

How workspace design influences innovation-related behaviour. The role of occupational stereotypes

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Abstract

Firms invest significantly into designing their workspaces in ways assumed to enhance innovation-related behaviour of their employees. However, evidence on how to design workspaces to positively affect desired behaviour remains sparse. Drawing from design and psychological research we combine insights on design styles with stereotype activation theory and propose that workspaces designed according to specific design styles activate innovation-related occupational stereotypes, which then influence innovation performance. We confirm our proposition with two online experiments. As stimuli, we used workspaces designed in Pop and Hightech styles, and related them through the activation of aligned occupational stereotypes to creativity and efficiency. We contribute to innovation research by demonstrating that the design of entire workspaces has a positive effect on individual innovation-related behaviours. We also show that a deliberate choice of design styles is important since the activated occupational stereotypes are rather different, and so is the behaviour triggered.

Subject Areas: *Cognition, Organization Behavior*

Track: Innovation Management & New Product Development