

CITED:
 "PEOPLE AREN'T
 AGAINST YOU;
 THEY ARE FOR
 THEMSELVES."
 —UNKNOWN

Vuja De: The Disruptive Workplace

NeoCon 2015 played host to the debut of a fifth seminar by the inspiring Gensler duo **Sven Govaars** and **Dean Strombom**, titled *Vuja De: Disruptive Workplace*. This new chapter addresses the concept of a disruptive workplace, or one that empowers individuals to choose where, when and how they work by disrupting conventional thought of what the workplace is. New generations joining the workforce, the coworking movement, and a learning- and cloud-based way of working are presenting remarkable opportunities and challenges to the way we work. A proper change management strategy will help interior designers and their clients successfully maneuver these inevitable work environment changes.

FULL STORY ON PAGE 3...



Starwood Hotels & Resorts Fuels Innovation with Starlab, a New Brand Innovation Studio

The manifestation of a brand can take on many forms, and a company's workplace often acts as a reflection of its brand. Many companies struggle to present a united, tailored presence in their workplaces, often for the understandable reason of limited resources. But many brands thrive on exploring and crafting their identity in ways that will help their businesses profit. At the top of that list of brands is **Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide**, which earlier this year unveiled **Starlab**, the company's new brand innovation studio located in Manhattan's Garment District. Starlab serves as a creative hub to immerse both employees and visitors of all kinds in the company's latest two- and three-dimensional design work, guest technology and brand programming.

FULL STORY ON PAGE 12...



Concurrents - Environmental Psychology: Eye Contact, or Not

Across cultures, having the opportunity to make eye contact with another person, when desired, is seen as a good thing. However, cultures differ in their ideas about when eye contact is best. Officeinsight columnist Sally Augustin explores the psychology behind the right amount of eye contact in workplace environments, as well as best practices for designers to follow concerning eye contact, such as seating area arrangements and the inclusion of proper focal points within a room.

FULL STORY ON PAGE 17...





Vuja De Disruptive Workplace

Photography: courtesy of Sven Govaars & Dean Strombom, Gensler

Vuja De: The Disruptive Workplace

by Mallory Jindra

NeoCon 2015 played host to the debut of a fifth seminar by the inspiring Gensler duo **Sven Govaars** and **Dean Strombom**, titled *Vuja De: Disruptive Workplace*. In their past work, Mssrs. Strombom and Govaars have addressed space optimization, the open plan office, optimizing human potential through design, and achieving happiness by design. Each year, the concepts and research behind their current seminar inform their future work.

This new chapter addresses the concept of a disruptive workplace; not to be confused with a distraction and noise-filled office, a *disruptive workplace* is one that empowers individuals to choose where, when and how they work by disrupting conventional thought of what the workplace is. The environments and tools we have at our disposal in our workplaces continue to present remarkable opportunities for how we work.



Dean Strombom and Sven Govaars

History of work

1st Age Hunter & Gatherer



200,000 BCE

- Modern humans
- Basic tools
- Clan communities
- Became skilled hunters
- Gathered fruit, nuts, & vegetables

3rd Age Industrialization



14th - 19th Century

- Radical innovation
- Natural resources
- Colonialism
- Industrial revolution
- Globalization

5th Age Learning | Cloud Based



NOW!

- Seamless technology integration
- Fundamental / radical change
- Cloud based
- Disruptive

2nd Age Civilization



10,000 BCE

- Early civilization
- Food surpluses
- Sedentary living
- Population growth
- Craft specialization
- Social & labor classes

Andrew Jones
"Fifth Age of Work"

4th Age Information | Knowledge



20th Century

- Organization / control of massive amounts of information
- Personal computing
- Internet
- Smart phones
- E-commerce

The disruptive workplace movement comes at a pivotal moment in the history of work. In their presentation, Mssrs. Strombom and Govaars reference author Andrew Jones' book "The Fifth Age of Work: How Companies Can Redesign Work to Become

More Innovative in a Cloud Economy." Mr. Jones identifies five ages of work: 1st age – Hunter & Gatherer, 2nd age – Civilization, 3rd age – Industrialization, 4th age – Information & Knowledge, and 5th age – Learning & Cloud Based.

In the fifth age of learning, advancements in seamless technology integration and cloud based solutions are ushering in change at an increasingly rapid and regular pace. Mssrs. Strombom and Govaars highlighted several trends contributing to this movement:

>Younger generations have new attitudes towards, expectations of, and ways of working.

>Globalization means that knowing how to find information, and having access to it, is becoming cooler than actual wisdom.

>Technology is becoming more streamlined and more collaborative, with a shift to the cloud and new ways of using big data.

>The mobility of technology is allowing people to work anytime, anywhere, on any device.

>Behaviors in the physical world are now being shaped by social media, the Internet and technology.

Trends

1

Demographics

New attitudes, expectations, and ways of working

2

Globalization

No boundaries; It's a small world; 24x7x365

3

Technology

Shift to the cloud; Collaborative technologies; Big data

4

Mobility

Work anytime, anywhere, on any device

5

Behaviors

Shaped by social media, the internet, and technology

Jacob Morgan - The Future of Work
Also seen in trends from: Gensler, Steelcase, Price Waterhouse Cooper (PWC), Rethinking Workplace 2015 Gensler, Deloitte

“The new generations joining the workforce today have grown up adapting to and understanding change at a much faster pace,” said Mr. Strombom. “We’re at a sort of tipping point right now in the disruption of the workplace.”

But these new tools and technologies also bring to light the equally remarkable struggle that most people naturally experience in the face of change. The Gensler gentlemen included an insightful quote by Clay Shirky: “A revolution doesn’t happen when people adopt new tools. It happens when people adopt new behaviors.”

Indeed, the workplace has accommodated many technological and workplace strategy advancements over the ages, but the physical spaces that make up an office have actually changed very little. So why do we do what we do? And why is it so difficult for us to change?

Mssrs. Strombom and Govaars pointed to several theories aimed at explaining why people struggle to change. For instance, double loop learning (DLL), a term coined by Chris Argyris, refers to the modification or rejection of a goal in the light of experience. DLL recognizes that the way a problem is defined and solved can be a source of the problem. A person could come upon knowledge or tools that could help them perform in a superior way, but refrain from taking advantage of those tools simply because human nature indicates an aversion to change.

Mssrs. Strombom and Govaars outlined three key ingredients needed to enact a culture shift. First, a designer must provide the tools necessary for the change. Second, he or she must articulate the new “rules” accompanying the change. And finally, assuming those rules are enforced and embraced, new norms, or behaviors begin to change.

events

Globalization

Knowing how to find information is cooler than actual wisdom

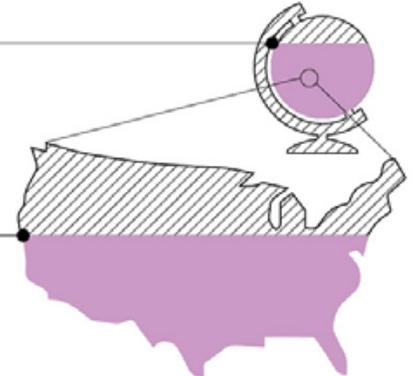
80%

of the global population will have access to mobile telephony by 2020

67%

of Americans are now smartphone owners, and for many these devices are a key entry point to the online world

New Research



“A **REVOLUTION** doesn’t happen when people adopt new tools, it happens when people adopt new **BEHAVIORS.**”

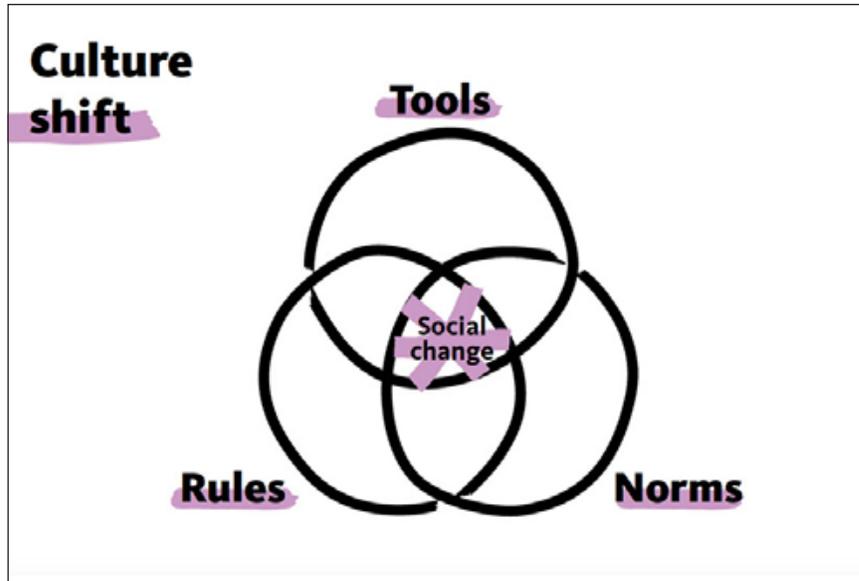
Clay Shirky



Has the workplace changed?

events

officeinsight



Three key ingredients needed to enact a culture shift: providing the tools necessary, articulating the new rules that accompany the change, and enforcing/embracing the new norms so that behaviors begin to change.

One movement newer generations are championing in the work environment is the concept of coworking.

“Coworking was initially perceived as an environment for like-minded individuals, freelance workers in particular, where spontaneous collaboration can happen and people can decide who they might best work with,” said Mr. Govaars. “The coworking movement has been bringing a lot of new ideas to the traditional workplace and is bringing new, different people together. We’re in an age where creativity and innovation are so important to our companies. We need more fluidity in the workplace.”

The coworking has its origins in the freelancing sector, but the movement is accelerating in the U.S. According to

A growing movement in the U.S.

Independent Workers

44.7mm

34% of the U.S. workforce

Mobile Workers

32.1mm

21.6% of the U.S. workforce

Small Businesses

5.2mm

17% of the U.S. workforce

events

officeinsight

the Freelance Union, IDC, and Bureau of Labor Statistics, 34% of the U.S. workforce are independent workers (44.7mm), 21.6% are mobile workers (32.1mm), and 17% are employed by small businesses (5.2mm).

While the coworking movement is igniting many new behaviors in workplaces across the country and the globe, it also shines a spotlight on the limitations of current independent workplace options. The desire to work independently is there, but there are few satisfactory workplace options. Working out of a home can be isolating and often distracting; coffee shops have limited outlets and can also present unwanted distractions; cube farms in traditional offices typically lack a sense of community between employees/members; and incubators are geared more toward specialized startups, rather than coworking groups.

Three principles that grew out of the coworking movement are now inform-

Behaviors	
Past to present	
Work 9-5	Work anytime
Work in a corporate office	Work anywhere
Climb the corporate ladder	Create your own ladder
Pre-defined work	Customized work
Hoards information	Shares information
Relies on email	Collaboration technologies
Focuses on knowledge	Focused on adaptive learning

Jeob Morgan

ing traditional workplace design:
 >Spaces should communicate a shared purpose, whether for people, display, team opportunities, social support, or learning support.

>Shift 'Me' space to become 'We' space; these hackable, layered spaces

provide excellent resources and transparency to teams

>Virtual connections are as important as physical ones; remote access, good telepresence, and wormholes must take on the qualities of positive 'real' experiences.

How people work



Home
Isolated, often distracting



Coffee Shop
Few outlets, distracting



Cube Farm
No community, old work space

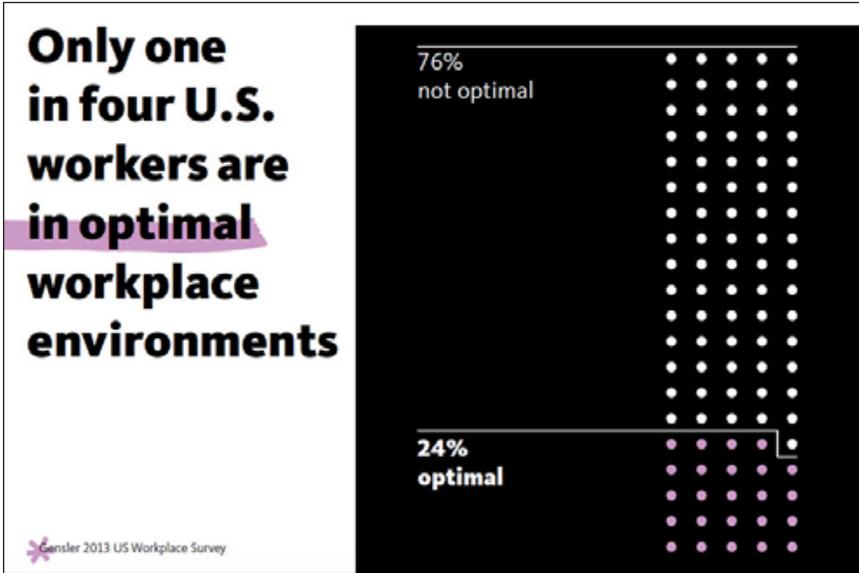


Incubator
Specialized startup - not groups

✖ There is a new desire to work independently, but there are few satisfactory options

events

officeinsight



At the same time, designers must also balance the challenges of an increasingly contingent workforce (another term referring to the workers who work for organizations on a non-permanent basis, also known as freelancers, independent professionals, temporary contract workers, independent contractors or consultants). It's crucial that designers achieve a balance between providing choice, and forming and maintaining a community by successfully bringing people together in the spaces they create.

Mssrs. Strombom and Govaars presented a case study of a Gensler Houston office, nicknamed G6. The space serves as a learning laboratory for the team at Gensler to put much of their research and design practices to action in their own space. When crafting the new space, the design team aimed to provide spaces where people could achieve high levels of focus, balance and choice throughout the workday. User control and a tailored series of flexible environments inspire workers to choose the way they work best.

The design team highlighted three change management tools they used when unveiling the new G6 space to its end users, all nestled under a fun flight theme, with the G6 space serving as the air vessel. The design team created a "Flight Manual", a go-to user



“Flight Manual” (User Guide)

Wellbeing Guide

Technology Support Website (www.flyong6.com)

Change management tools used in the Gensler Houston G6 project: a “Flight Manual” user guide, technology support website, and wellbeing guide.

guide addressing all questions regarding using the new space. They also created a technology support website and a wellbeing guide.

“Storytelling is really important to the work interior designers do,” said Mr. Strombom. “We need to tell the story of the space and come up with a disciplined set of plans to help orient people to it. Unless we tell people how to use their new work environment, they won’t be able to take advantage of it. We often forget the simplest things that people need to know about how to use the space. We need to create the support pieces.”

The team in charge of designing the G6 space also incorporated sensor technology to gather information unobtrusively about how the space was and is being used.



The Gensler team in charge of designing the G6 space incorporated sensor technology to gather information unobtrusively about how the space was and is being used.

events

officeinsight

“Sensors are now becoming much more sophisticated,” said Mr. Strombom. “We can see the movement of different groups of people throughout the day, when during the day the spaces are being used, by how many people, and if they’re being used in the intended way or for some other purpose. It allows us to design to the highest level.”

The Gensler gentlemen also made a case for creating an ecosystem of offices across a city, rather than the more traditional route of having one large central office. But they also noted that all of the explorative work happening at Gensler is backed by strong research and metrics, and the goal to provide choice.

“We’re continuing to explore all of

these new work ideas and choices on a larger and larger scale,” said Mr. Strombom. “But underneath all of the trends and statistics for us rests the constant of providing choice for everyone. That crosses all strati. It’s about listening to identify how to help people focus and accomplish their work. We want to empower the individual and not the space.” ■

