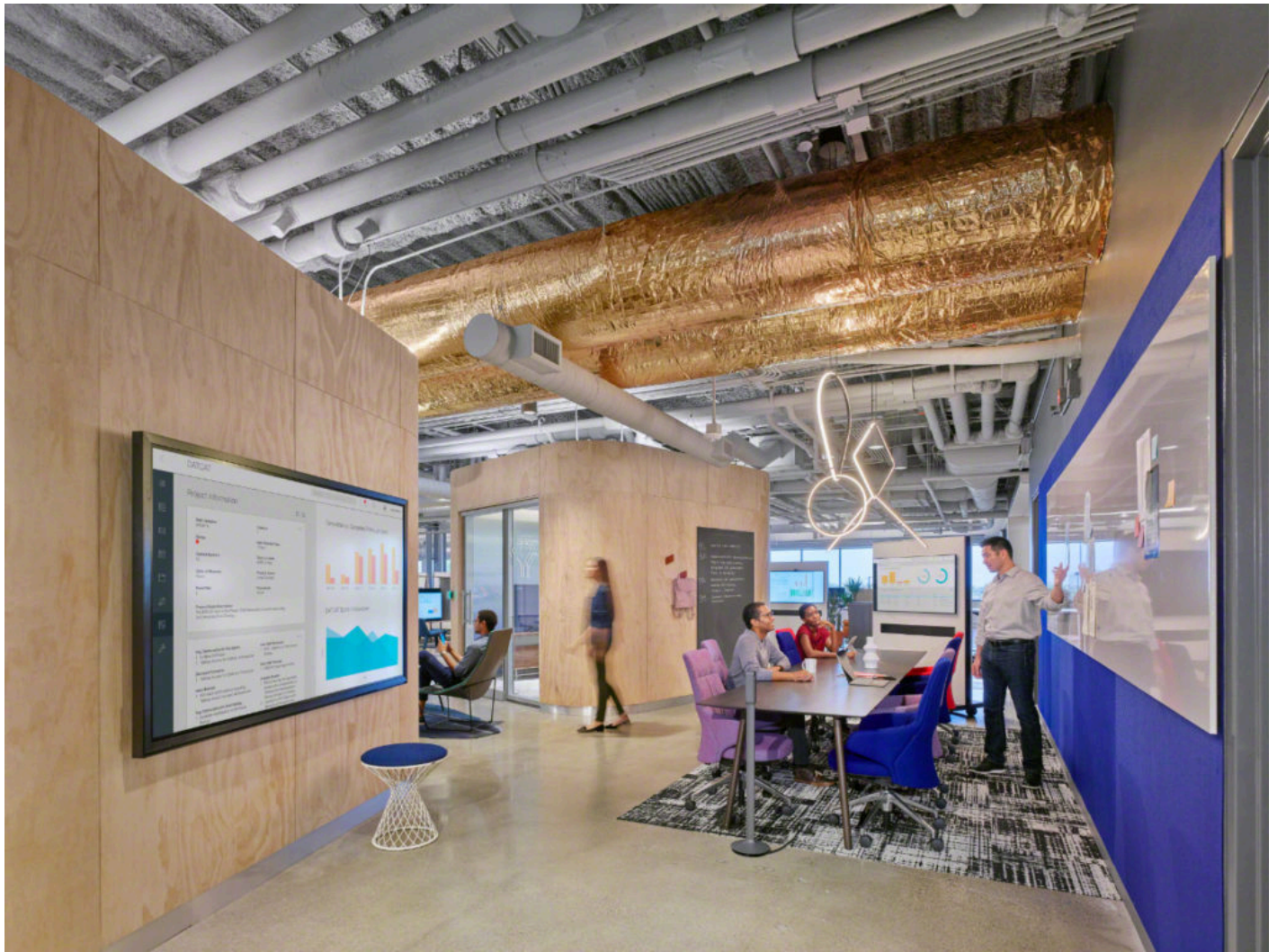


Better Connections through Collaboration

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Workplace collaboration is a different animal than it was 20 years ago, becoming a more intricate web of teams and individuals. How do we navigate it? As technology changes the way we create connections with our coworkers, it's becoming more challenging to develop the necessary relationships for collaborative teamwork.



The diversity of location, language and role makes communication and consistent inter-departmental collaboration more important than ever. However, the same factors make those things difficult to achieve. For example, a team leader based in New York may need to work closely with team members in Mumbai, San Francisco and London to complete a project. This dynamic can only be managed by successful collaboration. Research shows there are two common factors that can be employed to successfully create a culture of collaboration:

Establishing a Culture Built on Trust

Building trust among team members and within the general culture of an organization is the basis of effective teamwork. Great Place to Work [writes](#) “Silos form when people don’t see the value in involving others in their work – diverse perspectives are crucial to coming up with creative solutions.” If team members don’t trust the opinions or perspectives of their coworkers, they will be unable to collaborate well with one another. As an article in [Forbes](#) states “Trust is the foundation of true collaboration.”



Encouraging Productive Communication

Even with a basis of trust, teams can't work together without communicating. Steelcase conducted a [study](#) including more than 3,000 executives, managers and team members around the world, and 97% agreed that teamwork is essential to generating better ideas. Unless individuals within an organization come together to strategize and brainstorm, it's impossible to reach a common goal.

Great Place to Work suggests increasing the use of cross-functional teams as a way to form a greater variety of creative ideas by swapping viewpoints from different schools of thought. Unless these different individuals or teams are brought together to communicate, this can't be achieved.



No matter the industry, collaboration is necessary for success – and it's simple to do. Grabbing a marker and writing down ideas on the closest [magnetic whiteboard](#), or rolling a [mobile whiteboard](#) to your workstation to keep the thoughts flowing as you go are both quick and easy ways to start the brainstorming process. Even collaborating over video conference can be enhanced using large format writing tools to visually display your thoughts and ideas to someone across the world.

