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# The Continuing Evolution of the Wellness Work Environment

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Today, the definition of wellness is different than it was a decade ago. In the recent past, wellness platforms were focused on employee weight management, diet, exercise, and smoking cessation. Today, wellness is taking on those things and also employee stress, mental health, social interaction in the workplace, and other things to help employees succeed in their careers and lives. One thing that is of great impact to employee wellness is the work environment.

The depth of the corporate wellness platform has never been greater, as companies seek to add more alternatives for their employees, and also make participation simpler and more widely adopted. It is great for employees to have resources available, providing them with assistance on a variety of fronts. For employers, they are able to maximize the potential and productivity of each employee by keeping them engaged in the job and providing work / life balance initiatives.

How does a company's office space impact employees and recruits? Newer, attractive, healthy space is far more likely to keep your best employees in good spirits versus older, less comfortable office space.

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And when it comes to recruiting, job seekers can be choosy; they want to know “where” they will be working, and in what type of office environment they will be spending their time each day.

Many people in today’s workforce like and value unique space – open ceilings, natural light, bright colors, and social interaction. This trend has impacted how corporate space is designed today. While many work spaces are now designed as open plan, there are usually still some private areas for employees to take a break. The “chill out” room is becoming more popular in today’s office space. Other specialty rooms include nursing rooms, nap rooms, and phone booths for private calls. Hard work also deserves some playtime, right? Recreation game rooms are increasingly present in larger facilities. How about ping-pong or bean bags? Corporate spaces include these types of activities for their staff, so employees can take a break and recharge or decompress.

Human resource and facility managers are quick to note that each business has its own corporate culture. Employees should be surveyed in advance to determine their preference. If no employees want a meditation room, the facility manager isn’t going to recommend building it. Employee participation is critical, so having the right amenities and wellness platform does vary from facility to facility.

In the multi-tenant office market, landlords are jumping into the wellness game with both feet. Landlords of office buildings are recognizing that to more effectively compete for tenants, they need to have building amenities such as fitness rooms with showers - to satisfy the needs of businesses that lease smaller spaces. Casual seating spaces and lounges are also being added to many properties, along with some type of food service.

Of course, a healthy diet for staff continues to be important for employers. As such, larger facilities with cafeterias focus on providing healthy meal and snack options for their on-site employees, featuring fresh fruits and vegetables and right-sized portioning. Some corporate spaces have healthy vending machines as well, so that employees that miss the lunch hour won’t have to dine on soda, candy, and chips.





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Expect the evolution of wellness programs to continue to change corporate lifestyles and enhance the employee experience. These platforms will continue to impact space users, the buildings they choose to occupy, and how they design and utilize their office space for the foreseeable future.

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