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RESEARCH FINDINGS: DOES WORKPLACE DESIGN AFFECT EMPLOYEE ATTRACTION?



HASSELL

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RESEARCH



Credit Suisse, Singapore. Photography by Owen Raggett.

Contents

Section

01	Executive summary	02
02	Introduction	04
03	Method	06
04	Demographics	08
05	Part 1: Overall attractiveness factors	10
06	Part 2: Workplace attractiveness factors	14
07	Conclusion	17
08	About the authors	18
09	Case studies	19
10	About HASSELL and Empirica	26
11	References	27

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This new, primary-source research study presents unique and compelling evidence that links the physical workplace environment (i.e. office design) to employer attractiveness and therefore successful staff attraction and retention.

Workplace designers have often claimed that office design is important in attraction and retention. There is also evidence that workplace positively impacts culture and workplace behaviours. Until this study however, very little empirical data has been available to support or challenge this claim.

The findings show that workplace design significantly increases the attractiveness of employers to potential candidates, especially when working in conjunction with an attractive organisational culture. These research findings are based on a web-based survey of 1,006 Australian current and recent job seekers which was conducted in January 2013 by Empirica Research.

About the research

Respondents completed a series of ‘choice modelling’ tasks to reveal which factors affected their decisions to accept different hypothetical employment offers across a range of scenarios.

The scenarios varied salary, technology provision, organisational culture and workplace design.

The survey sample comprised a range of respondents with minimum representation across four major Australian cities, five key industry sectors and a balance across gender.

The spread of representation included respondents aged from 18 to 66+ with education levels from secondary to PhD and experience levels spanning junior, mid and senior.

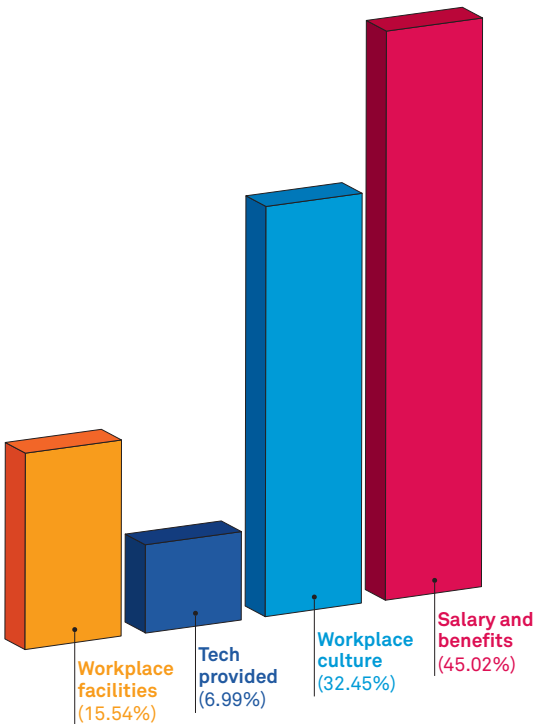


Fig. 01. Overall factors impacting appeal of an employer

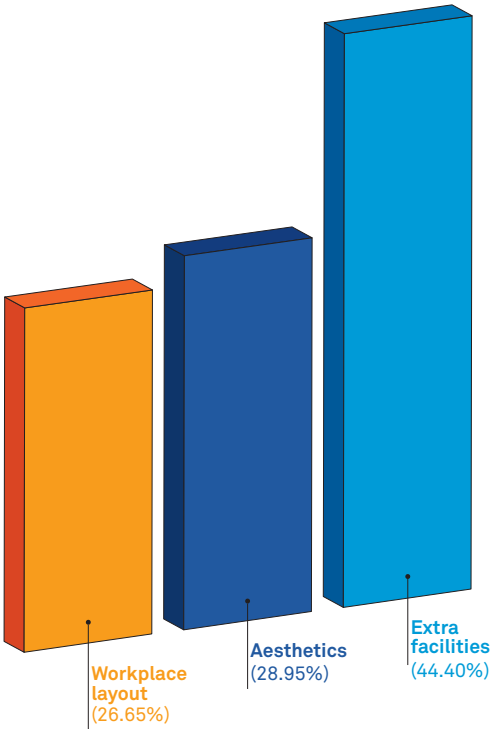


Fig. 02. Facility factors impacting appeal of a workplace

Key findings

The study found that workplace design significantly affects employee attraction.

The findings show that what makes an organisation attractive to an employee varies across gender, industry, experience level and even geography but that good workplace facilities, design and culture are consistent drawcards for potential employees.

Highlight findings include:

Salary has the largest influence on the attractiveness of a job (45% share), but workplace culture (32%) and facilities (16%) combine to outweigh the influence of salary.

Unprompted, respondents often cite physical workplace features as evidence of a good or bad workplace.

Workplace aesthetics has a greater influence on job attractiveness than workspace allocation (offices vs open plan vs activity based learning).

When salary is removed as a variable, an attractive workplace culture is the most influential factor in determining whether an individual is likely to accept a job or not, followed by workplace design, and then technology.

Appealing workplace facilities consistently **DOUBLES** the likelihood of a candidate choosing an employer regardless of the combination of other variables.

A creative, modern workplace aesthetic consistently **TRIPLES** the appeal of an employer's workplace facilities.

Findings in action

These research findings complement anecdotal observations that HASSELL has gathered designing over a million square metres of workplace for more than 100 diverse clients.

There are several case studies from HASSELL's experience designing leading workplaces. Anecdotal evidence supports the findings of the study by demonstrating tangible improvements to overall business performance and employee satisfaction from workplace design that is aligned with organisational culture.

For example, SA Water reinvented their physical workplace environment in conjunction with a cultural change program. This resulted in strong increases in employee engagement, a better culture, a reduction in sick leave by one day per person per year, a reduction in turnover by two per cent and increased graduate applications from approximately 20 per year to over 400 per year¹.

Ongoing research

This research is part of an ongoing program of studies to isolate and explore key topics in workplace design where there is an unnecessary lack of empirical evidence of the impact of good design on business.



1. DEGW Post Occupancy Evaluation –Staff Workshop Findings and Workplace Performance Survey Findings, January 2010

SA Water House, Adelaide, Australia.
Photography by Matthew Sleeth.

02 Introduction

Our clients are looking for their physical spaces to work harder than ever before – both broadly and particularly in relation to attracting talent

This research aimed to establish empirical evidence of the relationship between physical workplace facilities and an organisation's ability to attract employees.

In exploring this relationship, it is important to acknowledge rapid and significant changes in the external business environment – and consequent changes in organisational priorities – over the last decade.

Put simply, the nature of work is constantly changing and so too is the role of the office itself.

Ubiquitous, mobile information technology, autonomous work styles, increasing focus on work/life balance, sustainability imperatives and incentives to reduce business costs are often cited as challenges to the traditional office.

These pressures have led some futurists to question the need for an office at all. Now that we're all connected by efficient information technology, do we need to come into an office? Wouldn't it be cheaper, easier and more sustainable if many of us simply worked from home?

This research adds weight to the argument that while the role of the office is definitely changing, a physical office that embodies an organisation's culture is vital to competing in today's market.

As an international design practice with a strong focus in workplace design, we have seen increasingly business focused design briefs over the past decade.

Our clients are looking for their physical spaces to work harder than ever before – both broadly and particularly in relation to attracting talent.

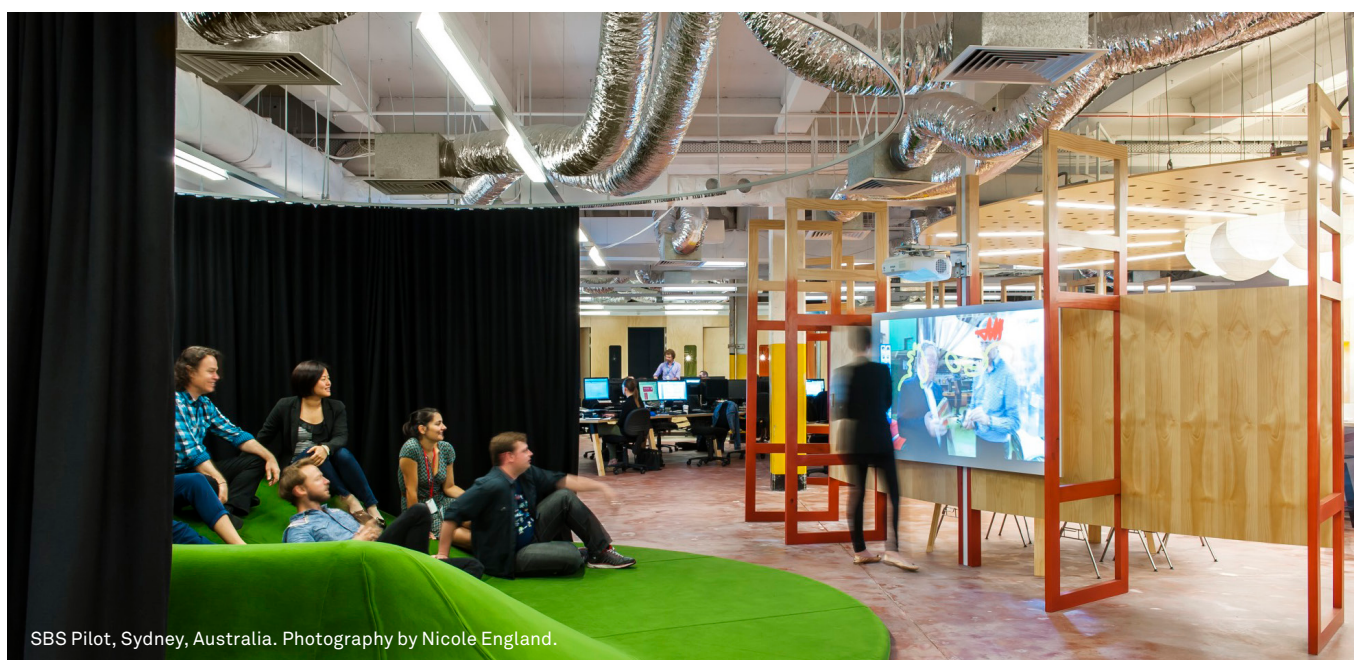
Organisations are seeking workplaces that increase flexibility, speed and agility, reinforce the organisation's culture, improve the quality of collaboration and help drive the resulting gains in innovation and productivity that are critical in today's knowledge economy. Near the top of the list for almost all briefs is a desire for the workplace to help attract and retain the best talent.

Changes in external business environment in the last decade

- _ Ongoing shift to a knowledge-based economy
- _ Ubiquitous, mobile information technology and wireless networks
- _ Increasingly autonomous workforce and independent work styles
- _ Challenging shifts in workforce demographics and increasing diversity
- _ Changed work-life balance expectations
- _ Focus on sustainability imperatives
- _ Need for increased productivity
- _ Ongoing drive for cost reduction

Drivers of workplace design – increasingly business focused objectives

- _ Influence upon attraction and retention of key talent
- _ Improved flexibility to respond to change
- _ Enable faster speed and agility
- _ Reinforce cultural alignment through encouraging desired systems, symbols and behaviours
- _ Enhance efficiency and quality of collaboration, creativity, and connection between people and teams
- _ Enhance value for money through more direct impacts on business performance



A cost-effective talent attraction strategy

The chart below shows that the physical workplace accounts for an estimated 15% of an employer's total operating costs over the life of a lease compared with salaries which account for the other 85%.

Given the relatively small capital cost of workplace facilities – and especially of good design – relative to ongoing staff salary costs, this study suggests that **investing in workplace design and organisational culture can be a more cost effective strategy for talent attraction than offering higher salaries.**

Connection and identity

From the point of view of an individual employee, there is an attraction in 'being part of something' – both when they are deciding on a job offer and once they are working within an organisation.

In their work on Identity Economics, Nobel Prize-winning economists George A. Akerlof and Rachel E. Kranton establish a compelling link between how people identify within their social context and how they make decisions – including how hard they work².

In the organisational context, their model shows that "if employees think of themselves as firm insiders, rather than outsiders, the pay differentials needed to induce higher effort will be lower".

It follows that anything an organisation can do to increase an employee's feeling of connection and identification will offset the need to offer higher salaries and increase the motivation levels of employees. The way a workplace is designed can impact on the extent to which an employee connects and identifies with their colleagues and the organisation as a whole.

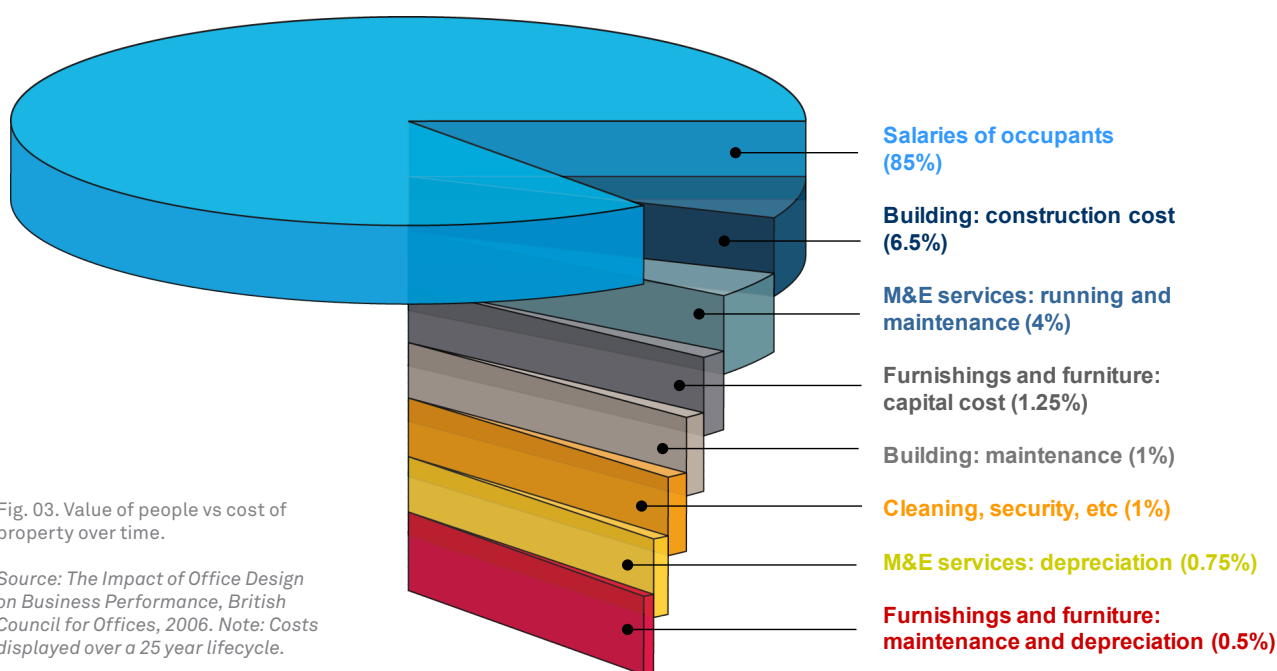


Fig. 03. Value of people vs cost of property over time.

Source: *The Impact of Office Design on Business Performance*, British Council for Offices, 2006. Note: Costs displayed over a 25 year lifecycle.

2. Identity Economics: How Our Identities Shape Our Work, Wages, and Well-Being, George A. Akerlof and Rachel E. Kranton

03 Method

The objective of the research study was to gather primary data to isolate and describe the influence workplace facilities and design have upon attracting potential employees to an organisation

The survey asked respondents to choose between specific job options, each consisting of different combinations of variables – i.e. “If you were offered the following two jobs, which one would you choose?”

By analysing the patterns of people's choices between different options, in relation to the specific variables altered in each option, the data allows us to statistically understand the relative influence each variable has upon respondents' choices between job option A and job option B.

The study investigates an organisation's attractiveness to potential candidates on two levels.

Broadly the study looked at the comparative influence of ‘big picture’ attractiveness factors including salary, culture, workplace facilities and technology.

In more detail the study probed what type of workplace facilities are most attractive. The chosen factors for this study were: the workplace layout, overall aesthetic of the workplace, and the extent of additional staff facilities provided in the workplace.

There are many other acknowledged influencing factors which were not included in the controlled variables to be examined through the survey. In general, the factors included in this survey were chosen because they represent the most valuable factors to understand relative to one another. Some other factors, such as location of the potential workplace, were excluded because their importance and influence is already well accepted.

Other factors, such as international work opportunities and formal learning and development programs, are clearly factors that might affect attractiveness but were excluded because they are less directly related to the primary focus of the study – the influence of workplace facilities and design on employer attractiveness.

Finally, the study sought to investigate whether the influences of these factors upon attractiveness are different in different contexts by separating the responses by age, experience level, gender, industry sector or geographical location.

About the two ‘choice modelling’ tasks

The survey respondents were asked to choose between two differently described job offers, randomly generated from a series of predefined variables. These diagrams explain the structure of the targeted variables, and how the options were created for respondents to choose between.

Level 1: Survey respondents were asked: “Which job would you prefer?” in scenarios where the following overall attractiveness factors were varied:

- _ Salary and benefits
- _ Perceptions of the organisational culture
- _ Workplace facilities
- _ Technology provided

Level 2: Survey respondents were asked: “Which job would you prefer?” in scenarios where the following specific workplace factors were varied:

- _ Workplace layout (individual work point allocation)
- _ Design aesthetic
- _ Additional staff facilities

The survey also included an open comments field to provide qualitative support to the quantitative data gathered via the choice modelling tasks. Some of the comments are included within this report.

A robust methodology to replicate real-world decision making

These research findings are based on a web-based survey of 1,006 Australian current and recent job seekers which was conducted in January 2013 by Empirica Research.

Respondents completed a series of ‘choice modelling’ tasks to reveal which factors affected their decisions to accept different hypothetical employment offers.

The survey sample comprised a range of respondents with minimum representation across four major Australian cities, five key industry sectors and a balance across gender.

The spread of representation included respondents aged from 18 to 66+ with education levels from secondary to PhD and experience levels spanning junior, mid and senior.

All respondents to the survey were either currently seeking, or had recently sought a new employer and so were broadly engaged in considering the factors important to them when doing so.

Also it is important to the study that all respondents were unaware that the survey was investigating issues of workplace facilities and design. For the respondents, the questions were simply about their choices between potential employers with the facilities and design-related variables just some of many factors to consider.

This is important because it means responses were not ‘primed’ to artificially focus on workplace facilities issues. Much research in the architecture and built environment industry is artificially primed by being undertaken as part of a project or otherwise artificially loaded within a primed context.

The ‘choice modelling’ approach (See Fig. 04 and 05) is a well suited method because it replicates the real-world situation of intuitively weighing up multiple different factors when choosing between available options.

This is a more realistic psychological replica of the intuitive process of choosing an employer than directly asking respondents to assess their own (often sub-conscious) weighting of the various factors.

The important distinction between intuitive, instinctive judgements and logical, cognitive decisions (and the implications for understanding thought processes) is best described by Daniel Kahneman³ and is clearly critical in correctly evaluating the impact of design upon user psychology.

3. Daniel Kahneman, “Thinking, fast and slow”, London, 2011

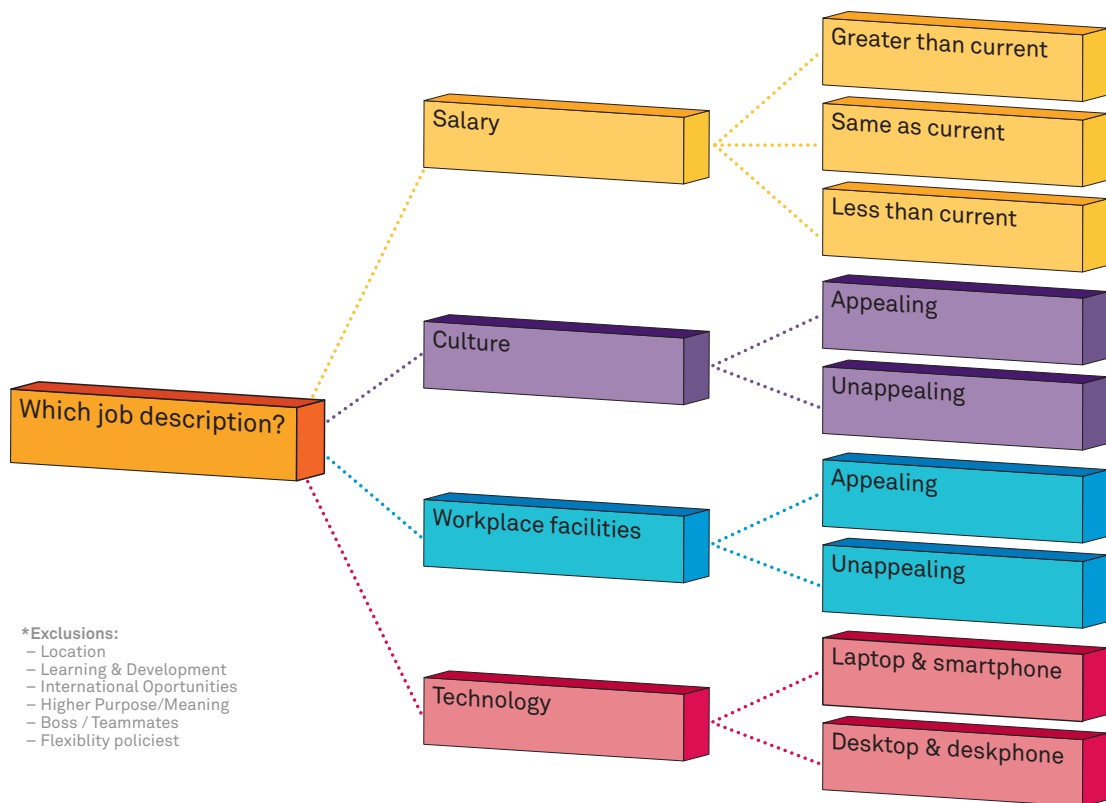


Fig. 04. Factors affecting employer attractiveness

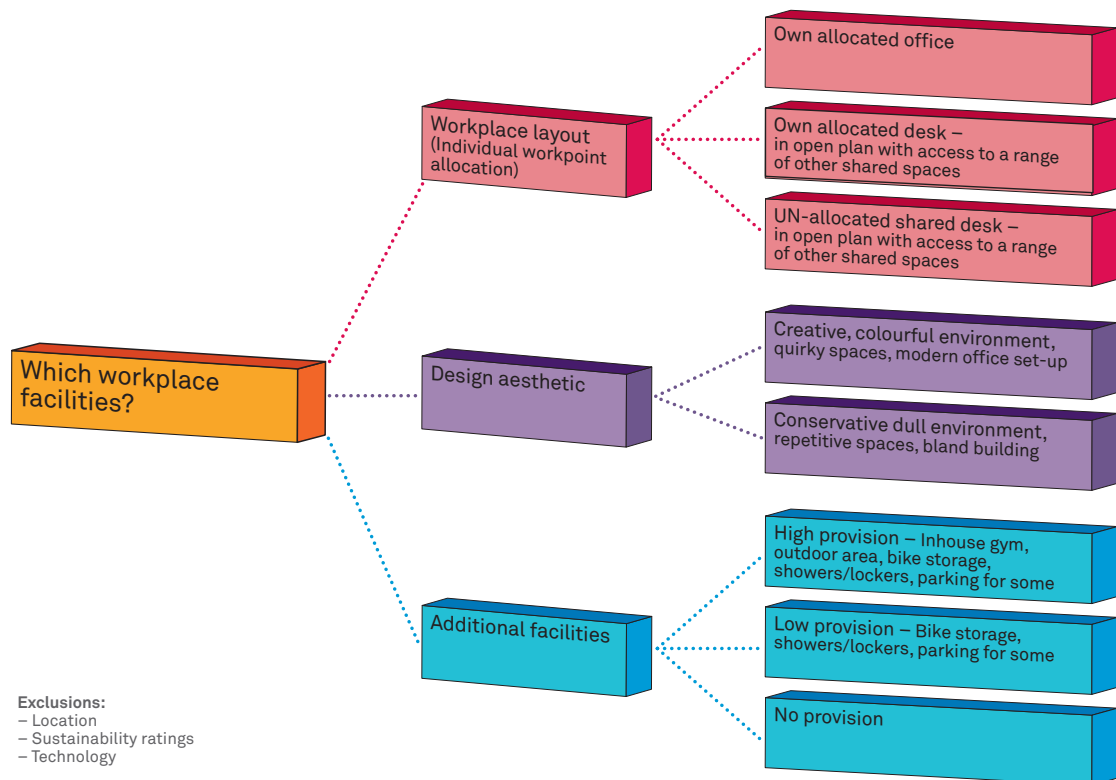


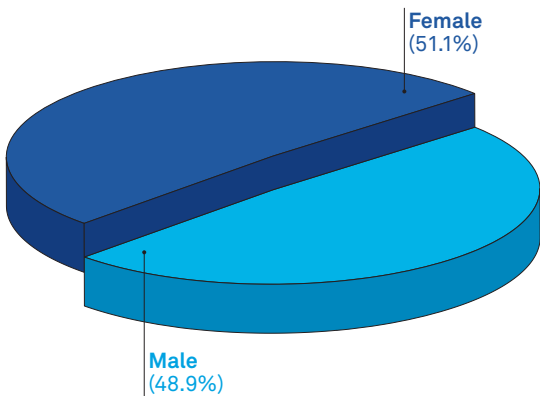
Fig. 05. Factors affecting workplace facilities attractiveness

04 Demographics

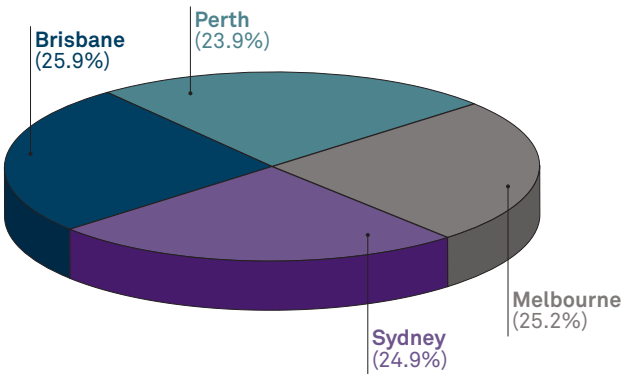
The 1,006 survey respondents were from four major Australian cities, five key industry sectors and represent a balance across gender. (See Fig. 06)

The spread of representation included respondents aged from 18 to 66+ with education levels from secondary to PhD and experience levels spanning junior, mid and senior. (See Fig. 06 and 07)

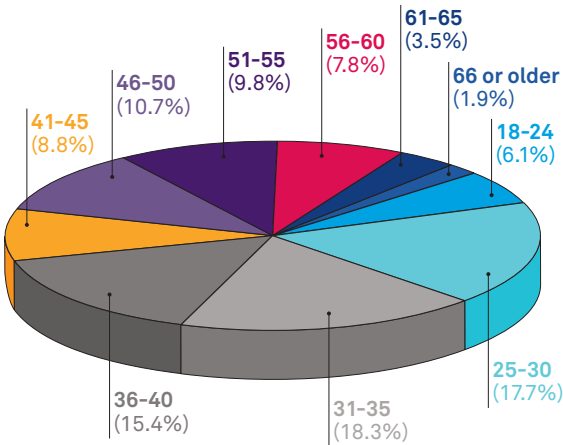
Gender



Location



Age



Industry sectors

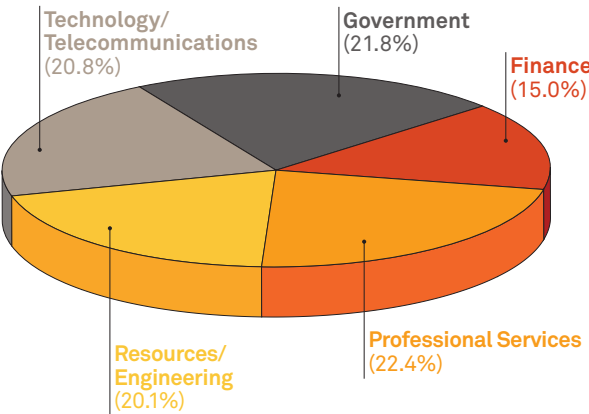
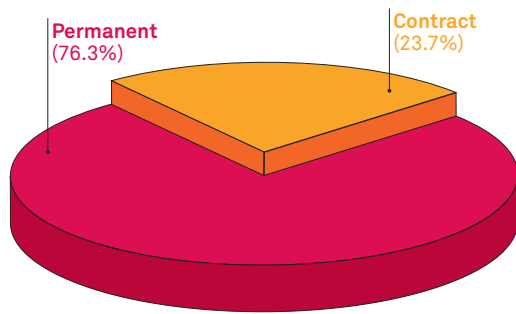


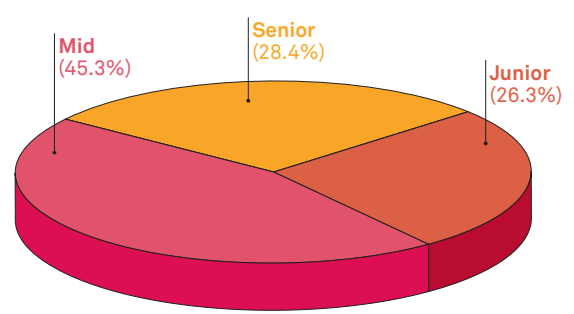
Fig. 06. Demographics

Survey sample comprised a range of respondents with minimum representation across four major Australian cities, five key industry sectors and a balance across gender

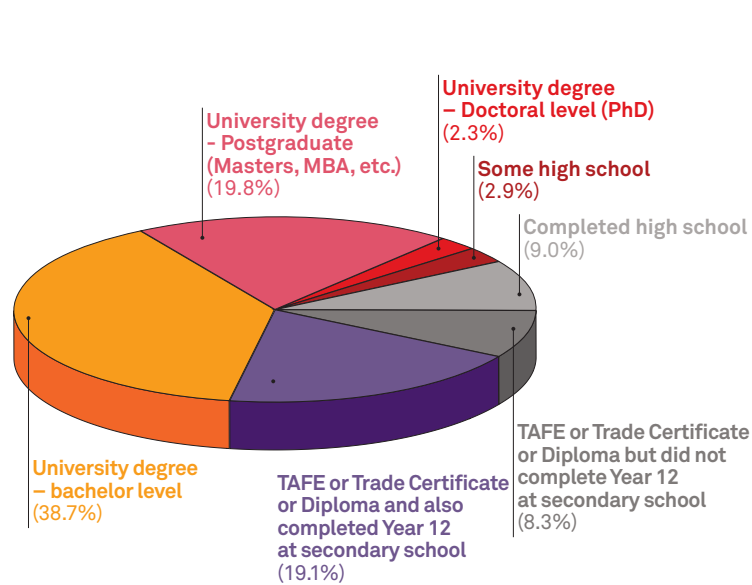
Type



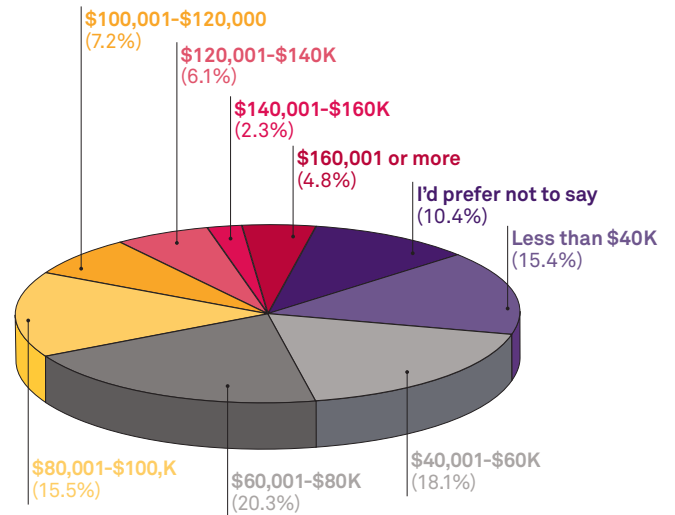
Experience



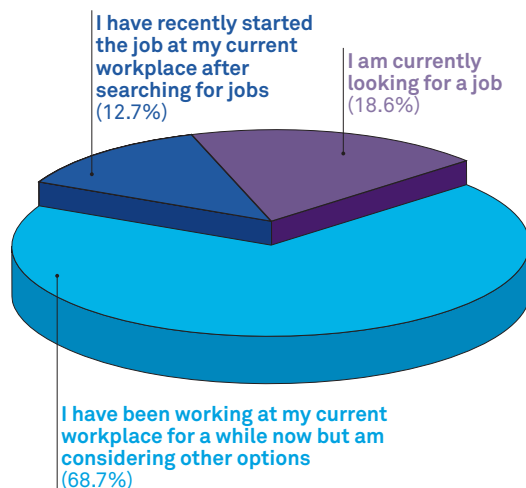
Education



Salary



Status



Situation

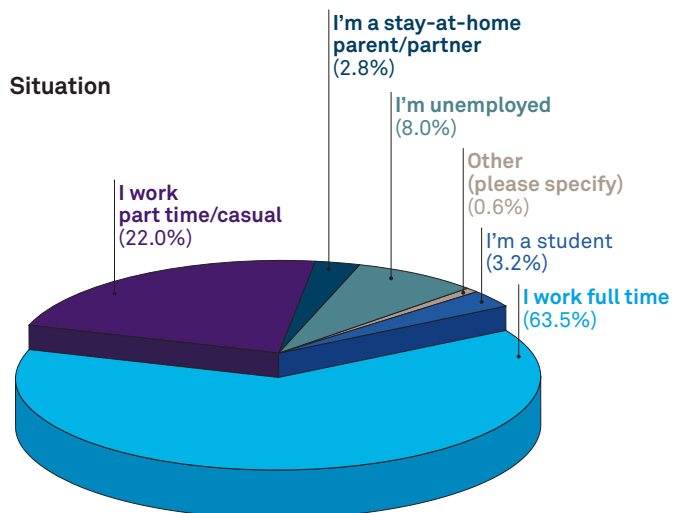


Fig. 07. Demographics

Survey sample spread of representation included respondents aged from 18 to 66+ with education levels from secondary to PhD and experience levels spanning junior, mid and senior.

05 The Findings Part 1: Overall attractiveness factor

Combining attractive workplace facilities and an appealing culture can outweigh salary in attracting candidates

When considering the high-level factors affecting the overall attractiveness of an employer, analysis of respondent choices between the different combinations of variables shows the following:

- Salary and benefits were the most influential factor on respondent's choice of employer overall. However, this factor was not as dominant as might be expected.
- Organisational culture was consistently the second most influential factor, more influential than workplace facilities or providing mobile technology
- Combining attractive workplace facilities and an appealing culture can outweigh salary in attracting candidates. This is a valuable finding for organisations that want to attract good talent without having to offer higher salaries than competing employers.

Workplace design and organisational culture are closely linked because workplace design can directly influence culture through supporting "systems, symbols and behaviours over time"

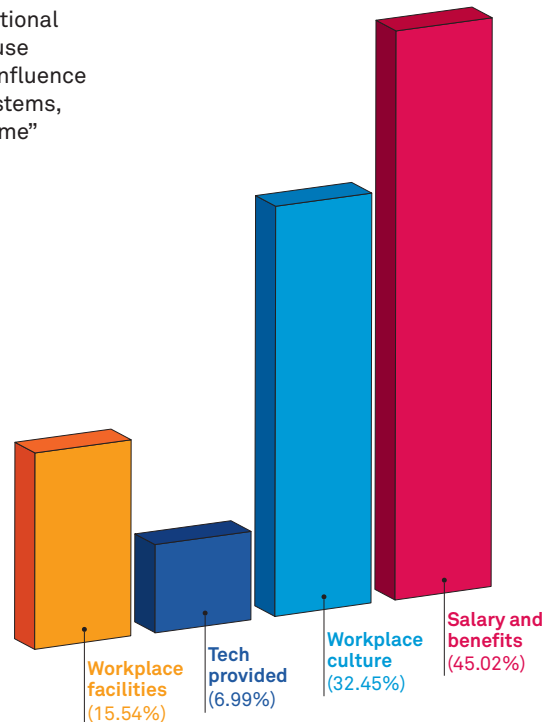


Fig. 08. Overall factors impacting appeal of an employer



Transurban, Melbourne, Australia. Photography by Dianna Snape.

There were also differences in the influence of the examined variables when comparing different subsets of the respondents.

By seniority/experience

Junior and senior employees place more importance on workplace facilities when choosing an employer than the mid-level employees. This may be because mid-level employees are relatively less involved in leadership of the organisation than senior candidates, and less involved in learning than those in junior roles.

Junior roles were significantly less likely to be influenced by the technology on offer than mid and senior candidates – perhaps because they are more likely to take effective mobile technology for granted. (See Fig. 10).

By industry sector

When looking at the different influence of factors between respondents from different industry sectors (See Fig. 09), the data shows:

- _ Workplace facilities are relatively MORE influential upon the decisions of candidates in the technology, professional services and resources/ engineering sectors, than they are for government or finance sector candidates
- _ Technology is MORE important for the decisions of finance sector candidates than those in other sectors

By age

An analysis of the different influence of factors between respondents across age or seniority (See Fig. 10) shows:

- _ Technology is LESS important for the choices of younger candidates than for older ones
- _ Workplace facilities are MORE important for junior and senior candidates than mid-level candidates

By location

Differences were also identified in the responses according to the respondents' location (See Fig. 11):

- _ Workplace facilities were MORE influential on respondents' choices in Perth than in other cities
- _ Organisational culture was MORE important for candidates' choices, and technology much LESS important for Brisbane-based candidates

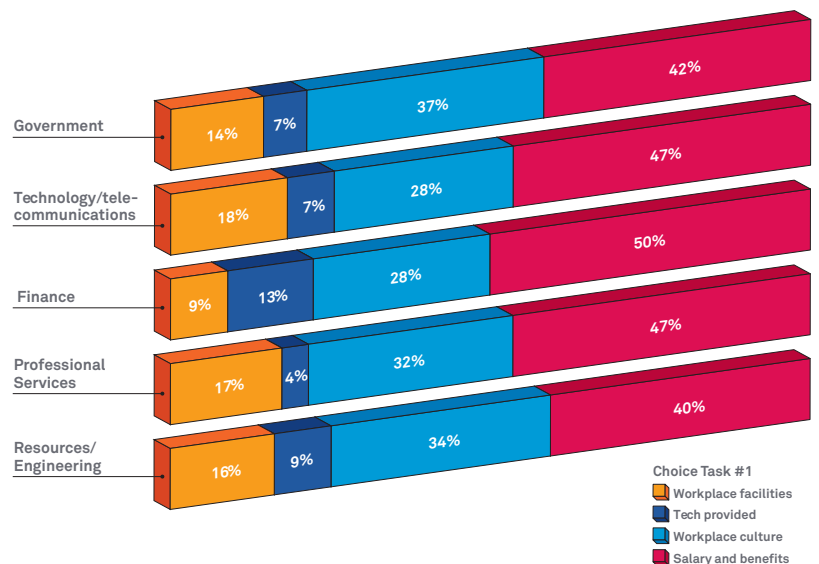


Fig. 09. Influence on attractiveness by industry sector

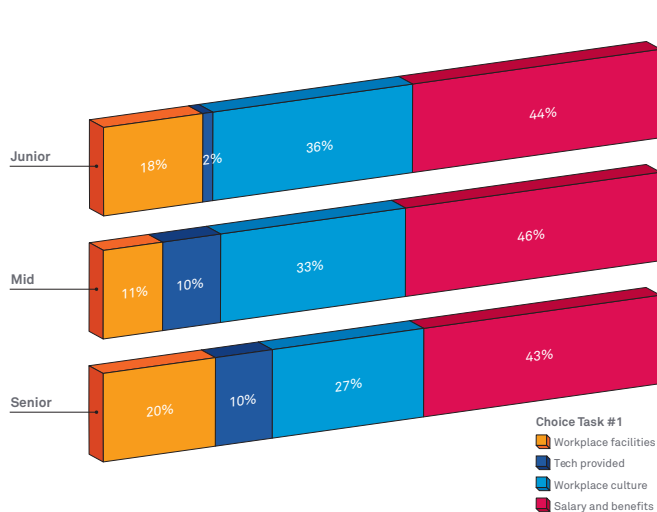


Fig. 10. Influence on attractiveness by seniority/experience

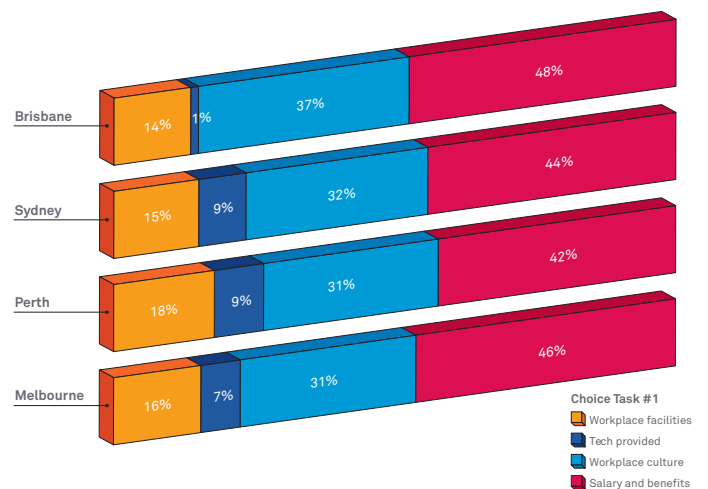


Fig. 11. Influence on attractiveness by location

The data also shows the trade-offs respondents make between different variables, and the impact of different combinations upon a candidate’s likelihood of being attracted to a job offer

For example, when considering only the combinations where the salary variable was described as “lower than the salary you are on now”, the study highlights the relative importance placed upon workplace organisational culture, workplace facilities, and technology, in offsetting a less than ideal salary. It shows that:

The most effective way to offset a lower salary is to offer appealing organisational culture and workplace facilities, and technology, which will attract 37% of candidates despite a lower salary on offer.

An appealing organisational culture and appealing workplace facilities alone will still appeal to 24% of respondents despite the lower salary.

The table (Fig. 12) shows the uplift each variable can contribute to attracting candidates.

Adding the “appealing workplace facilities” variable consistently doubled the likelihood of an employee being attracted, regardless of the combination of other variables, taking it from:

- 14% to 37% when both technology and culture are also appealing; and
- 10% to 24% when only an appealing culture is on offer.

Qualitative feedback also suggested the strong link between perceived attractiveness of the physical workplace and the overall attractiveness of a job offer.

Relationships with colleagues and the office space were the most often described features of an attractive employer.

When asked to describe “the best place they have ever worked” respondents often referred to the role of the physical office facilities despite the general nature of the question. This clearly showed a strong and intuitive association between the nature of the physical workplace facilities and the overall attractiveness of the employment experience on offer.

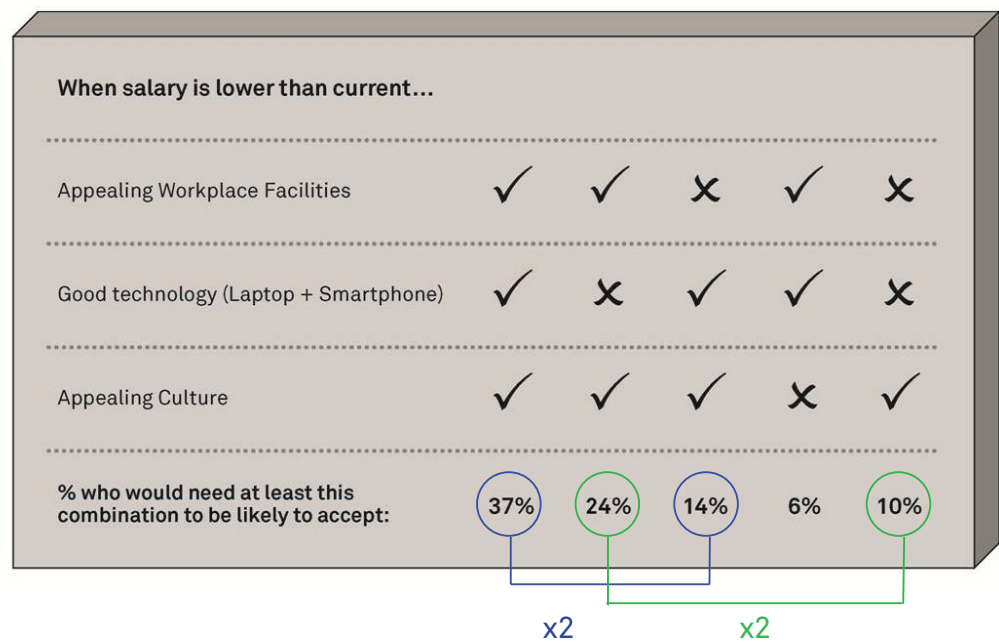


Fig. 12.

“We need a few different environments for different types of work – quiet, shared, private, phone-friendly, common room/kitchen helps keep workspaces quiet.”

Survey Respondent
Professional Services

BDO, Sydney, Australia. Photography by Nicole England.

“New office, hot desks, bright and funky interior. An energetic and dynamic vibe.”

Survey Respondent
Financial Services

Financial services workplace, Melbourne, Australia.
Photography by Dianna Snape.

06 The Findings
Part 2: Workplace
attractiveness factor

When choosing between job offers, the general
aesthetic of a workplace has a bigger influence than
whether an individual has an allocated work point

At the second, more detailed level, the study explored different aspects of workplace facilities to better understand which aspects are most attractive.

The analysis of respondent choices between different combinations of variables showed the following:

Staff facilities

- Providing additional staff facilities, beyond the workspace itself, has the biggest influence on respondents when choosing between job offers.
- Car parking is most commonly identified as an extremely appealing 'extra facility', followed by food and drink outlets and outdoor areas. Bicycle storage and childcare facilities were extremely appealing to the smallest number of respondents.

Aesthetics

- The general aesthetic description of the workplace (i.e. whether it was colourful and creative rather than grey and corporate) has the next strongest influence on respondents' choices - a bigger influence than individual work point allocation (i.e. whether you are assigned an office, a workstation, or a shared workstation).
- This is a surprising finding considering the emphasis placed upon individual work point by most users when asked directly about what is important to them in their workspace. This finding emphasises the significant – but perhaps less explicit – role of aesthetics in the workplace when compared to issues of functionality.

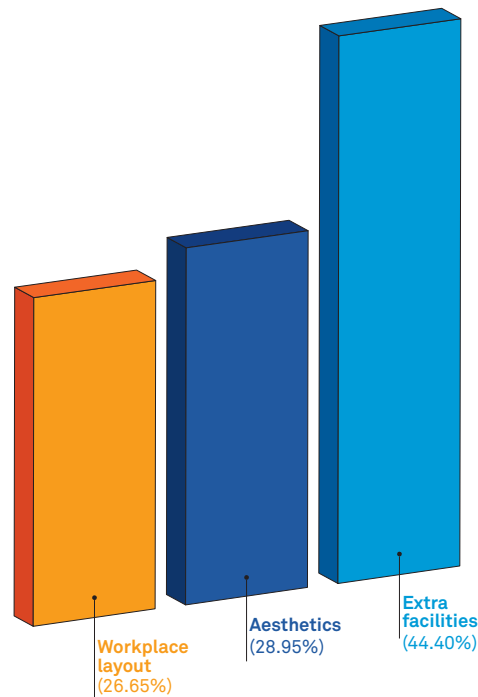


Fig. 13. Facility factors impacting appeal of a workplace

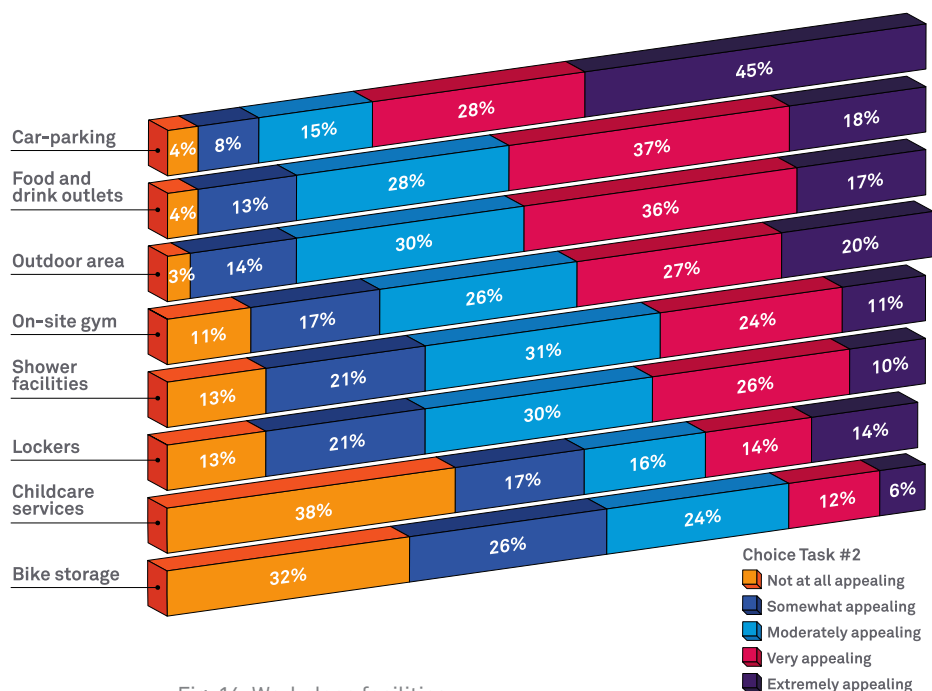


Fig. 14. Workplace facilities

There are also differences in the influence of the specific workplace facility variables when comparing different subsets of the respondents, as follows:

By industry sector

Differences in respondents by industry sector include (See Fig. 15):

- _ Extra facilities are MORE influential in the finance sector than in the professional services and technology/telecommunications sectors
- _ Within the 'layout/allocation' variable, having an 'own allocated office' is the most appealing option for employees overall. However, in the finance and government sectors, and among junior level respondents overall, employees preferred an allocated open-plan desk with partitions over having their own allocated office.

Shared unallocated spaces (such as those that might be shared under an Activity-Based Working or ABW model) are the least appealing option overall – although finance sector respondents saw this as preferable to having their own allocated office.

By age/experience/gender

Differences in responses by age or seniority include (See Fig. 16):

- _ Workplace layout/allocation is significantly MORE influential for mid-level compared to both junior and senior level employees
- _ Aesthetics of a workplace plays a MORE important role, and extra facilities a LESS important role for 36-50 year olds than for younger and older employees
- _ Men are more likely to be influenced by extra facilities than women

By location

- _ There is relatively little difference in the influence of variables when compared city by city. So while the relative importance of the workplace overall is slightly different in different places, what makes those facilities appealing in the first place appears to be more consistent.

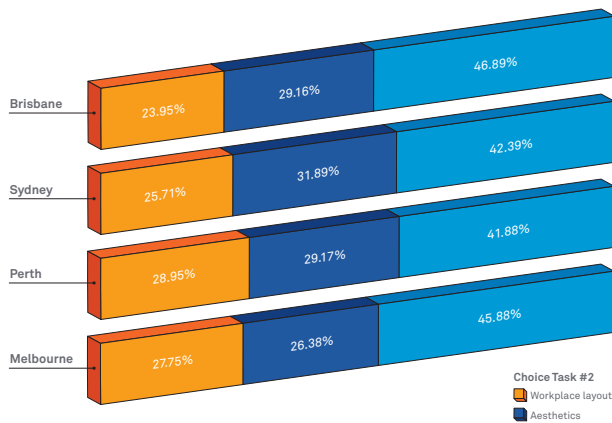


Fig. 15. Industry by choice importance

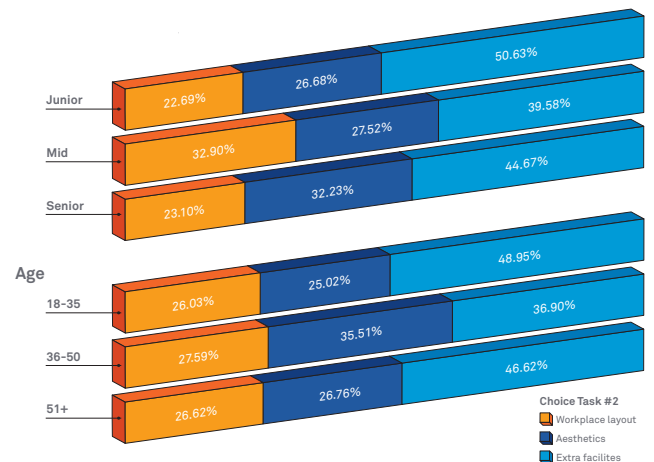


Fig. 16. Employment level by choice importance

Gender

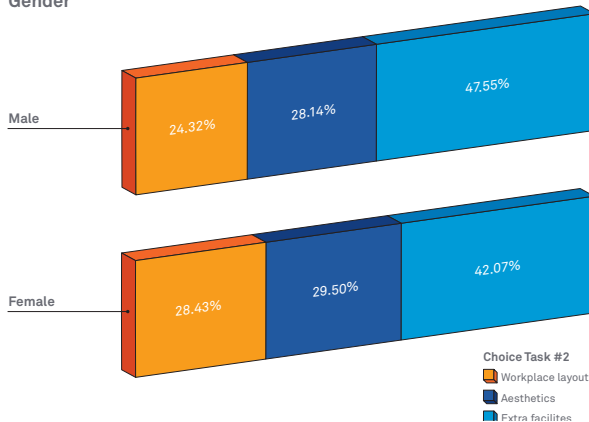


Fig. 17. Gender

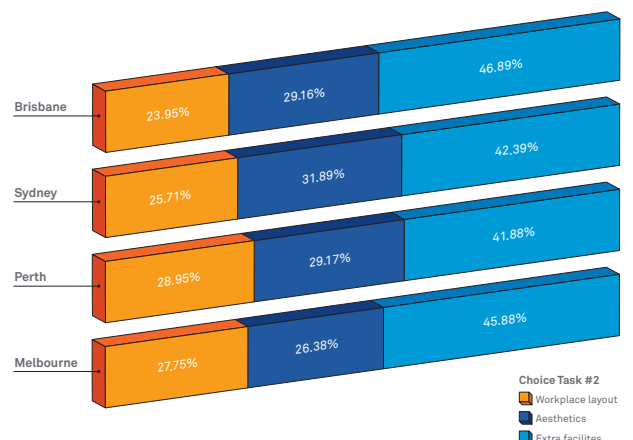


Fig. 18. Employment level by choice importance - Location

06 The Findings

Part 2: Workplace attractiveness factor

The importance of the creative modern space can be seen in the trade-off between the space and the extras – people would prefer to forego gym than the creative space

- Trade-offs to offset having ‘no extra facilities’ (See Fig. 19):**

 - _Extra facilities have the biggest influence on decision outcomes
 - _When the facilities component was described as ‘no extra facilities’, an individual office in a creative/modern space is the best combination to offset having ‘no extra facilities’.
 - _The importance of a creative modern space is also clear – when the space is described as dull/conservative, even the appeal of a private office does little to get people across the line.

Where the facilities component was described as ‘no extra facilities’:

 - _An allocated work point was three times more attractive than an unallocated desk; and
 - _A ‘creative, modern space’ was three times more attractive than a ‘grey, corporate’ space, regardless of work point allocation.

Trade-offs to offset the perceived down-sides of an open-plan office

The perceived downsides of an open-plan office are very strongly offset by the best combination of the other factors, as described below:

 - _A creative modern space and all the extra facilities (such as an in-house gym) strongly offsets the perceived negative of an open plan office
 - _The importance of the creative modern space is also demonstrated in trade-off between the space and the extras – people would prefer to forego the gym than a creative modern space
 - _A ‘creative, modern space’ is more than three times more attractive than ‘grey, corporate’ space, regardless of extra facilities

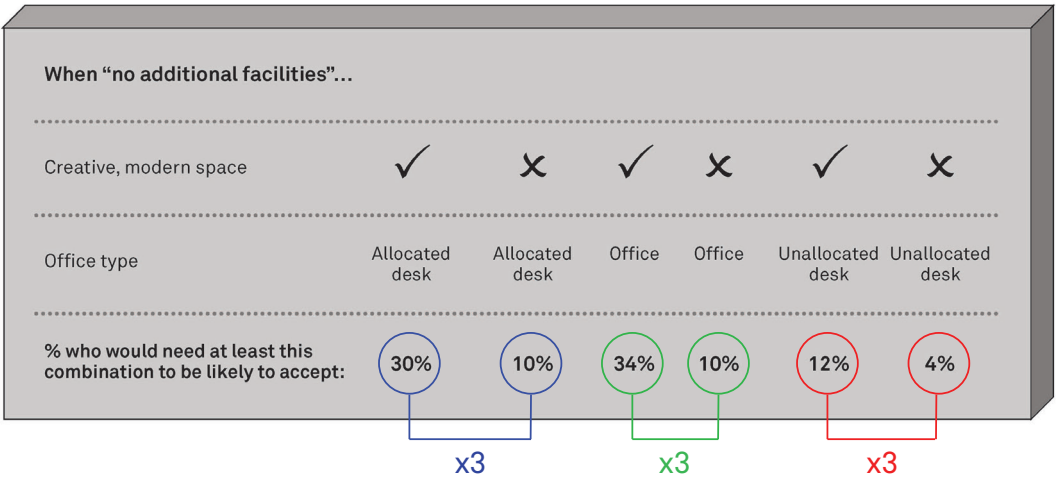


Fig. 19. Trade offs - The importance of the aesthetic / expression factor

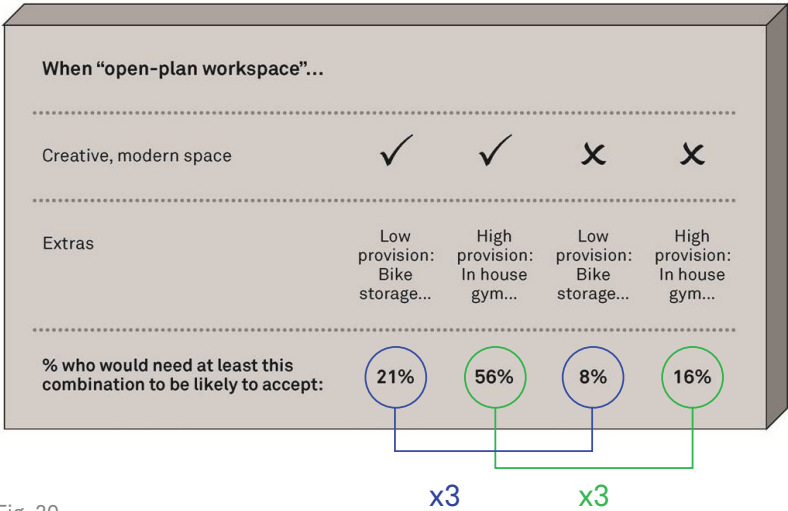


Fig. 20.

‘This study suggests that investing in workplace design and organisational culture can be a more cost effective strategy for talent attraction than offering higher salaries.

The way a workplace is designed can impact on the extent to which an employee connects and identifies with their colleagues and the organisation as a whole.’

Steve Coster
Principal, HASSELL

These research findings complement anecdotal observations that HASSELL has gathered designing over a million square metres of workplace for more than 100 diverse clients.

In designing workplaces for a range of organisations, we have seen those that actively design appealing workplaces and also support positive culture will reap the benefits in attracting talent.

This research:

- _ Gives us an empirical basis to substantiate a discussion about the importance of workplace design and aesthetics to overall business performance.
- _ Reinforces the link between organisational culture and the physical workplace.
- _ Provides us with a fact base upon which to advise clients trying to prioritise their spending on the various components of a new workplace.

Further questions raised by the research findings include:

- _ Whether the economic cycle would impact the degree to which workplace design and facilities impact a candidate's decision-making relative to salary.
- _ Whether the provision of certain facilities – such as childcare – that impact a relatively small employee population in an important way are in fact disproportionately valuable both in attracting candidates and building an organisation's reputation.
- _ How certain variables can impact other significant attraction factors not specifically researched in this survey. For example, how the design of certain open, collaborative workplaces naturally fosters highly sought-after mentoring and informal learning opportunities – which may offset the need to spend on more formal learning programs.

We will continue to research the impact of good workplace design on business performance.

08 About the authors



HASSELL

Steve Coster

Principal, HASSELL

Steve is a specialist in workplace strategy and design. He holds a Masters degree in Architecture focused on the strategic use of architecture and design for organisations. He has extensive experience developing workplace strategies, strategic briefs, design frameworks and workplace change management plans for a diverse range of organisations.

Steve is particularly focused on how workplaces and buildings (and the design process itself) can support organisational change and improve business performance. He has developed strategies and user-focused processes for

projects including co-working places, workplaces, commercial buildings, laboratories, university campuses and city precincts.

Prior to joining HASSELL in 2011, Steve was Managing Director of international workplace strategy consultancy DEGWA, and has been involved in some of Australia's most progressive workplaces.

Steve is also a joint leader of the HASSELL Knowledge and Sustainability team, focused on developing knowledge leadership and research programs across all HASSELL studios.



Cassie Govan

Cassie holds a PhD in social psychology.

Her previous roles include Research Associate/Co-Director of the Behavioural Lab at Stanford University's Graduate School of Business and Associate Director at Sweeney Research

Cassie launched Empirica Research in 2010. She is an Honorary Fellow in the University of Melbourne's Department of

Psychology and is regularly in the media as an expert social psychologist.

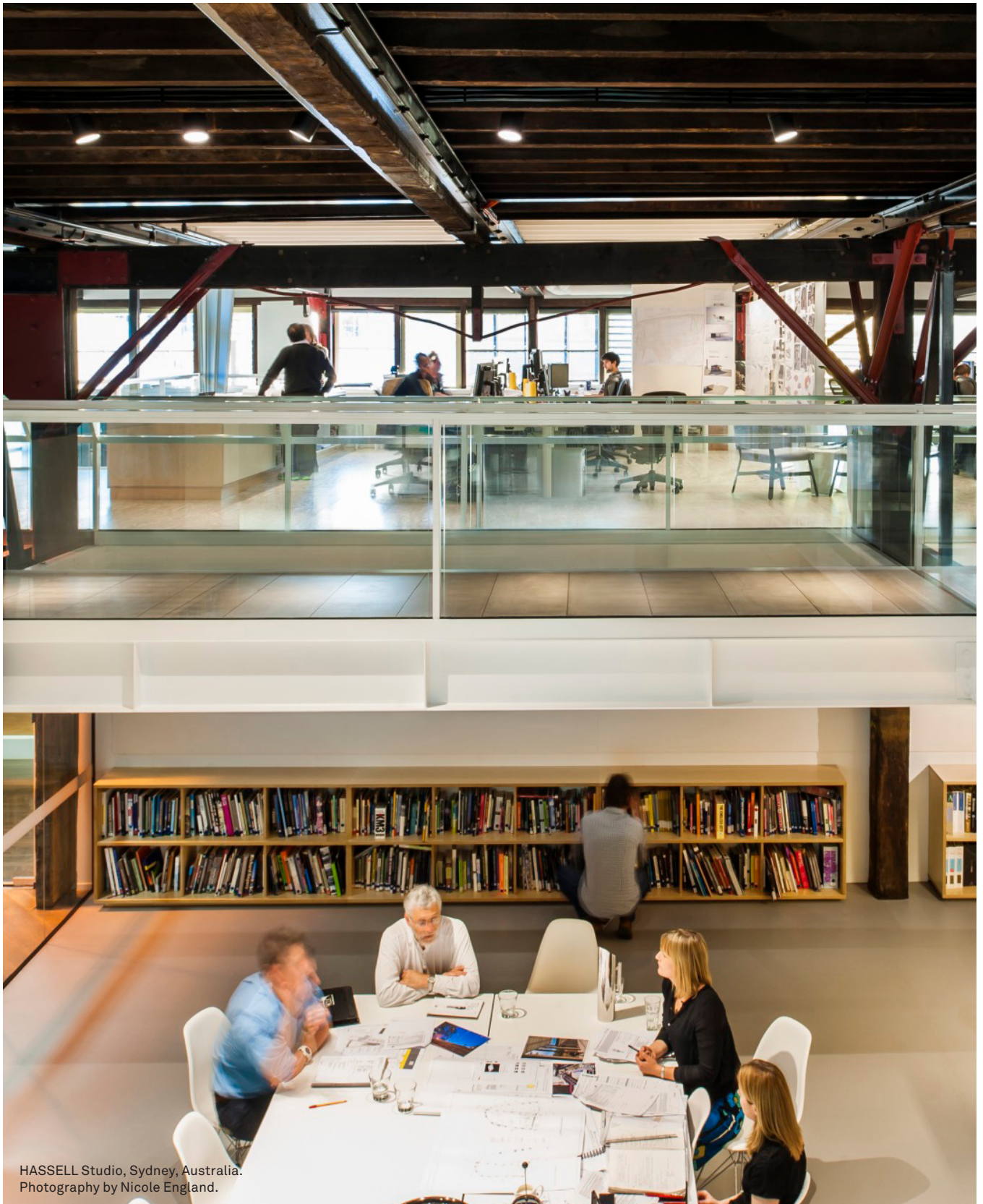
Cassie has worked on over 100 communication testing projects. One of her major passions in research is taking the science of attitude and behaviour change and combining it with her love of advertising and communications – the combination of academic theory and real-world insight.



09 Case studies

These case studies represent three different workplaces that all achieve high levels of talent attraction. In each case the workplaces have been designed by HASSELL in close collaboration with the clients and in close alignment with the organisation's culture, values and aspirations.

Each workplace reflects a different 'scenario' and combination of factors from the 'choice modelling' exercises.



HASSELL Studio, Sydney, Australia.
Photography by Nicole England.

Since Hub Australia was founded in Melbourne in 2011, the Network has grown into a co-working community of more than 800 people and organisations spanning small business, corporate, government, education and the community sector

Workplace highlights

In relation to the variables investigated in the choice modelling tasks within this research study, the Hub Australia projects exhibit the following characteristics:

- _ Unallocated open plan workpoints
- _ No additional facilities
- _ Creative, colourful design aesthetic

Highlights of the workplace design include:

- _ Moveable furniture – light enough for Hubbers to move around themselves
- _ Home-like feeling to enhance comfort and sense of belonging
- _ Individual and team settings
- _ Highly flexible informal spaces

A highly attractive workplace worth paying for

Since Hub Australia was founded in Melbourne in 2011, the Network has grown into a co-working community of more than 800 people and organisations spanning small business, corporate, government, education and the community sector.

The success of the Hub network of co-working spaces in Australia has been phenomenal.

This is a direct endorsement of the successful design of the work spaces themselves since – unlike in a traditional office – users choose whether or not they value the space enough to pay to use it.

HASELL doesn't take the credit for Hub's success – that was down to the innovation, creativity and energy of CEO Brad Krauskopf and his team – but we like to think we played a small part in unlocking the potential of the Hub spaces to succeed in generating such valuable human capital.

Co-designing for maximum flexibility and collaboration

Hub is a membership based organisation which provides hosted co-working environments for individuals and businesses to share with other like-minded people.

More than just a 'pay-by-the-hour' place to work, Hub is about providing the introduction, interaction, learning and event experiences that build true social and intellectual capital. The design of each Hub workplace is absolutely central to how well this works.

The core values of Hub – entrepreneurial, collaborative, transparent and autonomous – are reflected in the design approach for each Hub location.

Hub chooses character-filled, sometimes dilapidated buildings to provide a blank canvas for imaginative design.

The interiors celebrate the existing fabric and framework of each base building and enhances them with curated artefacts to create a comforting sense of belonging and a 'lived' in home-like feel.

Spotlight on the design process

- _ HASELL is Hub's strategic design partner in Australia, making for a truly collaborative design process where our client is highly involved every step of the way.
- _ HASELL co-designs the Hub spaces in collaboration with its members, who also install some of the new elements themselves.
- _ Even once the spaces are 'launched' the design process continues as the flexible shared workspace is manipulated by the users to support their changing needs.
- _ The furniture is generally light weight and mobile – supporting the 'Hubbers' to be agile and connected which is key to the ethos of the spaces.

About Hub

Hub Australia is the Australian component of a global network of collaborative co-working venues. Established in London in 2005, Hub currently has over 40 sites in six continents.



01



02



03

01 Hub Sydney,
Australia.
Photography by
Nathan Dyer.

03 Hub Adelaide,
Australia.
Photography by
Nathan Dyer.

02 Hub Melbourne,
Australia.
Photography by
Dianna Snape.

Optiver completed its A\$12 million workplace redesign in December 2011. Between 2012 and 2013, the firm bucked the post-GFC trend by growing staff numbers from 180 to 200 and was named best Place to Work in Australia by BRW in 2013.

Workplace highlights

In relation to the variables investigated in the choice modelling tasks within this research study, Optiver exhibits the following characteristics:

- _ Mix of allocated offices and open plan workpoints
- _ High provision of additional facilities
- _ Creative, colourful design aesthetic

Highlights of the workplace design include:

- _ Organic trading team arrangements unlike traditional rows of densely located traders
- _ High-specification desk-based technology
- _ Social/games level, roof terrace, bike storage, change rooms
- _ Breathes new life into an iconic heritage building in the centre of Sydney, Australia
- _ Light-filled, seven-floor open plan workplace

Being the best is no accident for Optiver

It was no accident that Optiver was named the Best Place to Work by BRW in 2013.

When the company placed 22nd on the list in the previous year, CEO Paul Hughes assembled internal work groups to address the areas he thought the company could improve – with resounding success.

Optiver took a similarly focused and energetic approach to ensuring its new workplace not only reflects its youthful, open, team oriented culture but actively enables it.

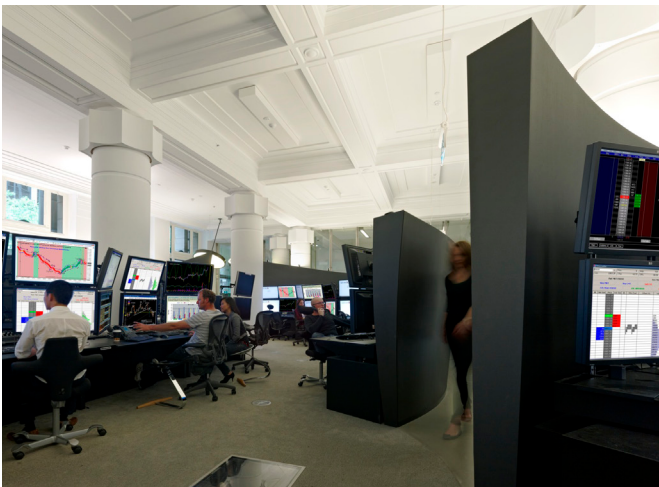
The new workplace was designed to maximise the potential of Optiver's highly skilled workforce. It had to capitalise on bringing together 'brilliant minds'. It had to do its bit to continue to attract and retain the best and brightest people.

Optiver takes its commitment to its employees to the next level with an in-house chef, personal training, yoga and massage to name just a few on the job perks. Creating a workplace that underpins this commitment was integral to the brief.

About Optiver

Optiver is the largest derivatives trading company on the Australian, Asian and European stock exchanges.

Currently employing just over 200 people, Optiver has a growing and successful base in Sydney for their Asia Pacific operations.



Photography by Michael Nicholson.

Workplace layout:

Allocated open plan workpoints

Additional facilities: Low provision

Design aesthetic:

Creative, colourful environment

“The design process for our new workplace was completely aligned with a much wider program of cultural change within our organisation. It was about repositioning a statutory authority to be – and be seen to be – a fresh, nimble, exciting employer of choice.”

Peter Ward
SA Water

Workplace highlights

In relation to the variables investigated in the choice modelling tasks within this research study, SA Water House exhibits the following characteristics:

- _ Allocated open plan workpoints
- _ Low provision additional facilities
- _ Creative, colourful design aesthetic

Highlights of the workplace design include:

- _ Integrated with major culture change
- _ Integration of laboratories with general work space for maximum knowledge share and visibility
- _ Desk-based technology
- _ Allocated open-plan work points
- _ Extra facilities: bike storage, showers/lockers, outdoor terrace

Designing a highly sustainable workplace

SA Water’s commitment to being a world leader in its field drove its commitment to creating an innovative and sustainable workplace, which includes a world leading research and analytical laboratory.

SA Water House brought together personnel from three separate sites and was a critical part of a wider strategy to reposition SA Water and attract and retain talented personnel.

The organisation’s vision for its new building was to develop a highly sustainable workplace that reflects the values of transparency, flexibility and innovation.

The workplace design is highly successful in achieving this vision. A central atrium and stair create visual and physical connections to all levels of the open plan workspace, bringing people together in a new social environment and promoting ad hoc professional interaction. The high quality space planning and amenity supports the well being of the organisation’s most important resource – its people.

Good design, employee attraction, productivity and efficiency

In the year after SA Water House opened, the organisation achieved measurable people and culture and financial improvements.

- _ Graduate program applications increased from 20 to 400+
- _ Sick leave reduced by one day per person per year (from seven to six)
- _ Employee turnover reduced by 2% (from 10 to 8%)
- _ 64% of SA Water staff surveyed agreed that SA Water House helps ‘attract and retain the workforce we need ‘

The environmental efficiency of the building also unlocks significant financial value, including:

- _ A\$150,000 - A\$200,000 annual savings in fitout churn through standardised work stations and upgraded technology
- _ Around A\$300,000 annual savings in travel costs between sites
- _ A\$1.25 million annual savings in reduced infrastructure and operational duplication



Photography by Matthew Sleeth and Earl Carter.

10 About HASSELL and Empirica

About HASSELL

HASSELL is a leading international design practice with studios in Australia, China, South East Asia and the United Kingdom.

We judge the success of the buildings and places we design by the way people use and enjoy them – the clients who commission them, the people who inhabit them.

Good design is about helping clients meet their needs and objectives. It's about unlocking a site's potential, identifying opportunities for transforming a good project into something exceptional. And good design is also about the way people feel when they experience it – the sense of meaning, connection and belonging it creates.

Our design values are shared globally across all the HASSELL studios, by the talented people who work in them: architects, interior designers, landscape architects, urban designers, planners and specialist consultants.

We work together in integrated design teams because they produce the best outcomes for our clients. The increasingly complex projects that clients bring to us demand a culture built on collaboration, creativity, and innovation in design thinking and delivery.

Openness and empathy with our clients ensure their interests are at the heart of all we design.

We have delivered over a million square metres of workplace architecture for more than 1,000 diverse clients across a broad range of projects throughout the world. Working with tenants, developers and owner occupiers, we have experience delivering small, crafted projects right through to some of the largest and most complex developments. Our services span a broad range from technical advice for building selection and commercial developments to strategic workplace planning.

About Empirica

Our work is diverse, but our philosophy across these projects is the same: inject academic, evidence-based research into commercial projects while keeping a clear focus on real-world, actionable insights.

Empirica Research is a specialist in behaviour change research. Our founder, Cassie Govan, has a PhD in Psychology and is an Honorary Fellow in the University of Melbourne's School of Psychological Sciences where she still lectures for the 3rd Year Psychology program and the Graduate Diploma program. We are passionate about conducting smart research for smart clients and we utilise our unique links to the academic world to bring an added level of insight to our projects.

Given our strong background in psychology, Empirica Research specialises in behaviour change research. Our researchers are well versed in current behaviour change research and theories, allowing us to provide a tailored multi-theory approach to research.

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