

10 ways to create winning workplaces

How to attract and retain talent with a people-centered workplace

Winning the war for talent starts with a winning workplace experience. People want to feel valued, connected and supported at work — and if they don't find that in your organization, they'll look elsewhere. In fact, according to Gallup's "State of the Global Workplace: 2025 Report", 50% of employees are already planning to leave their current job. But you have a chance to beat the odds — if you ramp up your people experience and workplace strategies.

You can bet that your competitors are investing in their workplaces. Nearly two-thirds (60%) of organizations in JLL's Global Future of Work survey plan to spend more on space design, employee experience and hospitality services. If you want to attract and retain talent, a truly exceptional workplace can set you apart.

Wondering how to get started?

We've compiled a list of the essential things to do to create a workplace experience that strengthens your organization from the inside out, along with some pitfalls to avoid.



DO give people a voice

There's a simple way to figure out what your people want from their workspace — ask! Chances are, they have lots of opinions on what will make their days smoother.

When HSBC reimagined its headquarters in New York City, the planning team not only surveyed and brainstormed with employees, but they also created a "Test and Learn" program to gather feedback on elements like lighting, furniture and music. In the end, they saved time and money by investing in the right designs, while making the new space feel more inclusive and customized.

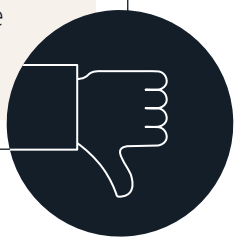
Once you start planning your strategy based on employee needs, be sure to involve all the players needed to design a truly extraordinary experience — including marketing to bring the brand to life, human resources (HR) for alignment with the employee value proposition, and Information Technology (IT) to integrate the digital and physical experiences.



DON'T ignore hard truths

Creating a better people experience requires looking at where your current workplace falls short. Don't shy away from those difficult discussions, says Dima Najib-Costa, Global Lead for People Strategy with JLL Consulting Services.

"When you talk about people, it's a sensitive topic — especially if you have talent gaps or need to upskill. It helps to bring in a neutral party to facilitate discussions and share insights on how other organizations address similar issues," she advises.



DO rethink the traditional workplace

Most people don't want a workplace where they sit at one desk, in the same role, year after year. A recent ResumeLab survey found that 83% of Gen Z workers label themselves as job hoppers, making frequent changes to gain new skills and take on new challenges.

"Young professionals today are experience-driven. They seek challenge, variety and meaning," says Nicole Chua, APAC Lead for People Strategy at JLL. "To attract and retain them, we need to think beyond static roles and offer dynamic pathways that connect personal growth with business impact. Today's talent doesn't just want to be developed; they want to be inspired. The physical workplace can be a launchpad for learning, growth and mobility if we design it with intention."



DON'T be static

With the world of work changing so rapidly, the way we design spaces needs to change, too. Flexibility is key when you're building a new office or embarking on a renovation. Modular furniture designs and moveable walls will allow you to revamp spaces as needs change.

"You don't need to get it perfect with a traditional fit-out," says Najib-Costa. "Instead, mock up different spaces as efficiently as possible to see what resonates with your workforce."

A leading life sciences company partnered with our consultants to pilot a Future of Work learning experience — a hub for testing new workplace strategies — offering hundreds of employees the chance to engage with and provide feedback on their work environment.

"We created excitement about what the future could hold — a place for people to kick the tires and really understand new ways of working," says Lisa Hsiao, AMER Lead for People Strategy at JLL. "The biggest value was the transformation and employee engagement; making the change tangible." With feedback integrated into each phase, the hub was increasingly optimized for both individual focus and collaborative synergy.



DO embrace hyper-personalization

"People have grown accustomed to personalized experiences. They can design their own sneakers, select their travel preferences and customize their latte with endless combinations. The workplace needs to deliver something similar," says Amanda Kross, Americas Lead for JLL Consulting Services.

By segmenting your workforce into personas, you can hyper-personalize employee experience to foster greater engagement and connection. Building personas may include data from occupancy and usage rates, focus groups and even neuroscience-based assessments. Final outputs might be customized rewards, different space layouts and furnishing, smart tech upgrades and/or designated "marquee moments" in the workday.



DON'T eliminate standards

A hyper-personalized workplace doesn't mean each person can modify every space to suit their whims. Design and space standards exist so that whether an employee walks into their firm's office in Paris, Chicago or Singapore, they still feel at home and can find the space they need to work effectively.

Consistency was important for the Wounded Warrior Project (WWP) when the nonprofit organization engaged JLL to develop a new workplace strategy for 15 locations. After a comprehensive analysis of employees' needs, JLL worked with the organization to create a workplace standards guidebook. The standards included different types of workspaces based on teammate personas and accessibility guidelines to meet the needs of the many veterans with PTSD and physical injuries comprising WWP's workforce.



DO tie in technology

Technology is critical to enabling hyper-personalized experiences and removing friction from the workday, especially as more digital natives enter the workforce. JLL research shows 82% of Gen Z likes to use the latest technology in their daily life. Smart tech can boost employee productivity and happiness by adjusting workstations to individual preferences and seamlessly connecting in-person and remote workers.

To truly eliminate friction, technology solutions must be user-friendly and integrated. “People get frustrated when they have to use multiple apps that don’t sync up with each other,” says Chua. She points to the importance of technology integration and user testing to create a seamless experience.



DON'T forget about etiquette and training

A great workplace is only great if employees know how to use it, so don't overlook change management and training.

When IHH Healthcare relocated to a new headquarters in Singapore, they embraced a completely new design to reflect changes in their workplace culture. As the company's partner, JLL developed a workplace etiquette guide explaining the new facilities and ways of working so that employees would get the most out of the office's flexible, sustainable, technology-driven solutions.



DO think big

A great workplace starts with a vision of how you want people to feel and act in your space. What behaviors do you want to encourage? What impression do you want to leave with visitors? What will make employees excited about coming to the office? You need a big, aspirational vision to guide your strategy.

DON'T overlook the details

Once you establish your vision, it's time to create a roadmap to get there — and the details matter.

"It's all about creating moments that matter so people are delighted and excited to be in your space," says Kross. "Unique touchpoints make people want to return and spend more time with the organization."

She points to Zynga's new headquarters as an example. When the video gaming company built out its new workplace, it incorporated elements that brought its culture to life, like a dog-friendly "Barking Lot" play area, a massive gaming wall and "Words with Friends" elevator cabs.



Stellar workplace experiences made possible by JLL

Companies that put people first attract and keep the best talent. If your workplace experience doesn't make it clear that your people are your number one asset, it's time for a reset.

JLL Consulting Services helps companies become talent magnets with people-centered experiences. We start by collaborating with you to develop an aspirational vision. Then, we tap experts in design, architecture, technology and workplace management to bring it to life.

Ready to take your workplace experience to the next level?

Contact our People Strategy team to get started.

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