

Keys to Designing your Modern Workplace

Design your modern workspace to tap into your greatest competitive advantage



Your company may transform over the years, but your employees will always remain your strongest asset. The creative ability they bring to their jobs stands out as a unique source of innovation in a way no technological advancement can. With the right tools and room to unleash their creative approaches to their work, true innovation is born.

It takes a holistic approach to create an environment that caters to an employee's best results, while playing to their creative strengths.

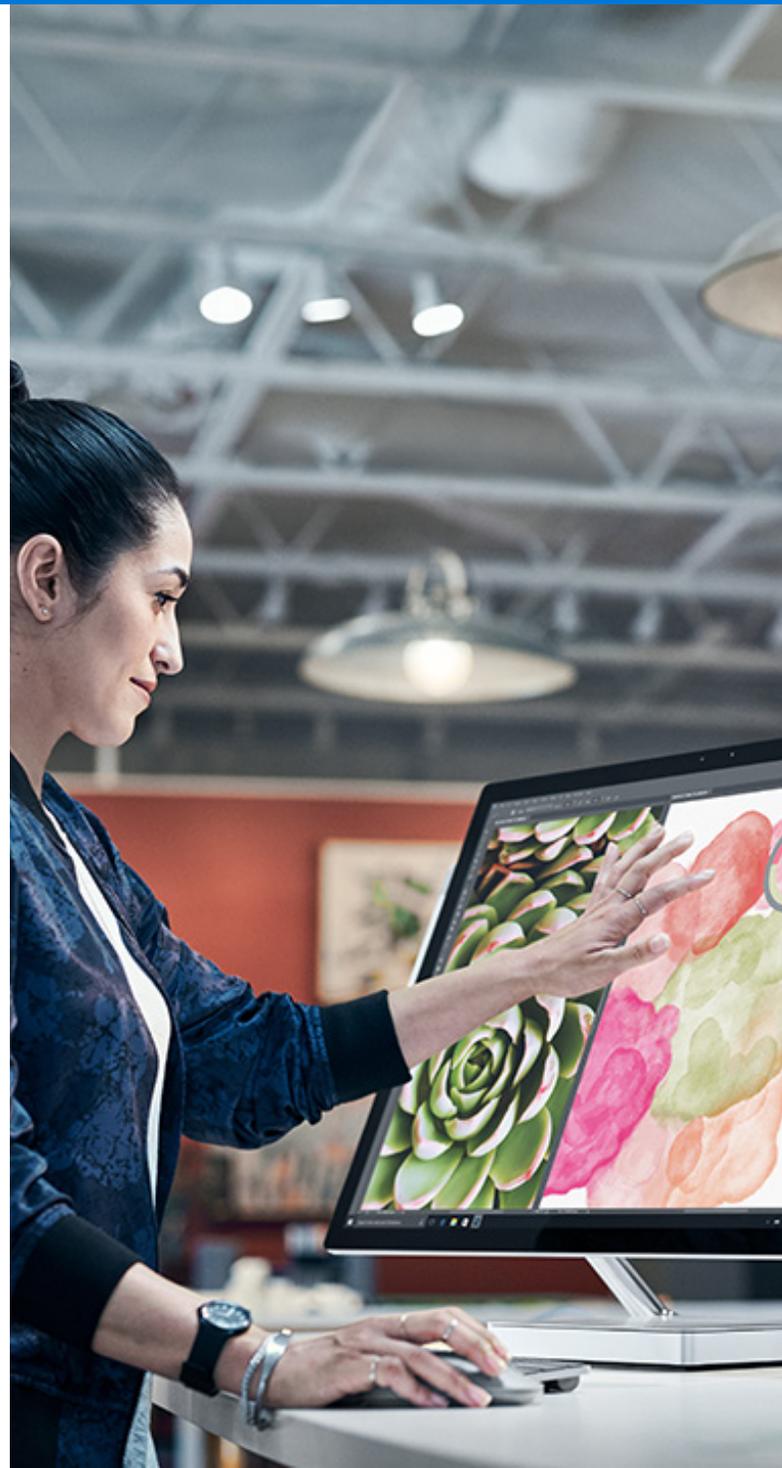
In fact, **your employees' creativity is your best competitive advantage.** Whereas focusing on automated productivity may enhance your business' ability to perform linear work, business leaders who focus on enhancing creative ability allow their employees to focus on what matters most.

Why creativity matters

73% of workers believe their future financial success depends on their ability to be creative.¹

69% of workers believe they are not living up to their creative potential.¹

61% of leaders don't think their company is creative.²





Leading businesses are quickly learning how important it is to improve communication, enhance collaboration, and support creativity in all its forms. With tools like the Surface family of devices, that's more possible than ever before.

It doesn't stop just at technology. Playing to your employees' creative strengths takes a holistic approach. To enhance creativity, flexibility, and productivity, the best companies build around these three pillars.



PEOPLE



SPACES



TECHNOLOGY

The challenge remains, innovate to match today's complex challenges or become outpaced. Forward-thinking organizations are updating their business models, organizational structures, cultures, and workspaces to get ahead.

SECTION 01

The ways we work



Enhancing employee engagement

Today, we need all hands on deck. Disengaged employees can have a significantly negative effect on morale, productivity, and your bottom line.

We've got a disengagement crisis

1/3

1 in 3 workers is either somewhat or actively disengaged, according to a 2016 Steelcase survey.⁴

21%

Yet, organizations with a high level of engagement report 21% higher productivity.⁵

Look for opportunities to remove barriers to productivity and creativity, so that you can focus on inspiring the whole team.

What tools and spaces are you giving employees to ensure they're working to their best potential?

In the past, company leaders treated people, spaces, and technologies like completely separate entities. Workers only came together at predetermined points to compare and discuss issues, returning to their individual tasks. But businesses are finding new ways to holistically strategize how people interact with technology in the physical space. The lines are blurring, and workers are coming together more freely to collaborate—elevating their results in the process.

Complicated business problems are becoming more complex

Understanding the distinction between complicated and complex problems is important because they each require a different degree of strategies and tools. Stated simply, a complicated problem is predictable and linear, with a clear beginning, middle, and end. Complex problems are more challenging and less predictable, without a clear endpoint.



One way to think about it: Building a highway is *complicated*.



Managing urban congestion is *complex*.

In this era of rapid-fire ideas, the problems we face are far more likely to be complex.



INDIVIDUALS

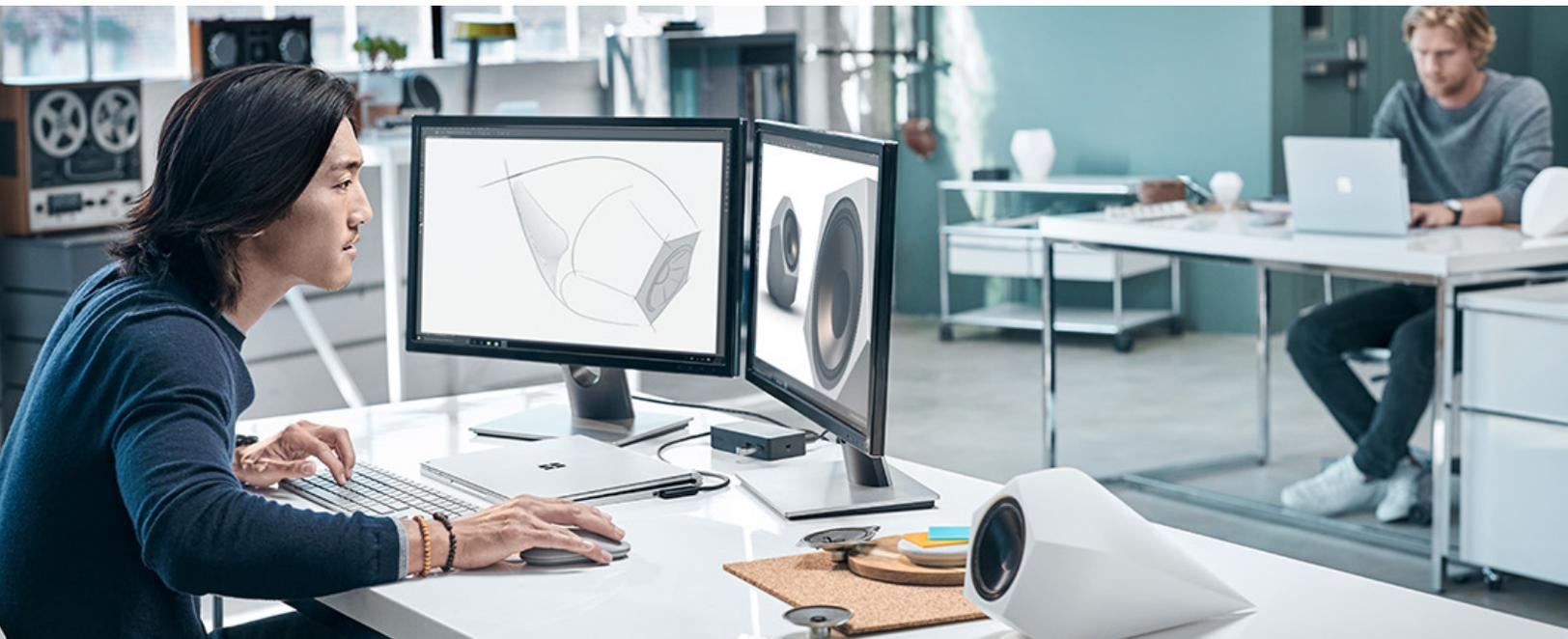
As problems become more complex, people will need opportunities and spaces to focus. By limiting distractions to quickly get into a productive workflow and stay there longer, they will be better able to set their own goals, focus on the challenges at hand, and apply their creative talents to developing innovative solutions.

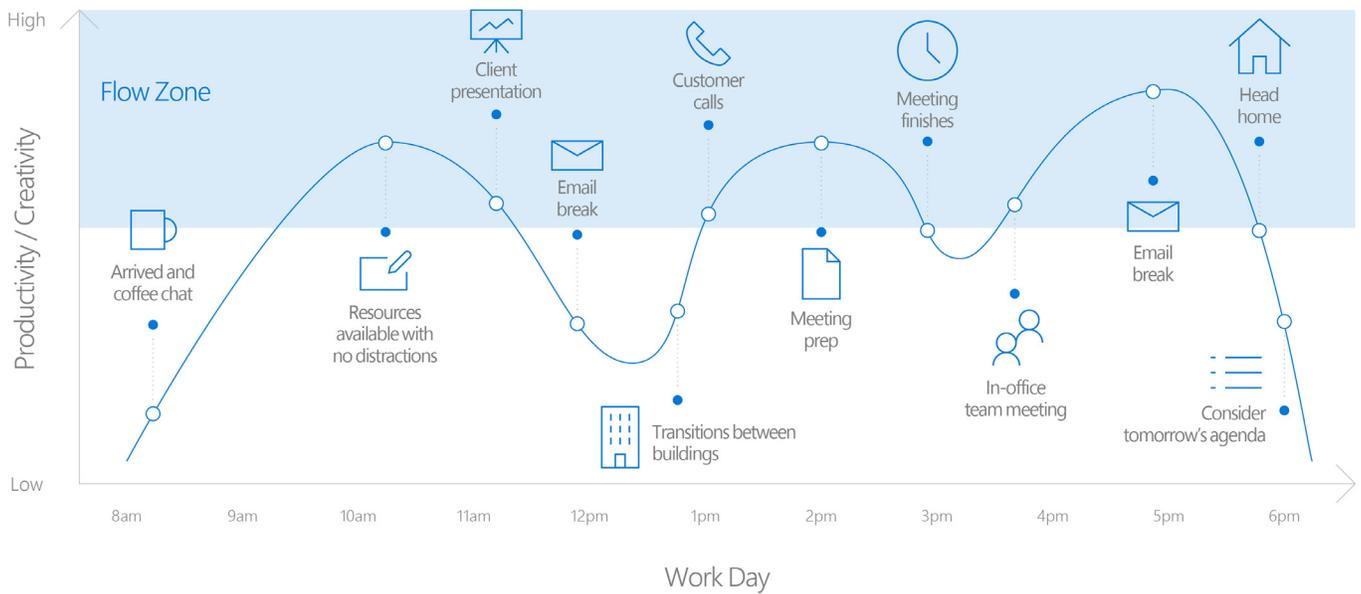


TEAMS

Because problems are more complex, it takes a lot more mind power to solve. Increasingly, they will require collaborative, creative brainstorming among dedicated teams.

Lagging, faulty, and outdated tech is the last thing your workers have time for when running between individual work and brainstorming sessions. When moving from independent to group work (and back again), they rely upon a device to function exactly the way they need it in the moment—quickly, efficiently, seamlessly, and effectively.





Working with the rhythm of the day

Today's complex problems and enhanced technology have drastically shifted the rhythm of a typical workday. Much of this change is due to a shift from a very linear, efficiency-focused workflow process to one that includes more creative work across various collaborative tasks. This creates new demands on people and the devices they use.

41% of employees now spend more time away from their desks than they did 2 years ago, many significantly so.³

Today's businesses are using technology and physical space to support the new ways that people are working.

Getting in the flow

Research suggests that the most effective outcomes come from a flow (an experiential state that occurs during full-capacity engagement). That's when people are most likely to perform at a level exceeding the demands of the task. In today's distracted workplace, flow is more important than ever. In short, flow achieves outcomes.

Even as today's office design encourages collaboration, workers still have the need for space and tech that allows not just for group productivity, but individual as well.



INDIVIDUALS

Your flow zone is where you do your best work. In today's fast-paced workplaces, individuals need to get into their "flow" faster—or distraction will tank productivity.



TEAMS

Group collaborative efforts are key to meeting today's complex business problems. So, it's also important to get everyone into a group flow zone.

SECTION 02

The right setting for your best work

Location design has a big impact on the work individuals and teams are able to do. Your workers should feel just as comfortable at work stations in close proximity as in meeting rooms for broader collaboration. Cramped cubicles, isolated corner offices, and stuffy meeting rooms are a thing of the past. Creating areas that support different work styles for different tasks ensures that your employees are more relaxed and achieving flow.

Is there room for improvement at your company?

29% of office meeting spaces are avoided because they don't meet employees' space- or technology-related needs.⁵

84% of workers say they can't easily express and share ideas.⁶

Inspiring creativity doesn't end with breakroom table tennis, stockpiled snack drawers, and colorful meeting spots. It requires innovative tools in thoughtfully designed collaborative spaces to support your team's unique creative processes, so that nothing stands between your workers and the things they wish to create.



INDIVIDUALS

When working independently, employees are fully immersed in the devices they use. Privacy is also a major concern for employees seeking spaces where they can focus to unleash their creativity. So, spaces designated for individual work should be configured to keep information private and reduce visual distractions and ambient noise.



TEAMS

Teams need to be comfortable in the collaborative spaces that support brainstorming sessions. The right group spaces facilitate shoulder-to-shoulder interaction where teams can be productive without distractions.

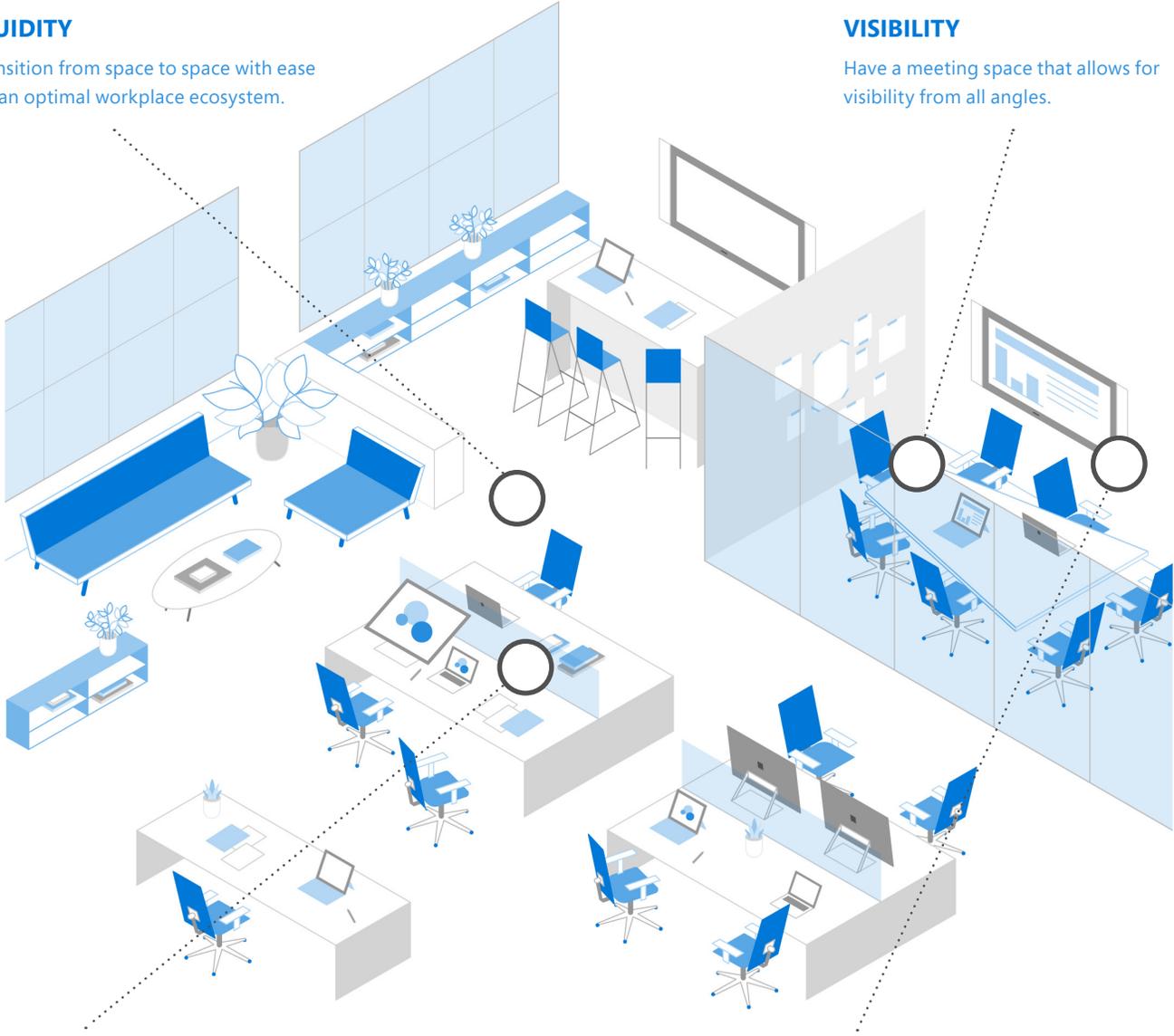
Things to consider when designing a well-balanced workspace:

FLUIDITY

Transition from space to space with ease for an optimal workplace ecosystem.

VISIBILITY

Have a meeting space that allows for visibility from all angles.



EQUAL PARTICIPATION

Seamlessly collaborate within the family of Surface devices based on a worker's specific needs.

CONNECTIVITY

Gain quick access to connect to hub.

It's clear: Workspaces must be designed to accommodate and empower both individual and teamwork by including areas that provide both privacy and collaborative environments.

Space isn't the only key factor at play. Your workers need the right tools to drive consistent usage and enhance engagement—which is where technology comes in.

SECTION 03

Where does technology fit?

Even with the right space, if you don't have the right technology, people won't use it. The best companies look at their investment holistically, so they're better able to support their employees' creativity.

Is it time to look at how you're investing in technology?

29% of office spaces are actively avoided by workers due to inadequate technology.³

1/4 1 in 4 employees would likely quit their jobs over poor workplace technology.⁷

Today's conference rooms are still too basic

Top 4 current conference room services⁸

Low-definition videoconferencing

70%

No wireless projectors

62%

No open guest Wi-Fi

52%

No audio conferencing

50%



The new ecosystem

In collaboration with Steelcase, we've learned that technology and space are more interdependent than we ever realized. We found that the technology available in the workplace makes a huge difference in the quality of work as an outcome of that space.

The fact of the matter is that companies that don't seize the opportunity to invest in technology to build employee engagement will become surpassed by those who do.

EVALUATE YOUR WORKPLACE



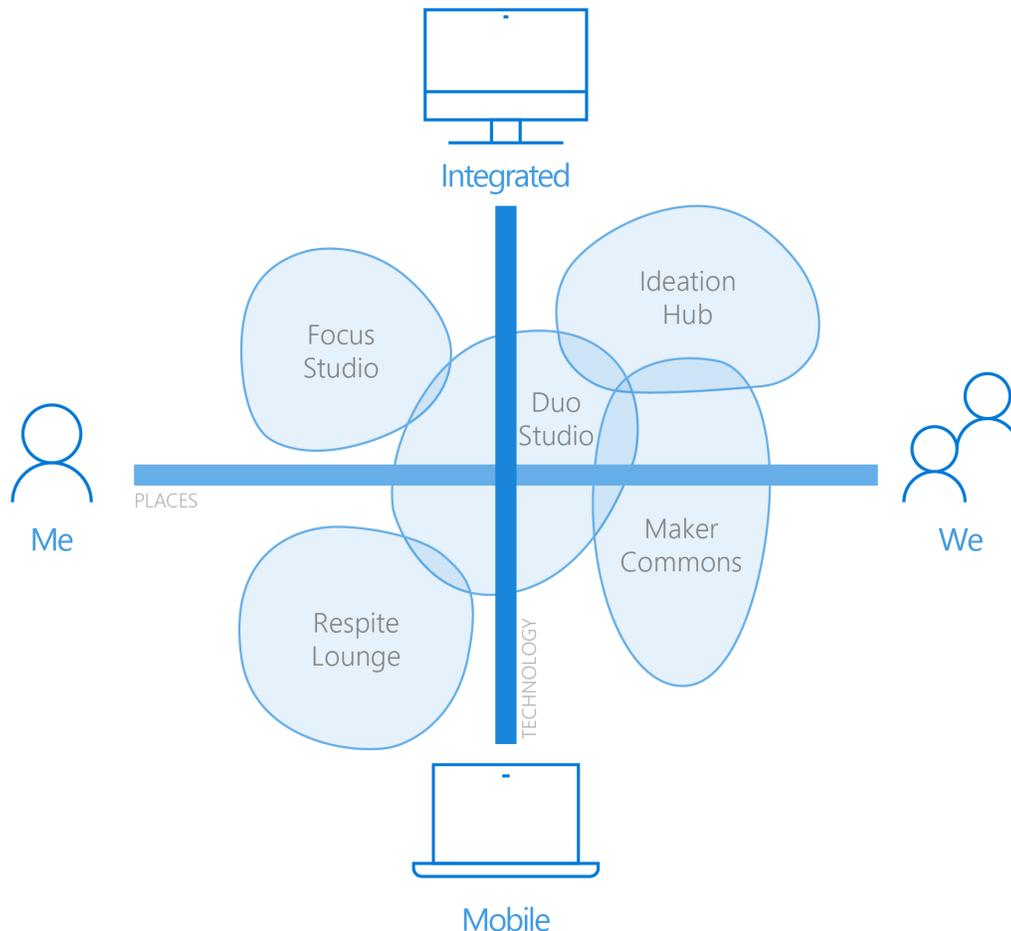
INDIVIDUALS

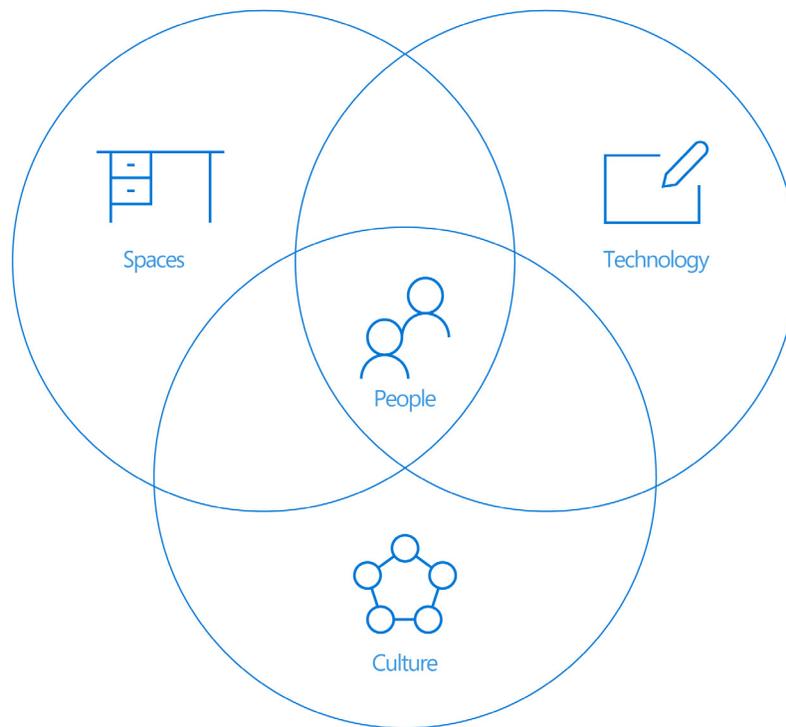
Workers need the ideal balance of performance and versatility in a lightweight package that can be docked to larger screens when needed. With a [Surface](#) device, an individual can capture ideas as they happen, wherever they are.



TEAMS

To harness creative energy, the entire Surface family is optimized for capturing, sharing, and nurturing ideas. When they're collaborating to solve a problem or brainstorming ideas, teams can come together seamlessly to keep things moving, wherever they're located.





Here's what we know:

People play a crucial role in your company's success, and their ideas will be your competitive advantage. By holistically looking at people, technology, and the spaces in which they work, you can inspire great work. One thing's certain: We must transform to meet today's complex challenges. Now.

The good news is that you don't need to make a massive change in your workplace right away. Test it out in a

collaboration space or at a smaller scale. By taking simple steps now and a trial-and-error approach to determine what works best for you, you will be paving the way forward for your company's future success. The important thing is to get started now. Microsoft can help.

Talk with an expert who can help you identify the Surface devices that best fit your team's needs.

Sources:

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