

Why daylight matters

- Access to daylight reduces stress and increases productivity
- Workers overwhelmingly prefer working near windows
- Natural light provides variety and stimulation during the day
- Tapping natural light as a resource reduces energy use
- Natural light is glare free

Haworth solutions

- Moxie® was designed for both privacy and access to daylight
- Toppers replace upholstery with translucent materials
- Translucent Stack Pads, Toppers, Banners and Canopies give a sense of enclosure without blocking light
- Moxie's open base options further lighten up open plan layouts



Daylight

Access to daylight

Human beings are naturally drawn to windows and light. Even if the average person can't scientifically explain why daylight affects our moods and energy levels, we know that it does. Not only are we all familiar with what's known as the "winter blahs," a growing recognition of the clinical diagnosis of seasonal affective disorder (SAD) has been well covered in popular media.

It follows naturally that daylight—or a lack of daylight—affects people in the workplace. As research is beginning to more clearly show, a greater dose of daylight in the workplace may be critical in reducing levels of stress and increasing performance levels of employees.

Workers and researchers alike say daylight is preferred

One study on employee preferences reported not only that the overwhelming majority of workers prefer an office with a window, but that 73% of those surveyed considered windows “extremely important.” People are drawn to windows for a variety of reasons, from the natural light and views to the instant access to information about time and weather.

But why is this draw to windows so intrinsic? Daylight has a powerful influence on people because it affects the chronobiological system, which is responsible for regulating our sleep/wake cycles. Scientists believe humankind’s evolution in a natural rather than built environment is responsible for our sensitivity to daylight. Our preference for views also is traced to early humans’ dependence on being able to see without being seen, which was key to survival.

Daylight and views have clear benefits

Research suggests the main benefits of natural light are psychological—it raises comfort levels and reduces stress. But these psychological improvements have broad effects on everything from productivity and physical health to mood and behavior, regardless of an individual’s gender, position or tasks.

Reduced stress and a greater level of comfort affect both productivity and performance. A study of daylight in schools showed that students with the most daylight in their classrooms progressed 20% to 26% faster on math and reading tests and were found to have 7% to 18% higher scores than students in rooms with the least daylight.

There is also a sizeable and growing body of evidence that giving workers a view outdoors, especially a view with natural elements, is beneficial. Research shows employees with a natural view exhibit less job pressure, more job satisfaction, fewer ailments and headaches, and recover from stressful situations more quickly.

Bringing daylight into the workplace with Moxie

Increased productivity and employee retention have become compelling economic reasons to bring more daylight into the workplace. Daylight in a workspace is measured by the amount of natural sunlight penetrating an individual’s work environment, as experienced from a seated position. Natural light coming directly through windows or filtering through translucent materials both grant what’s defined as access to daylight.

Because it is rarely possible to include a window in every workstation, Moxie offers several elements that allow daylight to filter into the workstation while giving workers a comfortable sense of enclosure and privacy. Moxie’s translucent mesh and Lumicor Toppers, for instance, add visual height and privacy without blocking light. Banners, available in several heights and depths to suit various applications, are light-conductive yet add privacy at the floor or table level. Moxie’s Stack Pads, available in single or double pane glass, translucent materials or an open structure, also allow natural light to penetrate a space, creating the feel of a window while maintaining acoustical privacy. Finally, Moxie Canopies, which mount directly to the panel or to a Topper, offer a sense of enclosure in an open space. Available in a scrim material, they allow light penetration while offering elements of user privacy and providing useful landmarks for way-finding in open plan layouts.



Resources:

- Butler and Biner, 1989
- Heschong Mahone Group, 1999
- Kaplan and Kaplan, 1978
- Wotten, Blackwell, Wallis and Barkow, 1982