

'Office of the future' environment study

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Mayo Clinic endocrinologist James Levine, M.D., Ph.D., has continued his research in environment-changing innovations with a six-month study of a real-life office that was re-engineered to increase daily physical activity or NEAT (non-exercise activity thermogenesis).

The study began in late 2007 and ended in 2008 at SALO, LLC, a Minneapolis-based financial staffing firm. Of the 45 employee volunteers involved in the scientific study, 18 were studied for weight loss and other changes.

Re-engineering included:

- Removing chairs and traditional desk seating
- Introducing walking tracks
- Educating and encouraging staff to conduct walking meetings
- Replacing traditional phones with mobile sets
- Adding desks attached to treadmills
- Introducing games in the workplace
- Providing high-tech activity monitors
- Advising staff about nutrition

Results:

- The 18 individuals lost a total of 156 pounds, 143 of that in body fat.
- Individuals lost an average of 8.8 pounds -- 90 percent of that was fat. Triglycerides decreased by an average of 37 percent.
- The nine participants who had expressed a desire to lose weight lost an

average of 15.4 pounds.

Another key finding -- no productivity was lost due to the new environment. In fact, company officials say revenue rose nearly 10 percent during the first three months of the study, and the company recorded its highest-ever monthly revenue in January 2008 -- the study's midpoint.

This "office of the future" is a functional environment that can also enhance weight loss and maintain health.

Source: Mayo Clinic

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