

How to make your workplace a healthier one

22 April 2019, by Len Canter, Healthday Reporter



(HealthDay)—Even if you love your job, your workspace might not love you back. Because people may spend 40 or more hours on the job, often at a desk, all that exposure to less-than-inspiring surroundings can negatively influence health.

While some people suffer emotional and physical problems from a stressful job, for others, it's the [physical environment](#) that can trigger back pain, sleep troubles or even breathing problems.

Since you spend so much time at work, it makes sense to do what you can to improve your workspace. Researchers at Central Michigan University found that surrounding yourself with elements from nature can boost your mood and job satisfaction, and even act as a buffer to stress.

At the top of the to-do list is getting more exposure to sunlight. Without it, workers are more likely to feel depressed, have lower [job satisfaction](#) and less commitment to their company. Having natural sunlight from a window is extremely helpful, but it's also important to get outside during the day. Being

in direct contact with the sun's rays had the greatest positive influence on workers, researchers found.

If your options for getting sunlight are limited, bring nature into your work area with plants. Look for a shade-loving variety if [natural light](#) inside the office is limited. Philodendron, pothos, ivy and dieffenbachia are all hardy, low-light plants readily available at garden centers and by floral delivery services. Need zero-maintenance options? Try hanging posters or photos and using a screensaver with images from nature.

In a separate study, researchers at Cornell University found that upbeat background music is also motivating. It can boost mood and prompt workers to make decisions that are good for the entire team, especially if they're able to choose the tunes themselves.

More information: Read more about the [Central Michigan University study](#) on the website of the Greater Good Science Center at UC Berkeley.

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