

Show bright public face by design

Stephen Parkins, the chief executive of Parramatta-based Apex Executive Interiors, writes about the trends in Parramatta office designs.

As the CEO or business owner you already know the public face of your company is of utmost importance.

There has been a trend in the last couple of years to upgrade reception areas and boardrooms to “put your best foot forward” to your visiting public.

That’s fine but it neglects the other “public face” of your company: your people.

This is the “face” that answers your phones, chats on social media and talks to their friends at coffee shops.

Ignore their needs to your own detriment.

So, people first ...

The need to get the most bang for your buck has led to open areas of workstations in favour of closed offices.

Because of this, it is important in your office design to include quiet spaces such as small meeting rooms and informal meeting areas that allow your staff to collaborate.

Sizeable break-out spaces equipped with coffee machines, vending machines and some space where your knowledge workers can come to sit and think. These need to be

strategically placed.

Reception areas ...

You only get one chance to make a first impression. Your reception area should instantly tell your visitors what sort of company they are about to deal with.

If you have a catalogue-bought reception counter then that’s fine — as long as you are a small accountant doing tax returns for \$99.

Your clients would likely not expect to see anything else.

If you are a business proposing to charge your clients hundreds of dollars an hour for your professional services then you had better think again.

Your reception and greeting area should be customised to suit your needs.

Boardrooms ...

They have evolved. The old dark mahogany table with the full-height cabinetry enveloping the room is simply no more.

The new-look is minimal yet filled with technology.

Interactive projectors, monitors and projection

screens are now standard.

They are now more than boardrooms, they do training, host internal and external meetings, conference calls and, of course, birthdays. We call them multifunction rooms.

Workstations ...

They don’t need to be lavish and expensive but they need to be functional and, of course, comfortable.

It is important to keep front of mind that people sit at workstations, not chickens!

Give them a space that shows respect to both their work and themselves and you will soon see the difference in their attitude and work output. I read an article in the paper a few weeks back that stated in economic terms that what we are now experiencing is the new norm.

We must all adapt to our environment and embrace reality.

If you think though that this means you should sit on the fence and not make any decisions “until after the election” you will be left behind by your more assertive future-focused competition.

For more information about Apex Executive Interiors visit apexei.com.au or contact 02 9635 9100.

