

Using the science of colour to encourage dynamism, employee engagement

By [Jean Swanepoel](#)

25 Oct 2019

The first thing you notice when walking into an office is invariably the colour scheme. Not only does it convey important information about a company's values and culture, but colour selection also has a significant impact on employee wellbeing.



Image supplied

Deciding upon a colour scheme for a workspace design requires careful planning and client consultation, as it is critical to create a stimulating and productive environment for employees. The careful use of colours not only stimulates productivity, but also affects the mood, attitudes, and emotions of workers.

Hence when designing a workspace, it is important to strike a balance between keeping employees stimulated and motivated, as well as relaxed and calm. The science of colour selection reveals that brighter colours such as red and orange encourage dynamism and employee engagement, raising the energy level in a workspace, while cool colours such as blues and greens encourage relaxation and calmness.



Image supplied

The workplace as a strategic branding tool

Colour selection has evolved from the traditional neutral office look of typically navy blue and wood veneer to reflect the values of loyalty and solidity. Many companies now strive to create workplaces that not only reflect their brand, but that truly embody that brand and its values. In essence, the workplace becomes a strategic branding tool. While there is a lot more to it than just positioning logos and selecting brand colours, colour does have a major role to play.

Nowadays workspaces have to be attractive and generate a level of excitement and purpose, which plays a vital role in companies being able to retain valuable talent and skills. Gone are the days when a wall is painted blue, and that then becomes the prevailing colour. Now interior designers are becoming far more creative, not only in using pops or splashes of different accent colours, but to enhance colour selection by means of office furniture, ceilings, flooring and carpeting, and also surfaces and textures.

I personally love using yellow, but if you overdo it, it can result in anxiety among workers, as it is such an energetic colour. Hence blues and greens are ideal to promote worker stability in the actual work environment, as well as meeting and focus rooms or collaboration areas. These softer colours are ideal here. On the other hand, brighter colours can be incorporated in breakaway environments where you do not need to concentrate that much, such as canteen spaces.



Image supplied

Colour selection

Working with a specific client on colour selection not only requires adhering to specific corporate identity guidelines, but exactly how these colours are to be incorporated in the overall design. How do you use it in the brand? This is very important. You have to ensure that the majority of your colour scheme links to the corporate branding, in order to create a sense of identity for staff and to convey its values and culture.

Therefore, before deciding on the final colour scheme, it is important to understand the organisation's culture. A workspace's design and colour scheme is paramount in creating an appropriate ambience in light of the company culture, and can also tell a story. Not only is implementing the correct colour scheme vital for employee productivity, but also to impress clients and visitors.

An office's colour is the first thing you notice on arrival, and the last thing you take away with you, and hence has a substantial subconscious effect. The choice of colour therefore could have a considerable effect on your company's success.

In addition to using corporate colours, how to pair this with complementary colours is an equally important skill. Clients are confident in our expertise, and hence are more open to our suggestions as well, as long as there is merit in our choices. Of course, everybody has their likes and dislikes when it comes to colours, so it is vital for us to workshop our designs with both the client and their staff so as to ensure we have the buy-in of everyone involved.



Image supplied

Latest trends

In terms of the latest trends, the 2020 international colour palette will move away from pink, orange, and coral towards blue and green pastels, and even dark emerald, for a more mature and natural look-and-feel. The emphasis on cleaner and softer pastel colours reflects the current trend in interior design towards smooth, rounded, or geometric shapes and objects.

Major corporates that occupy multi-storey buildings also use their colour palette to differentiate each floor, as well as providing a unifying theme. The crucial thing to remember here is that figuring out how to create a colour palette that's perfect for your brand takes time, focus, and creativity. There are no concrete rules for choosing the right brand colours, and there's always a chance that you'll get better results by colouring outside of the lines and going against the rules of colour theory. Hence it is best to work alongside a team of design and branding experts that are ready to guide you and work with you on a colour palette that works for your business.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jean Swanepoel, senior interior designer, Trend Group

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>