

The busy, noisy, modern office 嘈杂繁忙的现代化办公室

Vocabulary: Work 词汇: 工作

Can you **concentrate** in a crowded environment? If you want to work in a modern office you'd better start getting used to it. Millions of workers spend their long **shifts** in **open-plan offices** these days. And your co-workers? Well, don't stretch your arms out too far or you might knock over their cup of coffee!

Offices today might have the latest computers, but the idea of having dozens of workers gathered in a big room isn't new. Henry Ford, the American **industrialist** of the late 19th and early 20th Centuries, had a lot to do with that. The owner of the famous Ford cars loved **efficiency** - one of the main themes in the story of open-plan offices.



Would you work in a place like this?

Companies say they use these layouts to encourage communication and **collaboration** among **staff**. But does this really happen?

Franklin Becker, social psychologist at Cornell University in the US, doesn't think so. He says: "The fundamental reason why open-plan **has taken root** has to do with the fact that you can reduce the amount of space **per person** in an open-plan versus any kind of closed cellular office."

Becker says that if you put walls amongst the desks, offices would look like prison cells. But a big room feels different, so having lots of workers is acceptable.

Although an open-plan office can save a company money, they might have a negative impact on **productivity**.

Sound expert Julian Treasure, chairman of the Sound Agency, explains: "We have bandwidth for about 1.6 people talking. If I'm trying to do work it requires me to listen to a voice in my head to organise a **flow** of words and put them on paper. If you're talking at the same time, then you're taking up one of my 1.6. I'm left with 0.6 in my head."

Well, it sounds like that big report you have to finish by **end of play** might be just a whisper inside your head struggling against all that **chatter** around you.

So, do you like open-plan offices?

词汇表请参看答案与词汇部分

Quiz 测验

阅读短文并回答问题。

1. True or false? *According to the article, one problem of working in an open-plan office is that workers steal each other's coffee.*
2. Who does the article say is an important figure in the history of open-plan offices?
3. True or false? *Social psychologist Franklin Becker believes that the real reason that open plan offices have become common because more people can fit into them than into traditional, smaller, closed offices.*
4. Why might offices with walls between desks not be popular?
5. True or false? *Sound expert Julian Treasure says that listening to a colleague's voice uses up all the 'bandwidth' that we have for listening to voices both inside and outside our heads.*

Exercise 练习

请你在不参考课文的情况下完成下列练习。从每个表格中选择一个意思合适的单词填入句子的空格处。

1. Nowadays it's all about _____. There's no time to talk to your co-workers.

communication	productivity	collaboration	chatter
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2. The staff _____ at the entrance hall to greet the new owner of the factory.

taken	organised	joined	gathered
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3. It might take a while for the new idea to _____.

take roots	takes root	take root	take the root
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4. I have so much homework to do but I find it difficult to _____ when I'm hungry.

communicate	knock down	concentrate	collaborate
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5. The university wants someone who can understand people's behaviour in the community. They're looking for _____.

an industrialist	a social psychologist	a chairman	a co-worker
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Answers and Glossary 答案与词汇

Quiz 小测验

1. True or false? *According to the article, one problem of working in an open-plan office is that workers steal each other's coffee.* **False. The article warns workers not to stretch their arms out because they might knock each other's coffee over.**
2. Who does the article say is an important figure in the history of open-plan offices? **The American industrialist Henry Ford.**
3. True or false? *Franklin Becker believes that the real reason that open plan offices have become common because more people can fit into them than into traditional, smaller, closed offices.* **True.**
4. Why might offices with walls between desks not be popular? **According to social psychologist Franklin Becker, they remind people of prison cells.**
5. True or false? *Sound expert Julian Treasure says that listening to a colleague's voice uses up all the 'bandwidth' that we have for listening to voices both inside and outside our heads.* **False. He says we have a 'bandwidth' of about 1.6. Listening to a colleague's voice uses about 1.0, leaving us with 0.6 in our heads.**

Exercise 练习

1. Nowadays it's all about **productivity**. There's no time to talk to your co-workers.
2. The staff **gathered** at the entrance hall to greet the new owner of the factory.
3. It might take a while for the new idea to **take root**.
4. I so much homework to do but I find it difficult to **concentrate** when I'm hungry.
5. The university wants someone who can understand people's behaviour in the community. They're looking for **a social psychologist**.

Glossary 词汇表

to concentrate	集中注意力
shift	当班时间
open-plan office	开放式办公室
industrialist	工业家
efficiency	效率
collaboration	合作
staff	员工
to take root	建立；确立
per person	人均
productivity	生产力；生产率
flow	某事物的持续或连续供应（量）
end of play	下班的时候
chatter	喋喋不休的说话声