

BUILDING THE BUSINESS CASE:

Health, Wellbeing and Productivity in Green Offices

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Employers, building owners, designers, developers, and investors throughout the world are learning, in response to an increasing body of evidence, that office design affects the health and wellbeing of occupants in many ways and so it is a smart business move to create green buildings that are healthy.

Staff are the most valuable resource in most organisations, typically accounting for 90% of business operating costs, so even a 1% improvement in productivity can have a major impact on the bottom line and competitiveness of any business.



Building developers, owners, and investors are also discovering the business value of delivering to their markets healthy, green buildings. In a survey of 200 Canadian building owners, for example, 38% of those who reported increased value said healthy buildings were worth at least 7% more than normal ones, 46% said they were easier to lease, and 28% said they commanded premium rents.

This World Green Building Council report, *Building the Business Case: Health, Wellbeing and Productivity in Green Offices*, shows the global momentum behind green buildings that are healthy and marks a significant milestone in our *Better Places for People* campaign.

It provides best practice examples of healthy, green offices, showing that employers who care about the environmental impact of their buildings as well as the health and wellbeing of their staff, and take action to improve the quality of the workplace, are rewarded by improved productivity and loyalty, which can be worth many times more than their investment.

Some examples from the report:

Cutting sick days

Skanska, Doncaster, United Kingdom

BREEAM-UK 'OUTSTANDING'

Skanska UK saved £28,000 (\$36,000) in 2015 in absenteeism costs, and reduced the green payback period of an office move from 11 to 8 years by achieving 3.5 fewer building-related sick days alongside increased employee comfort and satisfaction.

New healthy workplace is worth €42m

Delta Development Group, Amsterdam, Netherlands

BREEAM-NL 'EXCELLENT'

Heerema, the occupant, could see a €42 million net present value over 20 years due to increased productivity, staff retention, and reduced absenteeism, according to KPMG.

Doubling call centre productivity

Saint-Gobain, Malvern, PA, United States of America

LEED Platinum - Core & Shell and Interior

Saint-Gobain call centre staff in their new North American headquarters have achieved a 97% increase in sales-generated leads and 101% increase in leads per call since moving into the building.

More collaboration and less absenteeism

Medibank, Melbourne, Australia

Six-Star Green Star - Office Design V3

Medibank, Australia's largest health insurer, reports that 80% of staff are working more collaboratively, absenteeism is down 5% and two-thirds of staff report feeling healthier in their new office, which includes 26 types of workspaces, edible gardens and sports facilities.

This report, and the case studies and spotlights presented within it, further strengthens the business case for firms to take action to create green working environments that enhance the health, wellbeing and productivity of their employees, and which result in clear and tangible benefits to their bottom line.

HOW TO ACT ON HEALTHY, GREEN OFFICES

Organisations of all sizes stand to benefit by creating green buildings which improve the health and wellbeing of their occupants. WorldGBC has developed, and continues to refine, a simple three-pillar Framework to help individuals, whether they are sustainability executives, HR professionals, facility managers, from the tenant side or owner/manager side, to assess and quantify the health, wellbeing and productivity of the people in their building, and therefore, the buildings themselves.

ENVIRONMENT

Measure eight features of a green workplace to determine how they affect its occupants. Each element can be measured objectively and assessed in light of a green building rating system and building code.

EXPERIENCE

Survey occupants to match the measures of the environmental features with how occupants feel about their workplace and whether they feel the environment supports or detracts from their wellbeing and productivity.

ECONOMICS

Measure five economic factors, likely already collected at a corporate level and/or by HR staff, and track these over time as improvements are made to the office environment.

Over twenty national Green Building Councils around the world are championing the cause of healthy green buildings, through certification and rating tools, research and stakeholder engagement to show how organisations all over the world are profiting from increasing the health and wellbeing of the people in their green buildings. Research from organisations, such as Harvard University's T.H. Chan School of Public Health, supported by United Technologies (UTC), is transforming the way we understand the interaction between human health and wellbeing and the green workplace.

CALL TO ACTION

We hope businesses, building owners, designers, and developers will be inspired by these case studies, which show how organisations all over the world are profiting from increasing the health and wellbeing of the occupants of their buildings. The WorldGBC calls on them to take action and unlock the business benefits of creating *Better Places for People*.



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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This report was printed by Eva's Phoenix Print Shop in Toronto, Canada. The Eva's Phoenix Print Shop is a socially and environmentally responsible commercial printer that supports a training program for homeless and at-risk youth. Located at Eva's Phoenix, a transitional housing and employment facility for homeless youth, the Eva's Phoenix Print Shop is a social enterprise of Eva's.

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