

Take The Stress Out Of Your Workspace

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Enjoy mountain and city views at Firmspace.

Three tips for making every day your most productive yet.

By FIRMSPACE

Like a new crush or the latest iPhone upgrade, co-working spaces launched onto the scene with a host of enticing promises that got our hearts a-thumping: Office space that isn't a desk in the corner of my apartment? Count me in. The opportunity to network with other entrepreneurs on a daily basis? Yes, please. Free kombucha? Cool!

But now that the relationship has matured and grown familiar—a recent count found more than 200 co-working offices in Denver alone — we're starting to notice that things aren't as perfect as they seem.

For one, shared workspaces aren't ideal for every profession. Lawyers, wealth managers, and CEOs, among others, may need secure workplaces (think: sound-masking technology and privacy screens) and sizeable, smartly decorated conference rooms for client meetings. What's more, as experts increasingly study these newfangled modes of work, we're learning more about the negative effects of open floor plans on productivity and stress. Researchers have found that open offices can decrease productivity by 15 percent (not to mention the increased likelihood of catching a cold from your desk neighbor), thereby increasing stress

levels. What's more, after an interruption—like, say, a loud, multi-person conversation at the desk beside you or an announcement that a new keg has been tapped in the kegerator—it takes an average of 25 minutes to return to your original task.

Destress! Take time for yourself in a quiet corner.

That's where the next generation of co-working venues come in. Take Firmspace, an Austin-based, luxury office that's aimed at senior-level executives and opened its first Denver location in October (monthly fees start at \$750). A tour around the chic and inviting LoDo office offers some replicable ideas for creating your own workspace that avoids co-working's pitfalls and, as the new year begins, will help you assemble a stress-free work environment so 2019 can be your most productive year yet.

Dedicate a space to work.

Your kitchen is for eating. Your family room is for relaxing. Your office should be for working. Having a dedicated work area—even in your home—can help you separate your job from the rest of your life. After all, work-life balance isn't just a gimmick.

Concierge services allow you to focus on your business.

Firmspace only offers private workplaces, in part because alone time is vital. You may not be in the mood to talk to other people, or you may need space to think about a big idea. "Private offices give you the freedom to network or to socialize," says Sarah Newson, Director of Marketing for Firmspace. "Unlike open floor plans, which are full of endless distractions, you can close your door and focus on the task at hand in a quiet, productive workspace that's all your own."

Focus on your health.

If you feel good, your work will reflect it. Invest in equipment—like ergonomic chairs and adjustable stand-up desks—that helps you succeed at your job but also keeps you healthy.

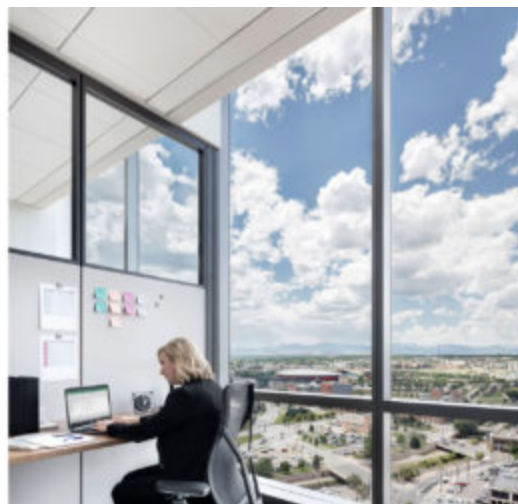
Set up your desk so you're near a window or can otherwise access natural light. Being able to see the sun has been shown to improve sleep and overall quality of life.



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Firmspace offers mood-boosting perks like nutrient-rich snacks and access to an in-building gym, 24 hours a day (hello, lunch break workouts!). Work-from-homers may not have the same concierge-provided amenities, but they do have the flexibility to create their own schedules, and they can recreate the C-level executive life by making sure to stock the fridge with healthy nibbles and instituting a gym regimen.

On busy days, it's still important to take a break from even the most well-designed chair. Walkability is always a factor when Firmspace looks for new locations because fresh air and time to stretch your legs is important. Those not living the downtown, co-working life can still get the same benefits by going for a walk around the block; consider instituting a stroll as your pre-breakfast or post-lunch routine every day.

Keep it simple.

Decision fatigue is a real thing. (Have you seen how many granola bars they sell at the grocery store these days?) By offering weekly catered lunches, mail services, guest accommodation, and other executive concierge services, professional workplaces like Firmspace help you limit your decision-making to the essentials, like which stocks to trade or how to let go of an underperforming client.

Common spaces allow the option to socialize outside your private office.

We're guessing your significant other isn't available (or willing) to play butler, but you can still set yourself—and your business—up for success by streamlining your day, your week, and even your year. Eat the same lunch every afternoon; block social media on your devices in the mornings when your brain is at its freshest; develop a morning routine that leaves you feeling ready to conquer the day; find a dry cleaner that will pick up and drop off at your house or workplace. The fewer small decisions you have to make every day, the more time—and energy—you have to focus on the big, weighty questions that are really worth your brain power.

Ready to learn more about how Firmspace Denver can help you achieve your business goals? Set up a 30-minute tour online or by emailing denver@firmspace.com.

1401 Lawrence St., 720-325-1191