

Raleigh WorkBetterLab

A new era of hybrid work has begun and it’s changing the nature of *how* and *where* we work

In 2023, Storr Office Environments transformed Highwoods Properties’ 150 Fayetteville St, Ste 400 location into an award-winning, prototype workplace predicated on Steelcase’s recently published research defining future ways of working that we called, the WorkBetterLab.

The Raleigh WorkBetterLab was a collaborative project between Storr Office Environments and Steelcase that aimed to redefine traditional office spaces. The WorkBetterLab created an immersive experience exhibiting a variety of workplace applications centered on hybrid neighborhoods.



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Power of Collaboration

After the success of Steelcase-led pop-ups in Seattle, Toronto, Philadelphia, Nashville, Austin and other cities, Steelcase selected Raleigh as the next city to experiment with their WorkBetter research. As industry leaders in workplace research coupled with innovative furniture and architectural solutions, Storr and Steelcase identified a need in the market to educate organizations about the evolving expectations and needs of today’s workforce.

WorkBetterLab demonstrated thoughtful hybrid work design with new and existing products from Steelcase and our community of brands.



A Special Thanks to Our Partners

Highwoods Properties	Duncan Parnell
HagerSmith	Kontek
Sun Protection	Nexus Network Technologies



Research-Led Insights

Five Critical Needs

In 2021 Steelcase conducted a global study of nearly 5,000 workers and compiled feedback about what people value and expect in the modern workplace. The research revealed people want a dramatically different and better work experience. Five critical workplace needs were identified.



What People Need + Expect

Belonging

A sense of community, trust and shared purpose

Control

More choice and autonomy about where, when and how they work

Productivity

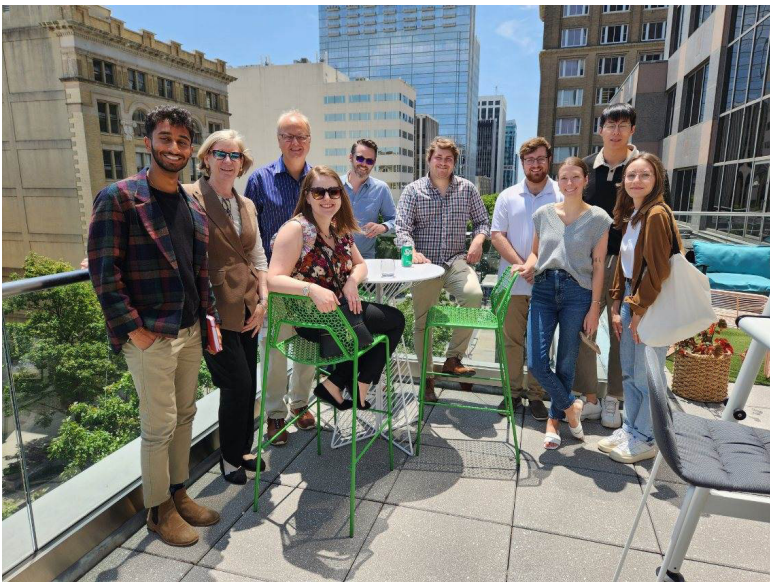
Support in-office and remote workers more equally to focus, collaborate and build relationships

Comfort

Places to rejuvenate and support wellbeing

Safety

Be and feel physically and psychologically safe



Importance Of The Office

Steelcase’s research reaffirms the importance of the office and reveals whether people like or dislike their office makes a difference: People who like working from their office are significantly more engaged and productive, connected to their company’s culture and less likely to leave.

Organizations are using these research insights to enhance the work experience through intentional space planning and creating neighborhoods - both of which **impact productivity, engagement, and culture.**

55% of Americans say the office is not living up to employee expectations

How The Workplace Needs To Change

The paradigms that guided office design in the past no longer work today. As this research shows, 87% of people are going to spend time in the office, but they’re going to be working differently than they did before the pandemic.

What matters most to employees has changed and the way work happens has changed. Offices will have to evolve to meet the pragmatic needs for this new era of hybrid work. The office now needs to earn worker’s commute. The answer to new expectations and needs is the hybrid neighborhood. Hybrid neighborhoods are diverse, inclusive and respond to what people and organizations need today.

Organizations should look to thriving communities as a model for work and the places where people work

Hybrid Neighborhood Design Objectives

Equity

Create a more equitable and inclusive experience for all participants, with a design goal to eliminate the gap between co-located and remote employees

Engagement

Design settings for a range of experiences that help people participate fully, focus deeply and stay in flow longer

Ease

Design a variety of intuitive virtual and physical experiences that are easy to navigate and control



Neighborhoods At Work

Neighborhoods solve for human needs within the workplace. Among other things, they create:

- A homebase for people + teams
- Diverse, inclusive range of spaces
- A destination worth the commute

The WorkBetterLab explored and illustrated hybrid work neighborhoods and the variety of spaces they should offer to make our workplaces “worth the commute.”



Click or scan to explore the 2022 Steelcase Global Report: The New Era of Hybrid Work





Building A Neighborhood At Work

The Neighborhood Experience

The WorkBetterLab, predicated on Steelcase research, was designed to define and describe future ways of working. Only through research-led insight can workplaces be created that meet both the **needs of workers and leaders** in today's new era of work.

The 6,000 square foot pop-up lab opened in April 2023 and, due to popularity, continued three months beyond its initial lease period – concluding in December 2023.

Comprised of diverse settings designed to support all work modes, the lab reimaged the office, creating spaces where people can work better. Storr and Steelcase illustrated that workplaces can offer choice, foster collaboration, embody flexibility and offer autonomy all while rebuilding a sense of community and culture.



Raleigh WorkBetterLab Floorplan

A better vision for a workplace is a community - a place where people bond around shared values, feel valued as human beings, and have a voice in decisions that affect them

Adam Grant
Author of "Think Again", 2022

Creating A Community At Work Can

Attract People Together

Increase Engagement
+ Productivity

Build A Connection to
Company Culture

Foster Resilience

Key Design Principles Frame the Raleigh WorkBetterLab



Me + We

Equal Support

Provide equal support for both team and individual work

Quick Shifts

Allow for quick shifts between working alone and together

Balance

Create a balance between 4 key space types: personal, collaboration, learning, social



Fixed-to-Fluid

Multi-Modal Spaces

Support multiple purposes and modes of work through multi-modal spaces

Adaptable Spaces

Highly mobile furniture, power, technology and space division

Flexible Architecture

Flexible architectural elements allow for multiple ways to reorganize space



Open + Enclosed

Me + We Spaces

More enclosed "me" and more open "we" spaces

Privacy + Control

More options for individual spaces with a range of privacy and control

Flexible Boundaries

More open team spaces with flexible boundaries



Braiding Digital + Physical

Increased Video

Increased video use in "me" and "we" spaces

Inclusivity

Create inclusive experiences for those remote and physically present

Embedded Technology

Embed intelligent sensing technologies for seamless data-driven and AI-guided experiences



Me + We

Equally support individual + team work

While some believe the primary reason people want to work in the office is for group activities, people say they also want the ability to focus and work in a professional environment.

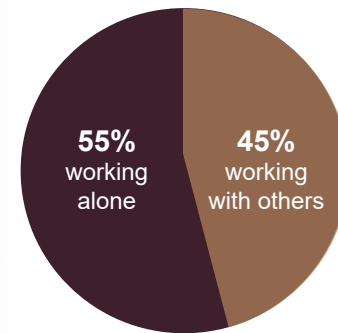
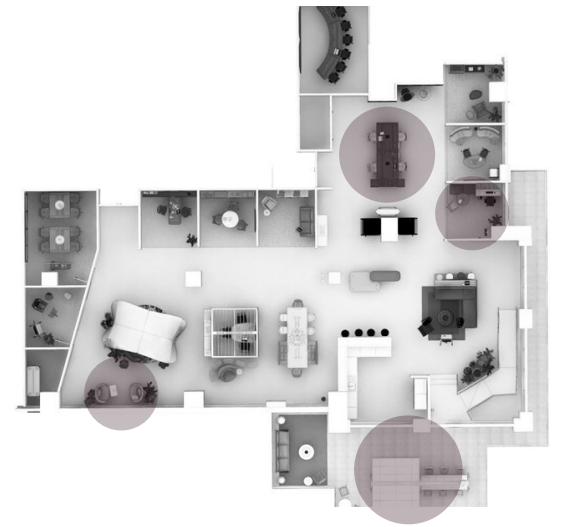
Workplace design needs to balance the needs of teams and individuals by creating neighborhoods where both collaboration and focused work can ebb and flow.



An intentional mix of shared and individual experiences in a relaxed, outdoor setting



One-on-one space functions for individual focus work or a quick touch base



Allow for quick shifts between working alone and together

Most workers say they spend 55% of their day working alone and 45% with others, making it impractical to plan an office for collaboration only and expect people to simply go home to focus.

Balance 4 Key Space Types

Personal

Collaborative

Learning

Social



Combined collaboration + personal workspaces within a private office provide work mode flexibility

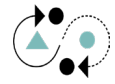
Balancing Individual + Collaborative Needs

The WorkBetterLab incorporated a balance of individual and collaborative spaces. Visitors had the opportunity to experience various settings tailored to both focused work and team collaboration. For instance, private booths or pods provided individual concentration commingled with open lounge and huddle spaces designed for group discussions or brainstorming sessions.



West Elm Work Greenpoint
Table, Bench Credenza,
Mobile Pedestal + Sterling
Chair, Steelcase Flex Acoustic
Boundary + Markerboard

Providing individual settings within open space serves to promote inclusivity for those that are stimulated by working in active environments



Fixed-to-Fluid

Design for greater flexibility + mobility

At work, change is constant, sometimes in small ways as teams add more people to the table or in significant ways when the the group requires multiple collaboration spaces.

Spaces in the new hybrid neighborhood are **modular, movable** and **multi-use**: they can support different types of work and be reconfigured or modified easily.

Flexible architectural elements activate the workspace + support autonomy

Emphasizing flexibility and mobility, the WorkBetterLab was designed to adapt to a variety of activities and work styles - empowering individuals to choose how they work best and easily transition between modes. These adaptable spaces featured mobile furniture, enabling users to reconfigure their environment on the fly.



Furniture on casters can be easily moved or re-oriented to adapt to the rapidly changing work activities

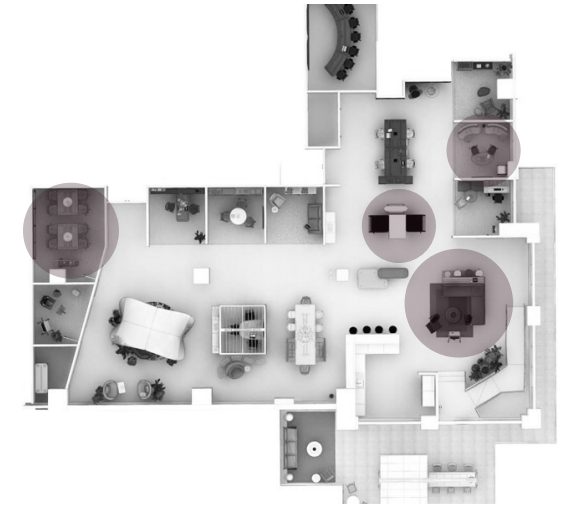


Click or scan to explore more examples of the WorkBetter Design Principles



People are not static Work is not static

A workplace can't be static if companies want their many stakeholders to thrive



Multi-modal Spaces Support Different Work Modes

Collaboration

Socializing

Rejuvenation

Learning

Focusing in the Presence of Others



Smith System Flowform Table, Numbers Chairs, Flowform Learning Lounge, Orbit Table + Cascade Storage

Equipping learning spaces with a range of easily movable furniture enables users to configure the setting to best respond to the task at hand



Established & Sons Grid Lounge, Lucio Chair + Heidi Stool, Blu Dot Bumper Ottoman, Coalesse Free Stand Table, Steelcase Flex Media Cart, Moooi Blended Rug



Individual pods for privacy in the open plan

Modular + Mobile

Fixed-to-fluid furniture and configurations might be modular, allowing for quick rearrangement to accommodate changing needs throughout the day.

These elements include:

- furniture
- power
- technology
- space division

This fluidity in the workplace design encourages agility and responsiveness to the evolving demands of work.

Open + Enclosed

More enclosed “Me” + more open “We” spaces

Privacy in the office surfaced as an employee expectation post-pandemic. Previously, people struggled with significantly open office plans but after working from home they are even more sensitive to the need for control over their privacy. Great workspaces offer a blend of private and public spaces that makes them diverse and dynamic - the kind of place people choose to work in.

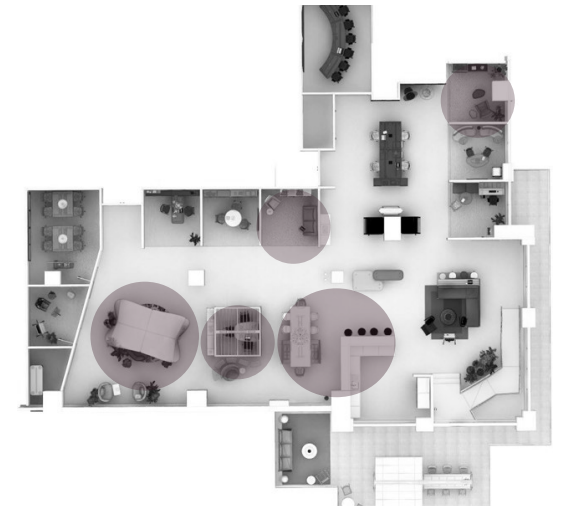


Learn more about the role of privacy for employee wellbeing in the Steelcase Work Better Magazine

Steelcase Overhead Tent, Bolia Grace Sofa, Cloud Lounge Chair, Island Coffee table + Pouf, Viccarbe Burin Table, West Elm Nolan Table, Moooi Rug: Menagerie of Extinct Animals

Lounge collaboration space offers relaxed postures supported by a sense of privacy

It's time to reimagine the places people work



More open team spaces with flexible boundaries

Options for privacy - such as phone booths, meeting pods or flexible screens - can easily mingle within team spaces in open lounge or collaborative zones. Flexible boundaries ensure a balance of space types, meeting the individual need for both solitude and social interaction.



Respite space offers employees and guests a quiet destination with relaxed posture

Options for individual spaces with a range of privacy + control

The WorkBetterLab featured a blend of open and enclosed spaces to cater to diverse preferences and activities. Enclosed “me” spaces provide privacy for tasks requiring deep focus or confidentiality, while open “we” spaces foster collaboration and team interaction.



Collaboration spaces with no technology offer a quiet escape for individual work or coffee chats



Viccarbe Trestle Table, Torii Benches, Quadra, Bolia Seed, West Elm Kent Chairs

Open spaces lend to organic social gathering and collaboration



Orangebox Air25 Pod, Steelcase Verlay Table, Coalesse Marien152 Chairs

An enclosed pod is easily deployable anywhere in open spaces to create a huddle meeting room

Braiding Digital + Physical

Enhance the human experience through technology

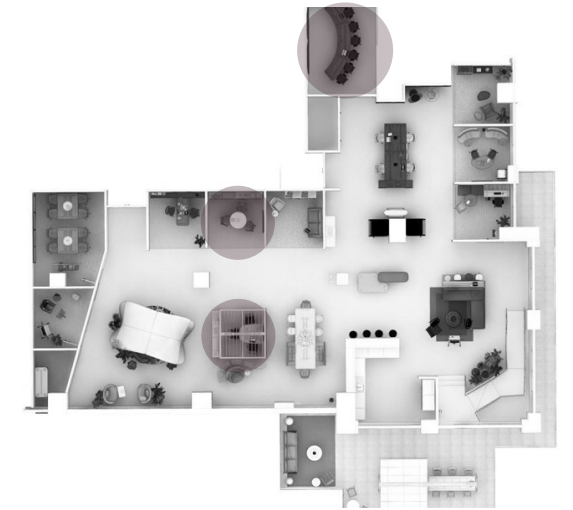
Video meetings are a new norm in the office and everyone needs to see and be seen, hear and be heard. With fewer assigned spaces, online booking systems can help people find a place to call their own, even if it's just for a day.

Ease-of-use is a critical component to technology, but most employees report that the biggest issue with their current video meeting spaces is that the space is too small or uncomfortable.

Hybrid work happens where space and technology meet



Supporting a front row experience from Microsoft Teams - remote participants are easily viewed while sharing content, allowing for an equitable in-room and remote experience



Hybrid Collaboration Goals

Equity

Strive for equal experiences on both sides of the camera

Engagement

Design for everyone's ability to participate and contribute

Ease

Create a seamless flow between different types of work and experiences

Equitable access in a hybrid environment

Embracing technology, the WorkBetterLab ensured that physical and digital elements complemented each other, creating an inclusive environment where both in-person and remote participants could contribute effectively.

The WorkBetterLab was designed to integrate technology seamlessly into the workspace, enhancing connectivity and collaboration. Meeting spaces were equipped with digital tools and interactive displays to facilitate engaging presentations and remote participation. Sensing technologies were embedded into the design for seamless data-driven and artificial intelligence-guided experiences.



Hybrid huddle room for small in-person groups to content share and engage with virtual participants



Multi-modal room for small team meetings or private office application - hybrid collaboration technology provides the opportunity for greater engagement by enabling remote participants to have a seat at the table



Raleigh WorkBetterLab

The Raleigh WorkBetter Lab exemplified the power of collaboration, innovation and user-centered design in creating next-generation workspaces that prioritize employee well-being, collaboration, and productivity. By embracing the Work Better research and applying it to an exploratory showroom, Storr and Steelcase were able to demonstrate how these spaces work to pave the way for a new era of workplace design in the Triangle.

Client Impact

More than 1,200 professionals representing 342 organizations participated in consultations and events. The WorkBetterLab offered visitors hands-on experience to test research-backed products and experience their application in space.

Community Impact

Storr and Steelcase shared the WorkBetterLab with the community by hosting events such as networking engagements, industry forums for healthcare/educational professionals and local art exhibitions featuring creative works by Raleigh's architects, designers and industry professionals.



Enjoying the Social Hub



2024 Award Winner

Most Creative Local
Marketing Campaign



Education Symposium: Designing Spaces for Immersive Learning



Taste of Viccarbe

**The new era of
hybrid work is here**
Are you ready?



We're With You
every step of the way

Schedule a consultation
with our experts today
and see how we can
transform your business
into the new era of work.



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What We Do

Our portfolio of workplace services are designed to enable our clients to seamlessly manage all facility needs through one comprehensive provider, ensuring efficiency and peace of mind.

Our offerings include:

- Workplace Consulting
- Design Services
- Project Coordination
- Installation
- Relocation
- Inventory Management
- New + PreOwned Furniture