53	17.15%

**Q10. Which best describes your employer?**

Options	# of Resp.	%
My employer is somewhat concerned about providing a comfortable office environment	144	46.60%
My employer is extremely concerned about providing a comfortable office environment	110	35.60%
My employer is not concerned about providing a comfortable office environment	55	17.80%



## Survey Results

### Q11. How often do office distractions negatively affect your productivity?

Options	# of Responses	Percentage
Once in a while	143	46.28%
About half the time	81	26.21%
Most of the time	57	18.45%
Never	16	5.18%
Always	12	3.88%

### Q12. What are the top distractions at your office? Select any that apply.

Options	# of Responses	Percentage
Talking	187	60.71%
People approaching me about something	128	41.56%
Phone conversations	112	36.36%
People walking by	101	32.79%
Ringling phones or other devices	78	25.32%
Laughter	67	21.75%
None of these	17	5.52%
Music	15	4.87%
Office games (pool, ping pong etc)	11	3.57%
Animals	10	3.25%

### Q13. On average, for how many hours per working day are you at maximum productivity?

Options	# of Responses	Percentage
6	77	25.00%
5	61	19.81%
4	56	18.18%
3	30	9.74%
7	28	9.09%
8	22	7.14%
12+	19	6.17%
2	8	2.60%
1	2	0.65%
9	2	0.65%
10	2	0.65%
11	1	0.32%
0	0	0.00%

## Survey Results

**Q14. What would reduce distractions at work? Select any that apply.**

Options	# of Responses	Percentage
Fewer people interruptions	163	52.92%
Working from home	122	39.61%
A quieter office environment	110	35.71%
Fewer meetings	78	25.32%
Less multitasking	70	22.73%
Less email	68	22.08%
Turn off phone notifications	45	14.61%
Less social media	34	11.04%
Less office clutter	29	9.42%
No animal policy	9	2.92%
Other	4	1.30%
No office games (pool, ping pong, etc.)	3	0.97%

**Q15. Have you ever snuck a nap in any of the following places during working hours?**

Options	# of Responses	Percentage
No, I haven't snuck a nap during working hours	186	60.39%
My car	75	24.35%
My desk	34	11.04%
Break room	22	7.14%
A couch in the office	21	6.82%
A bathroom lounge	17	5.52%
Warehouse	5	1.62%
A meeting room	5	1.62%
Other	4	1.30%



## Survey Results

**Q16. Which is most important to you at work? Select up to three.**

Options	# of Responses	Percentage
Salary	218	70.78%
Working hours	129	41.88%
Healthcare benefits	83	26.95%
Commute	75	24.35%
Co-workers	73	23.70%
Office environment	63	20.45%
Vacation days	60	19.48%
Boss	49	15.91%
Retirement benefits	37	12.01%
Job title	20	6.49%
Job seniority	14	4.55%
Other	12	3.90%
Promoted	11	3.57%
Annual review	4	1.30%

**Q17. Have you ever turned down a job because you didn't like the office setting?**

Options	# of Responses	Percentage
Probably not	104	33.77%
Definitely not	86	27.92%
Probably	63	20.45%
Definitely	55	17.86%

**Q18. What kind of priority is the office setting when it comes to accepting a new job?**

Options	# of Responses	Percentage
#1 priority	23	7.49%
#2 priority	34	11.07%
#3 priority	91	29.64%
#4 priority	61	19.87%
#5priority	44	14.33%
#6 priority	18	5.86%
#7 priority	11	3.58%
#8 priority	5	1.63%
#9 priority	2	0.65%
#10 priority	7	2.28%
Not a top 10 priority	11	3.58%

## Survey Results

### Q19. Have you ever quit a job because you didn't like the people sitting around you?

Options	# of Responses	Percentage
Definitely not	129	42.02%
Probably not	73	23.78%
Probably	49	15.96%
Definitely	33	10.75%
I don't know	23	7.49%

### Q20. Would you ever accept a new job without seeing the office setting?

Options	# of Responses	Percentage
Probably not	88	28.66%
Probably	87	28.34%
I don't know	62	20.20%
Definitely	44	14.33%
Definitely not	26	8.47%

### Q21. Have you ever quit a job partially because you didn't like the office setting?

Options	# of Responses	Percentage
Definitely not	105	34.20%
Probably not	81	26.38%
Probably	62	20.20%
I don't know	32	10.42%
Definitely	27	8.79%

### Q22. Have there ever been arguments at your office over the temperature being too hot or too cold?

Options	# of Responses	Percentage
Probably	97	31.60%
Definitely	96	31.27%
Probably not	45	14.66%
I don't know	36	11.73%
Definitely not	33	10.75%

## Survey Results

**Q23. Would it be a good idea to let the Employee of the Month decide the office temp for that month?**

Options	# of Responses	Percentage
Definitely not	128	41.69%
Probably not	95	30.94%
I don't know	42	13.68%
Probably	23	7.49%
Definitely	19	6.19%

**Q24. Do you try to avoid using the restroom at your office?**

Options	# of Responses	Percentage
Definitely not	176	57.33%
Probably not	64	20.85%
Probably	38	12.38%
Definitely	19	6.19%
I don't know	10	3.26%

**Q25. Are you concerned about your safety when alone at the office after hours?**

Options	# of Responses	Percentage
Definitely not	133	43.32%
Probably not	81	26.38%
Probably	39	12.70%
I don't know	34	11.07%
Definitely	20	6.51%

**Q26. Will you tolerate a boring meeting as long as there's food?**

Options	# of Responses	Percentage
Probably	131	42.67%
Definitely	82	26.71%
I don't know	45	14.66%
Probably not	37	12.05%
Definitely not	12	3.91%



## Survey Results

**Q27. Have you ever lied when asked “How was your weekend” because you didn’t want to admit how boring it was?**

Options	# of Responses	Percentage
Probably	94	30.82%
Definitely not	66	21.64%
Definitely	65	21.31%
Probably not	59	19.34%
I don't know	21	6.89%

**Q28. When you ask someone at work how their weekend was, how much do you really care about their answer?**

Options	# of Responses	Percentage
Somewhat	136	44.59%
A little	72	23.61%
A lot	63	20.66%
Not at all	34	11.15%

**Q29. Would you quit your job tomorrow if you won the lottery?**

Options	# of Responses	Percentage
Definitely	110	36.07%
Probably	70	22.95%
Probably not	64	20.98%
I don't know	42	13.77%
Definitely not	19	6.23%



## About Interior Construction Specialists

Interior Construction Specialists (ICS) was founded in 2000 to supply the demand for a sophisticated, quality tenant improvement-specific contractor in Utah. Since then ICS has grown to be the Top TI Contractor in the Intermountain West, working with the BEST and MOST INNOVATIVE clients who choose the west as a place to grow their companies.

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