

The 2025 Work Trends Report

- ✓ Key takeaways from 2024
- ✓ Predictions for 2025

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Framery's annual work trends & design report

An analysis of the work trends we predicted in 2024, and a discussion of what we foresee in 2025.

What we predicted about offices in 2024

- 1 The office needs to provide the core basics for modern work
- 2 Offices will have a distraction epidemic
- 3 RTO mandates will become a thing of the past
- 4 Office design will include more flexibility
- 5 Focus spaces will be the number one office design trend

What we expect in 2025

- 1 Hybrid work will shift focus from "me" to "we"
- 2 Companies will take more responsibility for employee experience
- 3 Sustainable manufacturing and design will take center stage
- 4 Technology will finally improve enough to eliminate technostress
- 5 Office design will prioritize task-based functionality

About this report

At the end of every year, we share our thoughts about workplace trends to expect in the coming year, and look back on our predictions from the previous year to examine how the ever-evolving nature of work has unfolded.

Building on these insights, we offer a glimpse into the trends that will shape the future of work, and their impact on workers, workplaces, and businesses everywhere.



What we predicted about offices in 2024

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- 2 Offices will have a distraction epidemic
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1 The office needs to provide the core basics for modern work

WE SAID

That offices would shift towards a more personalized and pragmatic approach to workplace design - focusing on core amenities that directly support worker needs. Offices would start to learn from the adaptability of home setups, prioritizing comfort, functionality, and environments that foster productivity and well-being.

WE SAW

That the hybrid work debate remains unresolved - highlighting how workplaces still struggle to create environments that support both productivity and comfort as effectively as home offices. While some progress has been made, the average office setup still falls short of offering a compelling alternative, underscoring a gap between office-based amenities and the high adaptability found in home workspaces.

Our key takeaways

THE INDIVIDUAL REMAINS CENTRAL TO WORKPLACE STRATEGIES

In 2024, the primary emphasis was on addressing the needs, preferences, and priorities of individual employees, especially as they navigate remote and hybrid work. This "earned right" to flexibility underscored a shift towards individual empowerment in choosing work environments.

SHIFTING AWAY FROM INDIVIDUAL-ONLY FOCUS

However, it's becoming evident that solely focusing on individual needs may not be sustainable for organizations. Catering to the unique preferences of every employee can strain resources and diminish cohesion, suggesting a need for more balanced approaches.

WE NEED A RETURN TO PRACTICAL WORKPLACE STRATEGIES

What's needed now is a return to balanced norms where job appropriateness and task relevance take precedence. A shift toward "we" and "task-based" frameworks—centered on regular workdays rather than experience-driven perks—will ensure workplaces serve both organizational needs and employees' professional goals.

2 Offices will have a distraction epidemic

WE SAID

That office infrastructure would shift to better accommodate workers. Rising levels of distraction highlight a structural issue beyond the reach of individual employee efforts - requiring a systemic approach to improve conditions for workers.

WE SAW

This prediction materialize through a growing emphasis on "focus work" and spaces specifically designed to support it. The discussion around neurodiversity and inclusive design further supports the need for distraction-free environments. And the rising demand for one-person pods dedicated to focused work clearly indicated that conventional office spaces were falling short.

Our key takeaways

PRIVATE SPACES REMAIN ESSENTIAL

Private spaces continue to be a critical element in modern work environments. This ongoing demand presents a clear opportunity to improve workplaces by supporting inclusivity and diverse work needs.

THE CORE BASICS MATTER MOST

The first step in creating optimal workplaces must be getting the basics right before adding more advanced features. Foundational elements, like minimizing distractions and enhancing focus, are key to promoting both productivity and well-being.

HOMES STILL SET THE STANDARD

Homes continue to set the bar for workplace comfort and functionality. The ability to focus, maintain personal well-being, and be one's authentic self is easier in the home office - underscoring the work still needed to align office spaces with these fundamental needs.

3 RTO mandates will become a thing of the past

WE SAID

That the office needed to provide a better working experience through thoughtful design - rather than through mandatory return-to-office (RTO) mandates. We predicted a shift towards creating supportive and attractive office spaces that make the office an ideal choice without having to enforce attendance.

WE SAW

That, contrary to our expectations, RTO mandates remained prevalent, with major companies like Amazon continuing to push for employees to return to the office. We may have been too optimistic in assuming that the evolution of workplaces would progress quickly enough to make remote work less appealing.

Our key takeaways

THE PACE OF CHANGE WAS SLOWER THAN EXPECTED

While we weren't entirely off the mark with this prediction, progress unfolded more slowly than anticipated. The shift towards more adaptive work environments was slower than we predicted.

REMOTE WORK AS AN "EARNED RIGHT"

The conversation continued to center on individual preferences, with remote work being viewed by many as an "earned right" rather than an alternative or complement to in-office work. This highlights the rising employee expectations for flexibility as an essential part of modern work.

THE INDIVIDUAL VS. EMPLOYER DEBATE HELD BACK PROGRESS

The prevailing "individual vs. employer" dynamic overshadowed task- and organization-specific needs. For meaningful progress to occur, this focus must shift towards aligning workplace design with broader organizational goals and the relevance of tasks, not just individual preferences.

4 Office design will include more flexibility

WE SAID

That in order for offices to survive, they needed to become destination spaces that prioritize flexibility and adaptability. We predicted that office design would shift towards creating purpose-driven, flexible spaces that cater to employees' evolving needs.

WE SAW

Some of this shift - but more in terms of flexibility and flashy design than with a clear focus on purpose-driven spaces. These spaces should enable employees to work for longer periods with dependable, reliable peripherals, providing the functionality needed for focused work.

Our key takeaways

SUCCESSFUL WORKPLACES WILL FOCUS ON PURPOSE-DRIVEN DESIGN

Going forward, successful workplaces will thrive by catering to task-relevant needs rather than just offering flexibility. Design will be driven by purpose, ensuring that environments are tailored to support specific activities and workflows.

VIDEOCONFERENCING SPACES WILL BE A PRIORITY

Spaces for videoconferencing spaces must be properly equipped, easily accessible, effortless to use, and of high quality. Dependability in these areas will become a critical factor for fostering collaboration and supporting productivity in hybrid work models.

JOB-APPROPRIATE SPACES ARE STILL MISSING

Despite the vision of agile, mobile employees, there remains a gap in spaces tailored to job-specific needs. Without these, employees may struggle with individual performance and overall efficiency.

5 Focus spaces will be the number one office design trend

WE SAID

That offices need to be designed to help tackle distractions. Focus spaces would emerge as a leading design trend, with companies recognizing the growing need for private, distraction-free areas that support complex, concentrated work.

WE SAW

A marked increase in the demand for quiet, dedicated spaces where employees can focus and concentrate without interruptions. A noticeable shift towards private and soundproofed areas responded to the need for spaces that enable deep work.

Our key takeaways

DEMAND FOR PRIVACY INCREASED

There was a noticeable uptick in demand for private and semi-private pods or soundproof areas where employees can focus without interruptions. This shift reflects a growing need for spaces designed to facilitate uninterrupted work and support productivity.

FOCUS SPACES STILL STRUGGLED TO INTEGRATE EFFECTIVELY

Many offices struggled to integrate private spaces effectively into the overall office layout. As a result, focus spaces became more of a specialized feature, rather than a core part of everyday office environments.

The office of the future **must evolve** from simply being a space **where** people work - and become a dynamic environment that supports **how** people work.

What we expect in 2025

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Hybrid work will shift focus from "me" to "we"

Hybrid work models are shifting from a focus on individual employee preferences to a more collaborative, team-focused approach, driven by the growing realization that the balance between in-office and remote work needs to align with organizational goals rather than individual desires.

- Hybrid teams will coordinate "office days" into their schedules to optimize collaboration opportunities and focus on team goals and objectives.
- Workspaces will support both focus and teamwork, with adaptable layouts that meet the changing needs of teams.
- Office designs will balance quiet zones with collaborative areas to optimize productivity and team performance.



The impact of a shifting approach towards hybrid work

IMPACT ON WORKERS

Employees will tailor schedules and working location based on the needs of their specific teams and tasks, enhancing collaboration and productivity. The shift will move from prioritizing personal preference to a more collective approach where workers align their work environment with the team's goals.

IMPACT ON WORKPLACES

The priority will shift from offering individualized workspaces to providing environments that support team efficiency and collaboration. Offices will need to create flexible spaces that support both individual focus and collaborative work, allowing easy transitions between in-office and remote work.

IMPACT ON BUSINESSES

Businesses will need to invest in solutions that optimize both remote and in-office work experiences, enhancing communication, collaboration, and efficiency across hybrid teams. Hybrid models will prioritize effective collaboration, rather than on the preferences of any one individual.

2

Companies will take more responsibility for employee experience

A broader focus on employee well-being will reshape office environments, with a strong emphasis on both physical and mental health. However, what will matter most is ensuring that the basic, foundational elements of well-being are addressed before any added luxuries or perks are introduced.

- Office design will prioritize ergonomic furniture and quiet spaces, creating spaces that reduce stress and allow employees to work comfortably and effectively as the foundation of well-being over surface-level perks.
- Practical solutions, like adjustable desks and soundproof pods, will support physical and mental health, enabling employees to work comfortably and recharge.
- Wellness initiatives will go beyond just perks and offer practical tools and mental health support to create a sustainable approach to well-being.



The impact of prioritizing the employee experience

IMPACT ON WORKERS

Employees will have access to spaces that support physical health and mental well-being, with an emphasis on making sure the basics are addressed first. The focus will be on reducing distractions and stressors, allowing workers to thrive without the need for external fixes or added benefits.

IMPACT ON WORKPLACES

Workplaces will be designed to encourage healthy behaviors, from physical movement to mental relaxation. Design changes will focus on making sure that employees have the foundational support needed to be successful, such as ergonomic furniture and quiet areas for rest.

IMPACT ON BUSINESSES

Companies that prioritize employee well-being by getting the basic things right will likely see increased productivity, engagement, and overall job satisfaction. The biggest returns will come from these “boring” but critical changes. By reducing distractions, supporting mental health, and ensuring physical comfort, businesses will see lower turnover, higher retention, and a stronger sense of overall employee satisfaction.



Sustainable manufacturing and design will take center stage

Sustainability will play a significant role in office design, with a strong push towards reducing environmental impact and creating eco-friendly workplaces. While this focus is already well-established, this is a long-term shift that will define industry leaders in the coming years. Companies that adopt sustainable practices will be seen as leaders in their industries, and the message is clear: doing the right thing for the planet is the new standard.

- Office designs will prioritize sustainability through energy efficiency, waste reduction, and renewable energy, making sustainability integral to infrastructure and daily operations.
- Workplaces will be designed with materials that are recyclable or made from renewable resources, making sustainability a core component of both office infrastructure and daily operations.
- Biophilic elements like plants and natural lighting will enhance both environmental impact and employee well-being, creating eco-friendly workplaces that positively influence the work experience while improving the building's environmental footprint.



The impact of a sustainable workplace

IMPACT ON WORKERS

Employees will work in environments that reflect sustainable values, fostering a sense of pride and responsibility in their workplace. Employers who prioritize sustainability will attract top talent - and enhance employee satisfaction and engagement by aligning with personal values.

IMPACT ON WORKPLACES

Offices will integrate energy-efficient lighting, renewable materials, and waste-reducing systems into their design. Green certifications, such as LEED, will become an essential part of the workplace, ensuring that buildings contribute to a healthier planet and are in line with evolving environmental standards.

IMPACT ON BUSINESSES

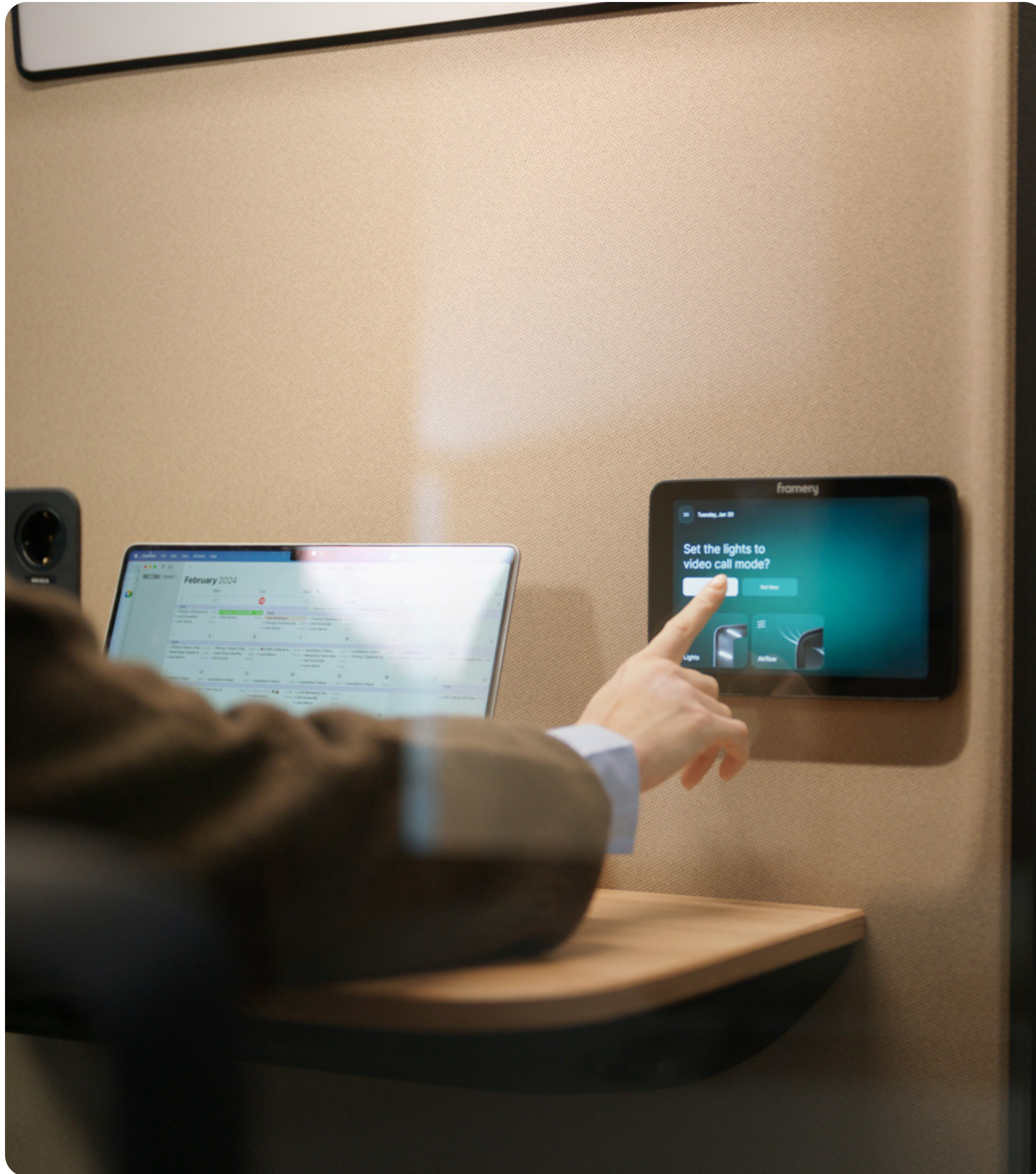
Companies that adopt sustainable practices will improve their reputation and align with customer expectations around corporate responsibility. While sustainability may seem like a given at this point, it will be businesses that truly integrate it into their DNA through design, operations, and culture that will stand out and lead the way.



Technology will finally improve enough to eliminate technostress

Smart technologies in the workplace will become a key component in improving the working lives of people. The focus will shift from simply introducing new technologies to ensuring that these systems are intuitive, effortless, and seamlessly integrated into daily work routines without causing technostress. The true challenge moving forward will be making workplace technologies so easy to use that they become second nature - not another tool to manage.

- Smart technologies will eliminate technostress by enabling personalized work environments, optimizing comfort, efficiency, and space usage through dynamic adjustments to individual preferences.
- Automated environments will adjust automatically to provide employees with tailored resources for efficient work.
- Tools that track workspace occupancy will help businesses maximize space utilization and ensure access to private spaces.



The impact of eliminating technostress

IMPACT ON WORKERS

Workspaces will anticipate and respond to the diverse needs of employees. However, the true value will lie in how effortlessly these technologies integrate into daily routines, allowing employees to focus on their tasks without being distracted by managing complex systems or switching between multiple apps.

IMPACT ON WORKPLACES

Workplaces will incorporate easy to use and intuitive technologies -integrated smoothly into the workday to avoid friction or overload. These data-driven technologies will optimize space usage, improve workflow, and ensure a personalized experience for each employee.

IMPACT ON BUSINESSES

Companies will see increased operational efficiency and employee satisfaction as smart technologies improve the workplace experience and optimize resources. The seamless integration of technology will support employee needs without being intrusive - allowing businesses to focus on improving the overall employee experience through tech that feels invisible yet incredibly effective.

5

Office design will prioritize task-based functionality

Spaces will evolve to be more task-specific - emphasizing functionality over purely aesthetic design. Environments will support the work employees need to do, reducing unnecessary complexity or distractions, so the space becomes a tool for success - rather than a source of stress.

- Workspaces will be designed to support specific tasks, such as deep work, collaboration, or virtual communication.
- Designated areas will be allocated for different types of work - creating a clear separation between activities to optimize focus and collaboration.
- Dependable, easy-to-use devices and technology will be integrated into spaces, such as smart meeting room technology that enables seamless virtual communication at the press of a button.



The impact of task-based office design

IMPACT ON WORKERS

Employees will have access to personalized spaces designed to fit their tasks - whether it's for focused work, collaboration, or virtual meetings. The emphasis on task-specific functionality will reduce stress and friction, particularly in areas like technology, where seamless, intuitive devices allow employees to dive straight into their work without disruptions or the anxiety of complicated setups.

IMPACT ON WORKPLACES

Office designs will evolve to cater to different work styles, such as quiet zones for individual work, collaborative areas for teams, and virtual meeting spaces for remote communication. Workspaces will be streamlined for efficiency, ensuring that each environment supports its intended function without unnecessary distractions or difficulties.

IMPACT ON BUSINESSES

Businesses will see an increase in productivity as workspaces are better aligned with the tasks employees need to complete. Streamlined, task-specific designs will also reduce clutter and optimize space, creating a more efficient and organized workplace, and easy-to-use technology will reduce the anxiety that often comes from dealing with unreliable or complex tools.

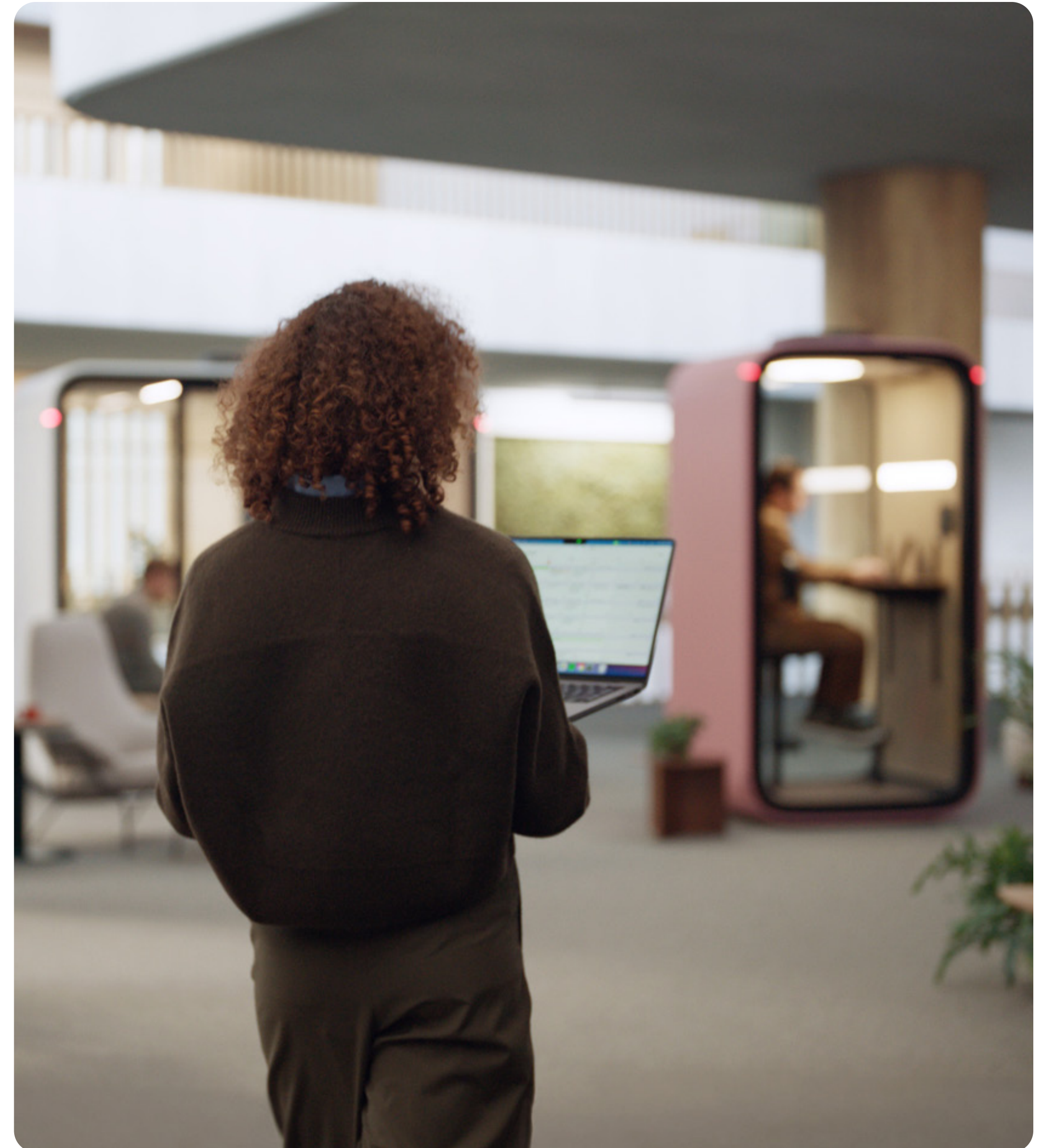
Preparing for the new era of work

WE FORESEE A SHIFT TOWARDS FUNCTIONAL, SEAMLESS WORKSPACES THAT PRIORITIZE EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING AND EFFICIENCY

Looking ahead, we anticipate a redefined approach to office design, where sustainability, well-being, and task-specific functionality converge to create spaces that support the actual work employees do. The focus will move away from unnecessary complexity toward simplicity, where everything in the office has a clear purpose and serves to enhance productivity, collaboration, and overall employee satisfaction.

The office will no longer just be a place for work - it will be a dynamic, adaptable environment that seamlessly integrates technology, sustainability, and thoughtful design. We envision a future where businesses embrace flexible, task-oriented spaces that meet the needs of diverse workstyles, creating a seamless experience that fosters both personal and team success.

In this future, the office becomes a place where employees can thrive, free from distractions and stress, equipped with the right tools to do their best work. And as organizations prioritize these core basics, they will pave the way for a more productive, engaged, and sustainable workforce.



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