



## Design Criteria of Next Generation Offices

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### ABSTRACT

The changing work culture and habits have made it necessary for offices to adapt. New generation offices have flexible spaces that allow employees to adapt to different working conditions. They also feature multi-purpose rooms that can be used for meetings, training sessions or social events. Elements such as ergonomic furniture, lighting, and ventilation support the health and well-being of employees. Modern technologies that enhance collaboration and facilitate communication are also incorporated into these new generation offices. Open-plan designs and shared spaces promote interaction among employees, while collaborative areas enhance creativity, teamwork, and team spirit. The design of new generation offices has undergone a significant transformation in line with changing work culture and practices. These offices are carefully planned to increase productivity, foster collaboration, and support employee well-being. Open-plan concepts are often employed to facilitate communication and interaction among departments and employees.

**Keywords:** Office, new generation office, interior design, design criteria.

### ÖZET

Değişen çalışma kültürüne ve alışkanlıklarına ofislerin de uyum sağlaması ihtiyaç haline gelmeye başlamıştır. Yeni nesil ofisler, çalışanlara farklı çalışma koşullarına uyum sağlama imkânı sunan esnek alanlara sahiptir. Aynı zamanda, toplantılar, eğitimler veya sosyal etkinlikler gibi farklı amaçlar için kullanılabilen çok amaçlı odalar bulunmaktadır. Ergonomik mobilyalar, aydınlatma ve havalandırma gibi unsurlar, çalışanların sağlığını ve refahını desteklemektedir. Yeni nesil ofisler, iş birliğini artıran ve iletişimi kolaylaştıran modern teknolojilere sahiptir. Açık planlı tasarım ve paylaşılan alanlar, çalışanların etkileşimini teşvik etmekte, ortak çalışma alanları, yaratıcılığı ve iş birliğini artırırken, aynı zamanda ekip ruhunu güçlendirmektedir. Yeni nesil ofislerin tasarımı, çalışma kültürünün ve iş yapış şekillerinin değişmesiyle birlikte önemli bir dönüşüm geçirmiştir. Bu ofisler, çalışanların verimliliğini artırmak, iş birliğini teşvik etmek ve çalışanların refahını desteklemek amacıyla özenle planlanmaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Ofis, yeni nesil ofis, iç mekân tasarım, tasarım kriterleri.

### THE CONCEPT OF OFFICE

Offices are fundamentally workspaces. Socioeconomic changes throughout history have also influenced workspaces. First, there was the agricultural revolution, followed by the industrial revolution. Most recently, we are experiencing the information revolution. This revolution is a new way of life that has emerged in the socio-cultural, economic, and political fields. The information revolution has also brought about the process of globalization, which has led to the reshaping of workspaces such as office structures. (İmal,2009)

The Industrial Revolution was a significant milestone that changed many things globally, including the development of office spaces. After this period, the development of information technologies led to the emergence of new work environments that adapt to the

produced technology. These work styles have influenced the historical development of offices. In this context, three different work styles can be mentioned: Taylorism, Fordism, and Post-Fordism.

Taylorism, pioneered by Frederic Winslow Taylor, is a scientific management system that focuses on the task rather than the worker. In this strategy, called Taylorism, workers are expected to work more precisely and synchronized, rather than being intelligent and creative. This is because all employees needed to be in the same place at the same time to work with typewriters or telephones.

Fordism, which emerged in 1914, was a form developed by Henry Ford, who paid his workers five dollars a day for eight hours of work. The most important period in which this form was accepted was between 1945 and 1973. Initially influenced by Taylorism but later replacing it, Fordism is an approach that increases labor and consumption levels in production. There are examples of this production form being updated and continuing to be used today.

Post-Fordism, aiming to save labor and capital, emerged with the development of microelectronic technologies. The flexibility of products and the ability to produce multiple products simultaneously were aimed for. The labor and time problems that emerged in Fordist production were solved by producing one product and moving on to the next production, preventing machines from being idle and thus reducing machine idle time.

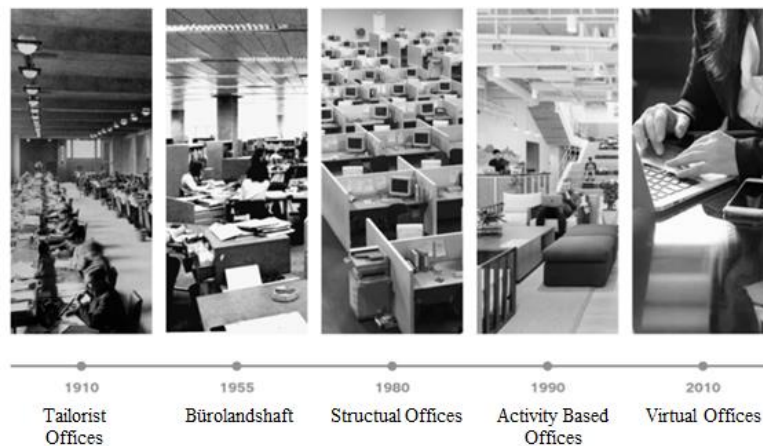


Figure 1: Historical Development of Office Types (Erginoğlu Çalışlar Archive)

### **OFFICES ACCORDING TO PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS**

Offices are classified as cellular offices, open offices, group offices, free offices, and mixed offices according to their physical characteristics. Among these plan types, offices that make a difference are those where spaces such as core and corridors are arranged in different forms.

#### **Cellular Offices:**

Cellular offices are a type that has historically been considered a traditional office arrangement dating back to the Middle Ages. In these offices, rooms of various sizes are used, and spaces are divided by panels, partitions, and cellular office cabinets. However, in today's business world, various office arrangements are preferred, and different workspaces have replaced cellular offices.

#### **Open Offices:**

The concept of open offices is developed to encourage communication and collaboration among employees. With these arrangements, employees can more easily share information, exchange ideas, and conduct team work more efficiently. Additionally, large

office spaces offer a more flexible working environment and better meet the spatial needs of workplaces. Changes are also made in workplace designs to ensure that workspaces are more functional and ergonomic.

#### Group Layout Offices:

These consist of office floors arranged for working groups of five or ten people. This plan type is designed as a transition between cellular and open plan offices. There are workspaces ranging from a minimum of 40 to a maximum of 150 square meters. When the dividers between cellular offices and the corridor are removed, it becomes a group layout office.

#### Free Layout Offices:

The Team Office and Free Office approaches developed by Quickborn represent an office planning concept aimed at changing traditional office and office planning systems. The Team Office refers to an arrangement where the walls of cellular offices are removed, creating a large space where employees can work together. In this arrangement, employees are grouped into teams working on similar projects, and shared spaces are provided to facilitate communication. Group work and collaboration are at the forefront in this arrangement.

#### Mixed Layout Offices:

The mixed layout office form represents an approach where cellular, group, open, and free layout offices are brought together. In this form, office planning is determined according to workflow, and flexible workspaces are created instead of the concept of geometry. Its aim is to encourage teamwork and enhance relationships among employees.

### OFFICES ACCORDING TO THEIR ORGANIZATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Especially after the mid-20th century, with the development of technology and the change in work styles, the organizational structure of office designs has also changed. Organizational office types vary depending on the structure and operation of the institution. Each office type is characterized by a certain level of independence, interaction, and collaboration requirements. Organizations can adopt one or more of these office types according to their needs and goals. These office types are hive, cell, den, and club models. (Naghavi,1995)



Figure 2 Historical development of office workstations (Erginoğlu Çalışlar Archive)

### NEW GENERATION OFFICES

The concept of new generation offices emerged as a result of examining the historical development of workspaces and classifying them according to their characteristics. Traditional office designs are gradually giving way to more innovative, collaborative, and human-centered approaches. The design of new generation offices aims to transform work environments to increase employee motivation, productivity, and satisfaction. The definition of new generation offices, and the reasons for their emergence, which are

starting to be preferred by employees today, will be examined in more detail.(Güney Yüksel, 2022)

### **New Generation Office Design:**

The definition of a new generation office does not only refer to newly constructed spaces. Previously, offices were primarily based on a simple efficiency calculation, such as the ratio of square meters to the number of people. Now, office efficiency consists of the social and technological opportunities it offers, including socialization, entertainment, and sports facilities.

Changes in technology have led to changes in many people's habits. Internet usage is one of the changing habits. Especially in recent years, due to reasons such as epidemics, people now spend a significant portion of their lives in virtual environments during meetings. Many people spend most of their time with phones and tablets, continuing their work life in this way. People have started to gain benefits from the virtual world they spend time in, being able to purchase numerous services from where they sit, compare products within minutes, and shop from the most suitable place. They can communicate with many people at the same time and meet at a common point. In fact, with changing work environments, new working styles have emerged. Some systems that were seen as new generation work environments ten years ago have now begun to become ordinary. Technological features such as smart devices, wireless connections, and multi-screen systems facilitate communication among employees and strengthen collaboration. At the same time, innovative technologies such as digital meeting rooms, virtual reality experiences, and data analytics are used to increase employee productivity and optimize business processes.

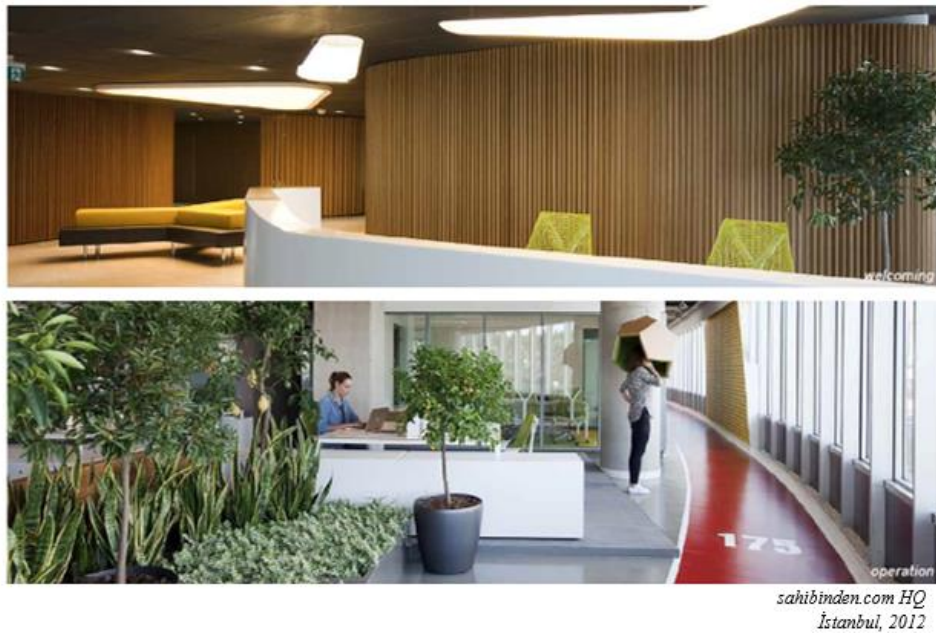


Figure 3 Design Differences Between Reception Area and Office Workspace (Erginoğlu Çalışlar Archive)

They can communicate with many people at the same time and meet at a common point. In fact, new working styles have emerged along with changing work environments. Some systems that were seen as new generation work environments ten years ago have now begun to become ordinary. Technological features such as smart devices, wireless connections, and multi-screen systems facilitate communication among employees and strengthen collaboration. At the same time, innovative technologies such as digital meeting rooms, virtual reality experiences, and data analytics are used to increase employee productivity and optimize business processes.

New generation offices are workspaces that provide flexibility in time and space, offer a variety of spaces suitable for different working activities and personal preferences, are equipped with information technologies, and do not have sharply defined hierarchical structures, but rather shared workspaces. It is possible to attribute the reasons for the emergence of these office types to the changing user profile, working conditions, and evolving technology. (Karıptaş, 2023)

### **FACTORS AFFECTING NEW GENERATION OFFICE DESIGN**

Traditional office designs are now giving way to new, human-centered, and collaborative approaches. In this transformation, office spaces designed based on the needs and expectations of employees play an important role. New generation office design adopts an employee-focused approach. It prioritizes the needs and expectations of employees. Elements such as ergonomic furniture, adjustable workstations, comfortable seating areas, and good air quality support the health and well-being of employees. Additionally, areas that encourage social interaction, relaxation corners, and exercise areas enhance employee motivation. Employee-focused design supports peace and job satisfaction in the workplace. New generation office designs accommodate different working models. Flexible working hours, remote working models are becoming increasingly common. Therefore, office spaces should be arranged according to the needs of the employees and should offer options suitable for different working styles. Various areas such as shared workspaces, private rooms, focus areas, and meeting rooms allow employees to make choices according to their working models. New generation office designs prioritize areas that promote collaboration and communication. Open plan layouts, shared work desks, collaboration areas, and meeting rooms facilitate employees coming together to exchange ideas. New generation office designs emphasize technology integration to increase employee productivity. Technological infrastructure such as wireless internet connection, smart devices, multi-screen systems, and digital meeting rooms facilitate communication among employees and strengthen collaboration. Additionally, applications supported by digital tools such as data analytics and project management optimize business processes and increase efficiency.

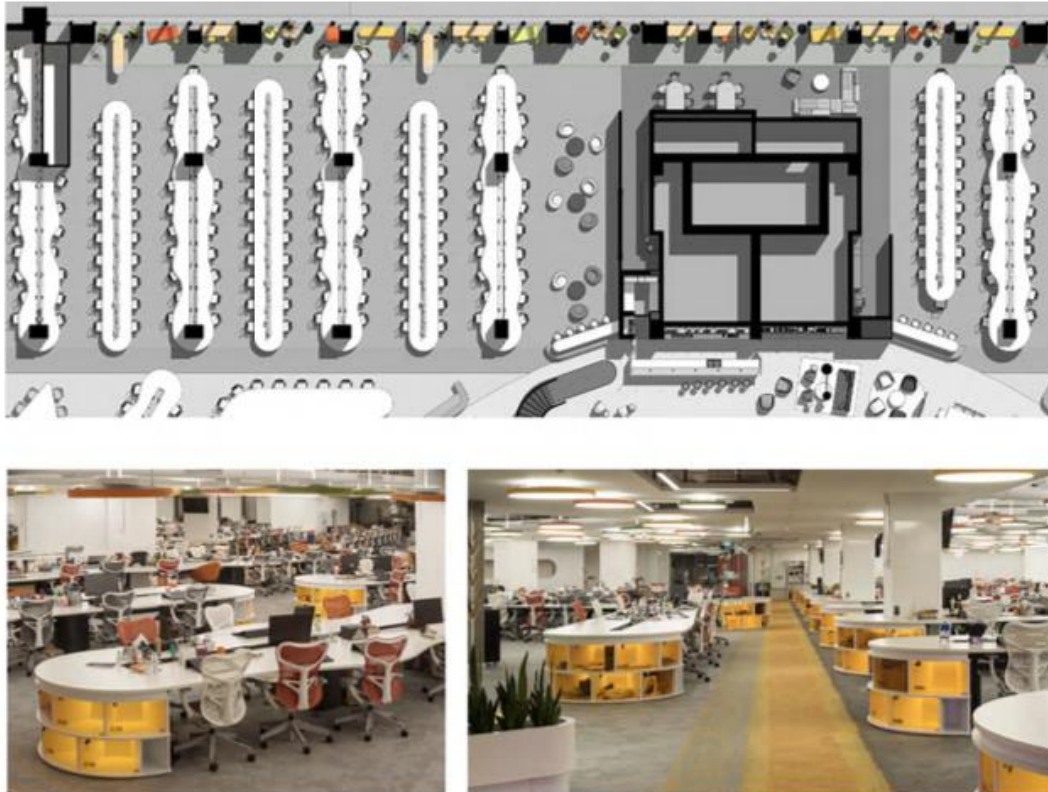


Figure 4 New generation office example (Erginoğlu Çalışlar Archive)

New generation office designs aim to reduce the environmental impact of workplaces by adopting environmental sustainability principles. Practices such as energy-efficient lighting systems, the use of natural light, preference for recyclable materials, and waste management optimize energy consumption and resource use. Additionally, the use of natural elements such as green spaces, plants, and plant walls is preferred in these office types.

During the design process, it is necessary to first develop the principles of the working area, prepare three-dimensional model studies and material suggestions, as well as plan proposals for all areas, company requirements, sustainability criteria, coordination with other disciplines, etc. Then, the designer presents these preparations to office representatives. After this presentation, contributions to communication with users, suggestions for built-in furniture, progress reports, and meetings with employers continue. After overcoming this initial stage, it is thought to be appropriate to collect the factors that affect the design process into four criteria based on previous office interior design studies.(Kariptaş,2023)

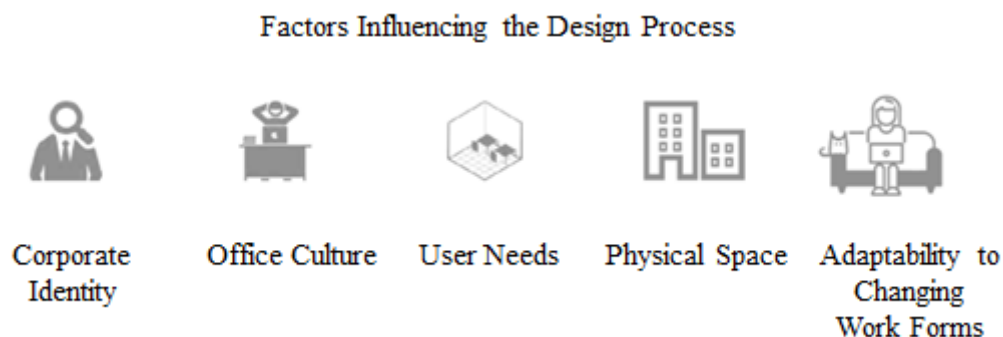


Figure 5: Factors Influencing the Design Process (Kariptaş, F.,2023)

1. Corporate identity
2. Office culture
3. User needs
4. Physical space
5. Adaptability to changing work forms

Offices are designed according to different working conditions and needs. For an office with a traditional corporate structure, the designed space may have a more simple and formal language, while the interior of an office designed for a younger and more dynamic design firm may be more lively and colorful. Additionally, new developments such as changes in technology and materials also influence design. The aim is for the design to be timeless and contemporary. When designing the interior of an office, the first step is to determine the customer profile. What departments does it consist of? What kind of work environment is needed? How many people work together? How much social space is needed? Answers to numerous questions like these shape the design. Corporate identity comes into play here. Clues about the identity contribute to the interior designer's design from the first meeting with the customer. The service area the office operates in, the services it provides and sells, the lifestyle of the employees, their positions in the institution, working and meeting styles, and many other topics provide information about the customer's corporate identity. (Kariptaş, 2023)



Figure 6 Office Interior Before and After (Erginoğlu Çalışlar Archive)

Especially when designing the interior of a new generation office, reflecting the space spirit that customers and employees need and desire with the available resources is the first criterion to increase the efficiency of employees and the workplace. Corporate identity, whether the office needs a formal or dynamic design, affects the design of the space both in terms of planning and visually. After the basic decisions regarding the design are made, details such as lighting, acoustics, thermal comfort conditions, color, material, and texture, which actually seem like small details but have a big impact, are decided together with the employer to design a peaceful and efficient working environment. (Seçer Kariptaş, 2021)

### **Corporate Identity**

Corporate identity is the way a company presents itself and establishes a brand image to customers, employees, and the target audience. A corporate identity provides a unique identity and appearance that reflects the brand values, purposes, mission, and vision of an organization. Corporate identity is important to enhance the company's competitive advantage, strengthen brand awareness, and increase customer loyalty. Effectively using corporate identity helps the company build credibility, reputation, and brand value.

### **Office Culture and Its Reflection in Space**

To understand the office culture, a focal group is created among all users, and various questions are asked before starting the design process. This allows both the employer and the designer to compare the office envisioned by the user and the most efficient working habits for themselves. Understanding the user profile is important, but it may not be correct to continue the design with the initial architectural approach. With the answers obtained, the employer will begin to confront their employees. To find the balance, it is important to balance architectural needs and dreams.

### **User Requirements**

Ensuring productivity in office environments is directly proportional to employees working in a peaceful and comfortable environment. It is important for users, i.e., employees, to feel good both psychologically and physically. Seeing that these needs are met leads employees to do their jobs more efficiently. The psychological needs of employees are a situation that can vary according to the cultural structure of the users, and can change personally. Generally, it can be classified as the need for privacy, the need for personal space, and the need for a moral environment.

### **Physical Space Configuration**

Another factor that influences design is the physical space where the design will be implemented. The impact of function on form, and form on function, is inevitable. It is a fact that corporate identity and user requirements guide the design in office design. However, for this, offices need to be planned correctly at the core. The layout scheme is shaped as a result of discussions with the architect. A correct spatial configuration should be made to provide an efficient and peaceful working environment.

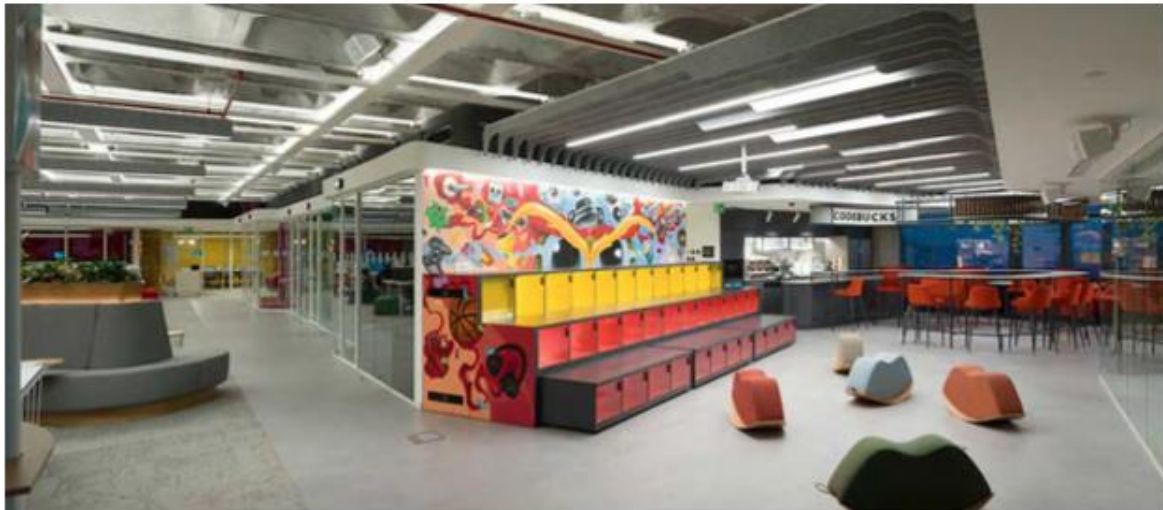


Figure 7 New generation office interior (Erginođlu alıřlar Archive)

### **Adaptability to Changing Work Forms**

In the design of new-generation offices, the placement of communication devices and the level of privacy play an important role. Reducing the physical distance between employees and ensuring close proximity to encourage communication, collaboration, and interaction is preferable. This way, communication among employees becomes easier, and collaboration increases. However, in addition to providing communication, the privacy needs of employees should also be considered. Lack of privacy can create discomfort among employees and make it difficult to conduct business. Therefore, it is important to strike the right balance in office design. The organization of workspaces should be planned to provide the level of privacy that employees need. Different areas can be created to balance communication and privacy in office design. For example, open workspaces facilitate communication among employees, while more private meeting rooms or individual work booths can also be provided. This way, employees can work in different areas according to their needs and be more efficient. (Karıptař, 2023)

### **Sleep Rooms:**

In new-generation offices, examples can be seen beyond traditional designs in terms of adaptability to changing working conditions. For example, sleep rooms designed to symbolize ongoing life within the office are a personal space solution that has been encountered in office projects recently. Sleep rooms have become one of the rejuvenation points in the office, accommodating individual work and rest functions. Such solutions are practices that increase work efficiency for employees who will feel peaceful being in the office throughout their time there, rather than waiting to complete their working hours. These rooms are comfortable and soundproof, so employees working in open office environments can use them not only for short naps but also as quiet spaces for work purposes at times.



Figure 8 Sleeping Rooms Example (Erginođlu alıřlar Archive)



### **Meeting Booths:**

In new-generation offices, solutions such as single or multiple-person meeting booths, open or enclosed, designed to prevent sound and noise from passing through and create private spaces, are implemented. They come in ready-made or custom-designed varieties. With the changing work style, especially in situations requiring focus, the need for these booths has increased. Differentiated by acoustic and lighting quality, these booths are spaces where individual meetings, video/conferences, small meetings, and discussions can be held without leaving the workspace.

### **Rest Areas:**

In new-generation offices, solutions such as seating elements, loungers, hammocks, swings, mesh seating areas, etc., are designed for resting in some points considered necessary to take a break from the intense working environment in different working conditions. Social areas in interior design can be supported with ready-made furniture as well as furniture design on-site, shaping according to the employees' preferences.



Figure 9 meeting rooms/ booths (Erginođlu alıřlar Archive)

### **Meeting Rooms:**

In new-generation offices, small meeting rooms can be designed for employees to have private conversations on the phone or face-to-face in an open office environment. Meeting rooms should be equipped with communication systems and acoustically resolved.

### **Phone Booths:**

In addition to meeting rooms, there are solutions specifically designed for making phone calls only. Acoustic solutions designed using different materials (such as felt or polyester fiber, etc.) to provide sound insulation are especially used for phone calls.

### **Corridor Solutions:**

These are solutions designed for new-generation offices' open workspaces to move away from the crowd to make phone calls, take a break with a few people, have a coffee, talk, etc. The corridors in this design also provide movement by breaking the monotony of long passages. It is also possible to complement these corridors with small niches.

### **CONCLUSION**

New-generation offices provide spaces where employees have the opportunity for collaborative work, interact in social areas, and have mobile working options. They also focus on features such as adapting to different work styles (individual or collaborative), enhancing concentration, and supporting productivity. New-generation offices offer interactive and activity-focused spaces to motivate employees and stimulate creativity. The purpose of this study is to detail workspaces and office designs in line with changing world conditions and changes in work culture. These designs are carefully planned to promote collaboration, support employee well-being, and increase productivity to meet new needs and expectations.



New-generation office designs are an important factor for companies to gain a competitive advantage and satisfy their employees. Employees want to work in an efficient work environment, be in an atmosphere that encourages teamwork, and keep their motivation high. Therefore, it is important for companies to shape their workspaces and office designs according to the needs and expectations of their employees. In the future business world, successful companies will adopt an employee-centric approach and use new-generation office designs to increase employee productivity, strengthen collaboration, and make the work environment more motivating. This way, companies will gain a competitive advantage and create a successful organization by increasing employee satisfaction and loyalty.

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