



Contemporary Office Design

EXAMPLE

Summary Writing

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Student

Two types of lesson

Lesson#1: [Easy] ***** [B2/C1]

1. Try to predict the content of the text. Write down key terms & ideas.
2. Read the text & check words & meanings with a dictionary.
3. Identify the key points & support & complete the **outline**.
4. Write the summary – only one paragraph (200-250 words).
5. Check key points with the **completed outline & model answer** (try to achieve 4 key points and 4 support points).
6. Answer critical thinking questions & check answers.

Lesson #2: [Hard] ***** [C1]

1. Read text – no dictionary.
2. Identify key points and support.
3. Write the summary – only one paragraph (200-250 words).
4. Check key points with the **completed outline & model answer** (try to achieve 4 key points and 4 supporting points).
5. Answer critical thinking questions & check answers.

Teacher

Two types of lesson

Lesson#1: [easy] ***** [B2/C1]

1. Distribute text a week /day before the test. Students read, check vocabulary & meanings.
2. Test day – distribute a **new copy of text** and **summary question**.
3. Set 1 hour to read text, take notes and write a one-paragraph summary of 200-250 words.
4. Feedback¹: take in and mark [use correction code*].
5. Feedback²: distribute **completed outline & model answer**.
6. Summary Marking: Should contain at least 4 main ideas with support – see Summary Key Points pg.21.
7. Extra: Answer critical thinking questions / group discussion (30 minutes).

Lesson #2: [hard] ***** [C1]

1. Set 1 hour to read the **text** and write a one-paragraph summary of 200-250 words.
3. Feedback¹: take in and mark [use correction code*].
4. Feedback²: distribute **completed outline & model answer**.
5. Summary Marking: Should contain at least 4 main ideas with support – see Summary Key Points p.21.
6. Extra: Answer critical thinking questions / group discussion (30 minutes).

Correction code*: www.academic-englishuk/error-correction

Contemporary Office Design

by H. Kennedy (2020)

The idea of working in an office once conjured up an image of people sitting at their desks in a cramped cubicle surrounded by [redacted] them. These days, office design has changed significantly with many high-profile companies such as [redacted]. Although it has [redacted] having an open plan office meant “workers were fitter and less stressed” (Counter, 2020 para. 2), in more recent times, the open plan [redacted] on well-being, productivity and teamwork.

Designing an office encompasses many factors including space, light, temperature and layout. Research has shown [redacted] impact on an employee’s health and performance. As stated by Soriano et al. (2018, p. 4), an office worker [redacted] the environmental [redacted] of [that] person to manage them”. Plus, if the activation level, that is to say the mental stimulation needed to be able to carry [redacted] that they cannot control, their performance will suffer. They also report that not only office [redacted] also those who have to interact with more people are most affected (Soriano et al., 2018). It [redacted] carefully consider the design of their offices.

Although the shift towards more open plan offices first appeared over fifty years ago, it has [redacted] felt since the [redacted] plan office for three main reasons. According to Counter (2020), the principal ideas are to increase [redacted] amongst staff, as well as strengthening relationships by removing hierarchies. However, several studies have shown that an open plan office does not come without [redacted] in offices which became open plan, “face-to-face interactions fell by 70%”. This was attributed to the “ [redacted] show they prefer [redacted] and are therefore left alone. However, Taskin (2020) claims that employees have less privacy in [redacted] Morrison and [redacted]. They report that female employees felt it resulted in their feeling as if they were being watched, so much so that [redacted] privacy could also lead to an increase in anxiety and stress, which in turn influences performance and productivity.

Another element of contemporary offices is hot desking. Put simply, it is the idea of moving away from [redacted] a typical desk is [redacted] of the time (Evans, 2020), the idea behind it is to save time. Yet many in the field believe it has had the opposite effect. [redacted] could be successful in smaller offices, in larger companies it can lead employees to waste more time when finding themselves unable [redacted] the group of employees that could be most affected by hot desking are trainees and new members of staff, who at [redacted] an increase in their [redacted] that support is not at an assigned desk. Moreover, Evans (2020) suggests that hot desking could result in an increase in noise levels and [redacted] may

be due to the fact that [REDACTED], this might not be to everyone's benefit.

It is likely that the idea [REDACTED] again, and several suggestions have been put forward by those in the field to be able to adapt offices for the coming years. [REDACTED]", that is, staff from different companies working side by side, which could increase an employee's networks, productivity, and trust in others and reduce [REDACTED] be designed with a "specific performance outcome" in mind (Waber et al., 2014, p. 3), which suggests that only [REDACTED] if required. This is echoed by Bernstein & Waber (2019) who also recommend not necessarily re-designing the whole space but simply making small [REDACTED] communal items. Moreover, they propose that current office managers conduct experiments to discover [REDACTED]

In sum, it is difficult to define what is the most beneficial design [REDACTED] most important [REDACTED] design to their employees to ensure staff well-being and the company's efficiency are at their highest.

References

Bernstein, E., and Waber, B. (2019). The Truth About Open Offices [online]. Harvard Business Review. [Viewed 2 April 2020]. Available from: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] company [online]. Forbes. [Viewed 2 April 2020]. Available from: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/simonconstable/2019/06/20/how-hot-desking-will-kill-your-company/#49db398532e9>

Counter, R., (2020). Return to the [REDACTED] 3 April 2020]. Available from: <https://www.macleans.ca/society/life/office-workers-want-a-return-to-the-cubicle/>

[REDACTED] hip office design [online]. *Financial Times*. [Viewed 2 April 2020]. Available from: <https://www.ft.com/content/6990b29e-11d5-11ea-a225-db2f231cfeae>

Morrison, R. L. and Smollan, R. K., (2019). Open plan office space? If you're going to do it, do it right: A fourteen-month longitudinal case study. *Applied Ergonomics* [online]. **82**, 1 – 18. [Viewed 2 April 2020]. Available from [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] to Work Performance: The Role of Work Patterns. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* [online]. **15**(8), 1 – 13. [Viewed 2 April 2020]. Available from: [REDACTED]

Taskin, L. et al., (2019). The dark side of office designs: towards de-humanization [online]. *New Technology Work and [REDACTED]* from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/336382070_The_dark_side_of_office_designs_towards_de-humanization

Waber, B. et al., (2014). Workspaces that move people [online]. *Harvard Business Review*. [Viewed 3 April 2020]. Available from: [REDACTED]

Summary Key Points

Take notes on the key points of the article.

1. Main idea:
Support:
2. Main idea:
Support:
3. Main idea:
Support:
4. Main idea:
Support:
5. Main idea:
Support:

Summary Key Points ANSWERS

A good summary should have the 5 main ideas and 2 points of support for each main idea.

1. Main idea: Evolution of the contemporary office.
<p>Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [REDACTED] • Present = open plan. Google & Facebook's offices are like this. • [REDACTED] Open plan = criticised for negative effects: well-being, productivity, teamwork.
2. Main idea: [REDACTED]
<p>Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Factors: [REDACTED] health & performance (Soriano et al., 2018). • Employee = [REDACTED]. • If activation (mental stimulation) is too high = performance suffers. • Employee [REDACTED]
3. Main idea: Open plan offices are not as beneficial as once thought.
<p>Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasons for open plan: [REDACTED], strengthen relations (Counter, 2020). • Research = [REDACTED] (Bernskin & Waber, 2019). • Less privacy (Taskin, 2020). • [REDACTED] (Morrison & Smollan, 2019).
4. Main idea: The issues of hot-desking.
<p>Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evans (2020) suggests [REDACTED] • Constable (2019) believes it works in small but not large offices as it takes too long to locate colleagues. • Trainees & new [REDACTED] • Noise, distractions & decrease in collaboration. (Evans, 2020).
5. Main idea: Suggestions for future offices.
<p>Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coworking [REDACTED] = increase in employee's networks, productivity, and trust in others and reduce isolation (Waber et al., 2014). • Office space = [REDACTED] • Make small modifications to the furniture or placement of [REDACTED] (Bernstein & Waber, 2019). • [REDACTED] to see what works best (ibid).

Summary

Task: Write a 200-250 word summary on the key features of the text.

Word count: _____

Contemporary Office Design - Model Summary

[REDACTED] cubicles where no interaction took place to open plan spaces favoured today by [REDACTED]. While Counter [REDACTED] office staff are fitter and less stressed in open plan [REDACTED] impact on [REDACTED] has been highlighted. In office design, layout, temperature, space and light need to be [REDACTED] [REDACTED] (Soriano, 2018). Employees have to balance the requirements of the environment with their [REDACTED] is too high or their tasks too complex with the need for more interactions, their work suffers. Although Counter (2020) [REDACTED] increase [REDACTED] and strengthen relations, Bernskin & Waber (2019); Taskin (2020); Morrison and Smollan (2019) found the opposite. [REDACTED] office. Although [REDACTED] (Evans, 2020), Constable (2019) believes it does not work in large offices because of the time it takes to locate colleagues. [REDACTED] spaces. Providing 'coworking' spaces; where staff from different companies work side [REDACTED] 2014) to [REDACTED] office space with a specific performance outcome in mind. Bernstein & [REDACTED] or placement of particular communal items, but managers should do experiments to see what [REDACTED].

245 words

Critical Thinking Questions

i) What's the stance of the author? What is the evidence for this?

[2 points]

ii) Is this a credible article? Yes /no – why?

[2 points]

iii) Highlight four ideas in the text you would use for an essay on 'How effective are open plan offices?'

[4 points]

iv) Highlight two areas in the text that you question, disagree with or lack evidence

[2 points]

Critical Thinking Questions ANSWERS

i) What's the stance of the author? What is the evidence for this?

*The author doesn't believe that there's one design that suits all office spaces, but she feels that employee well-being is important. She makes this clear in her conclusion:
"It is difficult to define what is the most beneficial design for today's offices. What is most [redacted] to ensure staff well-being and the company's efficiency are at their highest'.*

[2 points]

ii) Is this a credible article? Yes /no – why?

*Yes, good source choice with eight credible sources used.
But who is the author [redacted] publication. Probably a good idea to use the primary sources.*

[2 points]

iii) Highlight four ideas in the text you would use for an essay on 'How effective are open plan offices?'

P1: Offices in the past = desks in a [redacted] with little interaction between them.

P1: Offices in the present = open plan – favoured by high-profile companies such as Google and Facebook.

P1: Open plan office meant "workers were fitter and less stressed" (Counter, 2020 para. 2), 2020).

ALL ANSWERS ARE INCLUDED IN PAID VERSION...

[4 points]

iv) Highlight two areas in the text that you question, disagree with or lack evidence

P1: Why are workers fitter and less stressed in open plan offices? [What studies were done to support this? How would the result change if the open plan space is small or large?]

P1: Who criticised the open plan office for its negative effects? [Where's the evidence for this?]

ALL ANSWERS ARE INCLUDED IN PAID VERSION...