

## 5 Ways to Foster Collaboration in the Workplace

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Offices for leading organizations are reflecting this change, creating concepts for new headquarters or changing existing floor plans with the strategy to provide open and shared environments that foster creative thinking and collaboration in the workplace. Take a look at the examples featured in [Jetset Magazine](#) — Zappos cut off a sky bridge leading to a parking garage, redirecting the flow of employees from disperse areas of the company to a central plaza to encourage more interaction among their people. The headquarters of multi-national tech company Apple, called Apple Park, opened in 2017 and sits on 175 acres, housing over 12,000 employees in a circular building nicknamed the “Spaceship.” The design for the campus was driven by the desire for organic collaboration and the company’s love for the environment. Many spaces are large and open communal areas for people to connect and create, inside and outdoors.



Open spaces and floorplans aren't the only ways to inspire creativity and collaboration. Individuals and teams need settings, tools and a company culture that allows mobility, agility and the permission to take risks. Here are five key elements to implement in the office to inspire creativity and collaboration.

1. **An ecosystem of spaces:** Collaboration is necessary for innovation, but people also need areas to work alone and think through ideas. A balance between time with others and time alone is crucial to the creative process.
2. **Make work visible:** [Collaborative writing surfaces](#) like PolyVision a3 CeramicSteel [Sans](#), [Flow](#), [Motif](#) or digital screens, making work visible allows team members and others passing by to make new connections and develop ideas quicker.
3. **Materiality matters:** Inspiring spaces spark creative thinking. Incorporate a mix of materials and visuals into the environment, such as graphic walls or wood finishes, to draw people into a space and spark new ideas.
4. **Prioritize wellbeing:** Thinking through complex problems with a fresh state of mind requires rejuvenation and nourishment. Offer private spaces for people to take a moment for themselves and common cafe areas where people can build social connections key to teamwork and collaboration.
5. **Take risks:** For people to think outside of the box, they need to know that taking risks is encouraged and accepted. Failing fast and using an agile approach, which involves end users in the iteration process, provides learning lessons and helps shape the project for

success.

The digital revolution isn't stopping anytime soon. With AI and Virtual Reality on the horizon for many industries, work will continue to shift towards a more collaborative and creative nature. Designing an environment and culture that fosters collaboration and innovation is keeping industry leaders at the forefront of change. With an ecosystem of spaces that inspire wellbeing and provide the tools people need to work together, organizations can engage employees, innovate faster and maybe even spark the next big idea.

