

# Using Shapes and Forms as Tools to increase the Productivity at Workplace

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**Abstract:** Emotions in the workplace play a large role in how an entire organization communicates within itself and to the outside world. Spatial forms, shapes and layouts at work have real emotional and behavioral impact on the employees. The consequences of emotional states in the workplace, both behavioral and attitudinal, have substantial significance for individuals and groups on their productivity. Positive emotions in the workplace help employees obtain favorable outcomes including achievement, job enrichment and job satisfaction. Negative emotions, such as fear, anger, stress, hostility, sadness, and guilt, however increase the predictability of workplace deviance and how the outside world views the organization.

**Keywords:** *Shapes, Emotions, Moods, Productivity, Workplace*

## 1. Introduction

Productivity may be evaluated in terms of the output of an employee in a specific period of time. Typically, the productivity of a given worker will be assessed relative to an average for employees doing similar work. Because much of the success of any organization relies upon the productivity of its workforce, employee productivity is an important consideration for businesses.

The **workplace** is the physical location where someone works. Such a place can range from a home-office to a large office building or factory. For industrialized societies, the workplace is one of the most important social spaces other than the home. Employee productivity (sometimes referred to as workforce productivity) is an assessment of the efficiency of a worker or group of workers.

Emotions normally are associated with specific events or occurrences and are intense enough to disrupt thought processes. Moods on the other hand, are more generalized feelings or states that are not typically identified with a particular stimulus and not sufficiently intense to interrupt ongoing thought processes. There can be many consequences for allowing negative emotions to affect your general attitude or mood at work. Emotions and emotion management are a prominent feature of organizational life.

## 2. Impact of Emotions and Moods of employees on their productivity at workplace:

The starting point for modern research on emotion in organizations seems to have been sociologist Hochschild's (1983) seminal book on emotional labor: *The Managed Heart*". Ever since then the study

of emotions in the work place has been seen as a near science, with seminars being held on it and books being writing about it every year to help us understand the role it plays. Consequently, if we can find ways to alter organizational practices, social processes, or task designs in ways that increase positive emotions and reduce negative emotions, the welfare of organizational members is directly increased.

When employees are with preoccupied mind set or already pre stressed because of some other outside issues, he or she may result in Production deviance. Production deviance is ineffective job performance that is done on purpose, such as doing tasks incorrectly or withholding of effort. Such behaviors can be seen in disciplinary actions and safety violations.

Being able to manage mood and emotional quotient in employees with the help of planning using appropriate forms and shapes is a tool that can make any employers job easier. It can allow us to motivate them in ways that cause positive performance, and avoid conflict at work place.

Positive emotions at work such as high achievement and excitement have “desirable effect independent of a person's relationships with others. Strong positive emotions of emotionally intelligent people include optimism, positive mood, self-efficacy, and emotional resilience to perform under adverse circumstances. Those who express positive emotions in the workplace are better equipped to influence their coworkers favorably. They are also more likable, and a halo effect may occur

when warm or satisfied employees are rated favorably on other desirable attributes. It is likely that these people will inspire cooperation in others to carry out a task.

A manager or co-worker who displays positive emotions consistently is more likely to motivate those around him/her and have more opportunities within the company. Being able to bring out positive emotions and aware of how to do this can be an incredibly useful tool in the workplace. Positive mood also elicits more exploration and enjoyment of new ideas and can enhance creativity. A manager who is able to reward and speak to his employees in a way that brings out their positive emotions will be much more successful than one who lacks these skills.

We can say that the ability to effectively deal with emotions and emotional information in the workplace assists employees in managing occupational stress and maintaining psychological well-being. This indicates that stress reduction and health protection could be achieved not only by decreasing unpleasant and depressive surroundings (stressors), but also by increasing the comfort levels and motivational surroundings for employees. The increasing positive and desirable atmosphere necessary for successful job performance can help workers to deal more effectively with their feelings, and thus directly decrease the level of job stress and indirectly protect their health.

### **3. Shapes and Forms as a tool to manage Emotions and Moods of employees at workplace:**

Whether in 2D or 3D design, shapes and forms greatly affect our subconscious and are used to great effect by designers in order to convey the right messages. Feelings and moods associated with specific shapes is elaborated here, which can help the designer to create conducive and desirable atmosphere in a workplace to manage or enhance the Emotional quotient of the employees at workplace.

When we see a shape or form, peculiar type of emotions or feelings are developed in our minds. Every shape and form conveys some meaning and signals to its users.

As designers, its our responsibility to understand the grammar and language of shapes and incorporate it in our designs. Specifically the spaces like offices or any workplaces, where users are the performers and their productivity is the most important function of the building. Designers use shape and form as a tool for the following purposes:

1. To organize information through connection and separation
2. To symbolize different zones or areas

3. To create or channelize movements
4. To give textures, depth
5. **To convey moods and emotions**
6. To emphasize and create functions like entry/exit etc in the space
7. To channelize eye movement from one element of design to the next.

Out of these, we are discussing here the fifth point i.e. “ To convey moods and emotions” through the shapes and forms so that the productivity of the employees or users can be increased by managing their moods and emotions.

#### **4. Circular shape:**

Circle has a free movement and gives the feeling of infinity. Circles are warm, comforting and give the feeling of togetherness and belongingness. Its movement suggests energy and power, however its completeness suggests unity and harmony. Circle protects, endures and restrict. It confines what is within and keeps things out. It also suggests community, integrity and perfection. Because of its geometry, it attracts attention, provides emphasis and improves concentration.



source: [www.sancheet.in](http://www.sancheet.in)

Looking after the qualities of a circular shape, and analyzing it in a different angle, we can say that this shape could be much more efficient for the spaces like conference rooms, meeting rooms and seminar rooms, where people need to concentrate on the inputs given to them and keep all other worries, may be professional or personal, outside the space and restrict their emotions to the required agenda and not diverting the mind towards unwanted aspects of life.



source: [www.pinterest.com](http://www.pinterest.com)

Also, the qualities of circle like togetherness and belongingness ameliorate the sense of responsibility towards the work issues.

#### **5. Squares, Rectangles and Pyramids:**

These shapes suggest honesty and stability. They represent discipline, order, rationality and formality. Most important qualities of these shapes are Solidity, Security, Equality and Peacefulness.

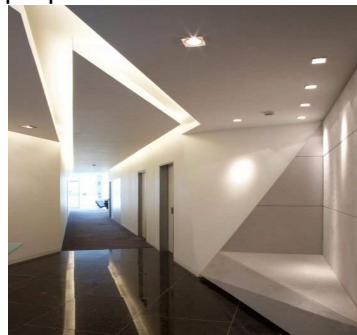


source: [www.wedonyc.net](http://www.wedonyc.net)

Repetition of square and rectangle could be very boring, but interest can be developed by tilting them at the corners or chamfering the corners. Because of its quality of discipline and order, it can be used for the spaces like staff room or cubicles for staff in the offices. Where all are automatically in synchronization with the discipline and order, without any verbal or written instructions. At the same time, shape gives the feelings of peacefulness and security which is most important aspect of peoples' emotions, which have to be managed at workplace. These shapes can contribute to managing EQ of the users, thus enhancing the productivity up to remarkable levels.

#### **6. Triangles:**

Triangles when sitting on their base represent stability and growth. They also represent dynamism, action and aggression. They have energy and power. Triangles indicate the movement and growth towards the way they are pointing. The strength of triangle suggests masculinity. Their dynamic nature make them better suited to a growing high tech company than a stable financial institution. Triangles can be used to convey progression, direction and purpose.



source: [www.pinterest.com](http://www.pinterest.com)

Thus, the best suited for the areas in any workplace which are related to Sales, Marketing and Customer Care areas. These areas need fast, prompt, result oriented and dynamic actions for efficient working, which can be generated within the workers by providing triangular shaped spaces here.

### **7. Spirals:**

Spirals are representation of creativity. They suggest the process of growth and evolution. In many organisms, natural growth pattern is indicated in spiral shape. It also represents ideas of fertility, birth, death, expansion and transformation. Spirals move in either direction and represent returning to the same point on journey with new levels of understanding. It also represent trust during change, the release of energy and maintaining flexibility through transformation.



source: [www.businessinteriors.co.uk](http://www.businessinteriors.co.uk)

Although, the creative workplaces like Design studios of Architects, Interior Designers, Fashion Designers, Advertising Agencies, Animation studios etc, where creativity is the only requirement, workers in such areas can actually be imbued with creative ideas by providing spiral spaces or spiral designs in the spaces. Shapes definitely have a strong impact on the mind set, emotions and thus performance of the

workers. Working in such spiral spaces, will definitely enhance or uplift the creative quotient of the design studios.

### **8. Cross/Vertical/Horizontal/Curved shapes:**

Cross shapes suggest transition, balance, faith, unity and hope. They also represent relationships and synthesis and a need for connection to something whether that something is group, individual, self or project related.

As with lines vertical shapes are seen as strong and horizontal shapes are seen as peaceful. Everything said about vertical and horizontal lines can be said about vertical and horizontal shapes.



source: [www.pinterest.com](http://www.pinterest.com)

Rhythm and movement is offered by Curved shapes. Happiness, Pleasure and Generosity are also reflected through curved shapes. Curved shapes are more feminine and Sharp shaped offer energy, violence and anger. Sharp shapes are lively and youthful and are seen as more masculine. Suitable selection of shape is very important by the designer according to the use of space and expected output out of that space by the users in terms of productivity of efficiency of the workers.

### 9. Conclusion:

Architecture and space creation has a power to change, handle or channelize the behavior of its users. Considering expected output by the users of the space, if designers select the design elements to stimulate and enhance the required emotions which will result in their better productivity, the companies and the firms will be at their desired achievements and goals, which ultimately will be proving the welfare of its employees. Growth of company or firm ultimately results in the growth of its employees. Designers must take a step forward to research and implement the design strategies and design elements so that we can change moods and emotions of the workers which are carried with them from their home or personal spaces and lives into more conducive atmosphere, changing their negativity into positivity and thus affecting on the increased productivity of the employees.

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