

Coworking: The Way to Happier Work

As companies both large and small become “flatter” and they decentralize command and control management and supervisory structures, productivity and job satisfaction can continue to improve in flexible work environments like Coworking centers.

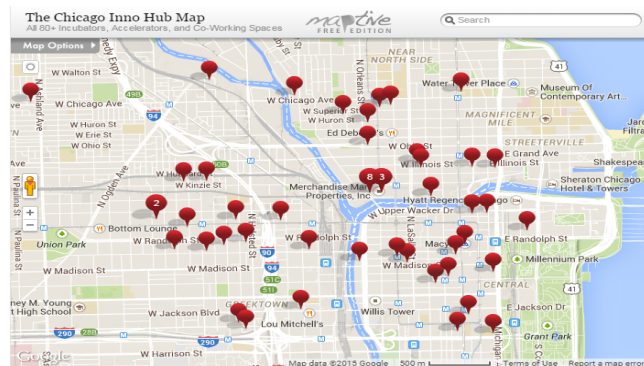
Who Coworks?

Thought to be a haven for freelancers and consultants, many varieties of work and workers populate coworking facilities. Recognizable names, including All Things Digital, an influential industry blog since 2007, have joined the coworking movement. Freelancers and W-2 employees make up the landscape of who coworks. Large companies who have regional managers can stop in and get some work done while on the road, and small companies can “be founded” by a few and have the room to grow while planted in a thriving community.

Where Do People Cowork?

From a 2011 industry study: Three-quarters of coworkers live near where they cowork. Fifty per cent live within three miles, and another twenty-five percent within six miles. Half of all coworkers live in cities of one million people, and a third live in cities of between 100,000 and one million people.

“Coworking spaces can be found in urban centers, like Chicago, and in suburbia like my coworking space in a shopping center in Austin, Texas. Even if you live nearby, working in a supportive environment makes a big difference, when compared to your kitchen-table home office.” Shelley Delayne, Founder, Orange Coworking



Happiness @ Cowork

Key contributing factors to work-place happiness include the opportunities for social interaction and support as well as a sense of community and belonging. When surveyed, coworkers reported:

- 76% said they collaborate more versus 54% for employees
- 89% said their social networks expanded versus 68% of employees
- 9.1 average satisfaction versus 7.9 for employees
- 91% said they were less lonely versus 72% of employees

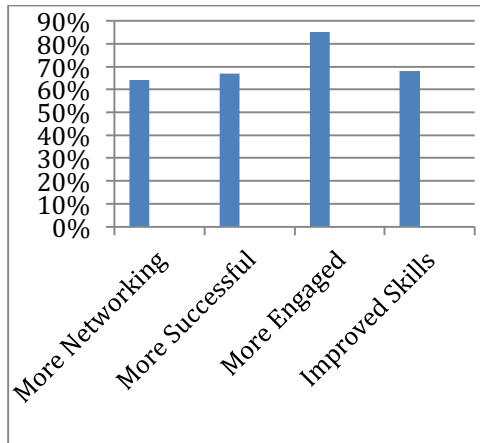
Rather than sit in a coffee shop using insecure WiFi and taking up a booth during busy lunch hours to work, meet clients and catch up on email, cowork

70%

Seventy percent of all coworkers said they were very happy with their desk in their coworking space.

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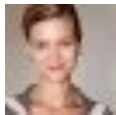
centers have added benefits that contribute to overall satisfaction. The report from the Coworking “unconference” GCUC, shares survey results:



Conclusion

The growth of coworking centers, from just a few 5 years ago to more than 800 in the U.S. today, makes sense when looking at 30% of the new economy being freelance and on-demand workers, and where companies who have downsized are adding new workers without the overhead of a long term commercial lease. Cowork centers provide a cost sensitive way to lower turn-over and higher employee satisfaction. Oh – and these workers are happier and more productive!

About the Author:



Shelley Delayne is the Founder and Owner of Orange Coworking in friendly Austin, TX. She delights in curating a growing cowork community. Please reach her at: Shelley@OrangeCoworking.com

Footnotes:

<http://theamericangenius.com/business-news/traditional-v-flexible-schedules/>

<http://densitycoworking.com/guess-who-coworks-1/>

GCUC The Cowork Unconference / stats + map of Chicago cowork spaces

<http://www.deskmag.com/en/the-coworkers-global-coworking-survey-168>