

EisnerAmper's New Space

One Logan HQ mixes the old with the new

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EisnerAmper's new offices at One Logan Square in Center City is absent of something that has become in vogue when it comes to newly designed space.

It doesn't have any of those cozy areas where a couch or a grouping of oversized chairs are arranged for employees to hang out and collaborate. There are no little pockets where someone can plop down with their laptop to venture away from their more traditional workspace or co-workers. The lack of such spaces makes EisnerAmper's offices fall into what might be called the old school genre. It was refreshing to see and done deliberately.

"We are an accounting firm," said [Lori Reiner](#), partner in charge of EisnerAmper's Philadelphia practice.

Reiner didn't say that apologetically, either but to point out the obvious. This is a place where accountants and other employees go to their cubicles to stay focused and get their work done. A series of collaborative areas may have just ended up being wasted space here.

Reiner's point is well-taken and an example of what might be a little push back in



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The accounting firm's new lobby is contemporary with clean lines.

how offices have been designed over the last decade. An increasing body of research is finding that so-called space utilization that helped companies cut back on the amount of space they lease and helped spawn hot desks and collaborative spaces may have gone too far and design may be trending back to providing employees with more individual space.

Let's face it. Open environments where people work on top of each other can be loud, distracting and, in some respects, uncomfortable when there's nothing to shield you from noise, food odors or co-workers' annoying habits.

"Our research now suggests that once again, people feel a pressing need for more privacy, not only to do heads-down work but to cope with the intensity of how work happens today," according to a Harvard Business Review article from October 2014 called: Balancing "We" and "Me": The Best Collaborative Spaces Also Support Solitude. "The open plan is just one of the culprits assaulting our privacy. The increased focus on collaborative work means we're rarely alone, and the ubiquity of mobile devices means we're always accessible. In light of these pressures, it's not surprising that the number of people who say they can't concentrate at their desk has increased by 16 percent since 2008, and the number of those who don't have access to quiet places to do focused work is up by 13 percent."

Some companies have started to respond by incorporating screens and other devices to give employees some privacy when they want it. All of this doesn't negate the overwhelming benefits of collaborating and giving employees options of how and where they feel like working from one day to the next.

In EisnerAmper's space, the firm tried to find a "balance" in providing some spaces where employees can gather, Reiner said. To that end, there is a large kitchen with a dining area that has a variety of seating areas as well as small social areas on each floor. There are places where work can get done, such as cubicles that don't have super low partitions, and small meeting rooms. It has a very mobile workforce that spends a lot of time out of the office with clients and that aspect was also taken into consideration.

It also incorporated a large training area for clients and employees as well as private

offices for client meetings and other administrative work. There are no corner offices nor file rooms but there is a formal boardroom and quiet booths.

So far, there are 160 people working from the 42,000-square-foot offices on the 29th and 30th floor of the office tower and there's room to grow.

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