



Perkins+Will Wins Architectural Record's "Good Design is Good Business Award"

[NEWS]

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Award Recognizes the Business-Savvy Design of Four of the Firm's Own Studios

Perkins+Will knows that when it comes to good business, good design can make or break a successful enterprise. So when the firm set out last year to design four of its own studios—[Chicago](#), [Minneapolis](#), [New York](#), and [Seattle](#)—its design teams employed the same research-based, transformative design strategies that they use for their clients. The result was a series of highly responsive offices that adapt to Perkins+Will's business needs while increasing staff satisfaction, productivity, and performance—and, to top it off, a 2017 "Good Design is Good Business" Award from Architectural Record.

"It's quite an honor to receive this award, which recognizes exemplary architectural solutions that contribute to the growth and success of business," says Phil Harrison, Perkins+Will's CEO. "But this award is particularly meaningful to us because we were our own 'client' for all four projects, and we had the opportunity to experience for ourselves the benefits of what we offer our clients. We walked our talk, and the results speak for themselves."

Four Studios, Four Designs

Perkins+Will designers and workplace strategists set out to achieve four primary objectives for each studio:

- Increase collaboration
- Enable choice
- Promote health and wellbeing
- Embrace and optimize sustainability

Strategies employed to achieve these objectives included increasing the number of shared spaces and integrated technologies in collaboration areas; offering a greater continuum of workspace types, including active, quiet, private, collaborative, and social areas; using healthy, nontoxic, and sustainable materials and avoiding those on Perkins+Will's Precautionary List; and, when possible, ensuring close access to amenities like fitness centers, outdoor terraces, or bike storage. In fact, all four offices are now undergoing [Fitwel Certification](#).

"The new studios showcase best practices in workplace planning and design, enabling visiting clients to experience the potential of their own spaces," says **Rachel Casanova**, co-leader of Perkins+Will's Planning and Strategies practice. "Our design features elements we frequently propose, and it provides great opportunities for clients to see concepts in action."

Measuring Business Success

Perkins+Will convened in-house experts in design, strategy, and research to conduct interviews with staff, administer custom surveys, and lead observational studies in each of the four studios. This included issuing a confidential, standardized workplace effectiveness survey known as the [Leesman Index](#) to measure how well the offices support their employees. (The Leesman Index assesses workplace design effectiveness by benchmarking an office's survey results against a database of over 200,000 survey responses from around the world.)

The data collected from this research confirm that Perkins+Will's investment in the design of its workplaces has enhanced employee satisfaction, performance, and productivity. Overall, Perkins+Will scored 8.3 points above Leesman's best-performing workplaces and 20.2 points above Leesman's baseline workplaces. Employee satisfaction related to activities ranked most important, such as the ability to meet both formally and informally and to collaborate on creative work, which measured over 90 percent satisfaction. Moreover, based on the post-occupancy evaluation of the Minneapolis studio, staff there reported a 61 percent increase in "sense of community" and a 62 percent increase in "energy/buzz."

"Prior to our office move, we conducted a pilot program called Mobileapolis, which allowed us to test the concept of 100-percent-unassigned space, as well as new technology. The pilot gave us the opportunity to perfect our approach, and it is a resounding success in our new space," says Lisa Pool, co-leader of Perkins+Will's Planning and Strategies practice. "In fact, our mobility concept has set off a new trend in the Twin Cities, with architectural and design firms regularly asking to tour our space for inspiration, and some even emulating the approach."

The designs of each Perkins+Will studio were also heavily influenced by research into the built environment's impact on human biology, psychology and wellbeing.

"Neuroscience and psychology reveal how interaction with the built environment can drive

healthier behaviors, yielding positive experiences that support greater satisfaction, performance, and productivity,” says Dr. Eve Edelstein, Ph.D., director of Perkins+Will’s Human Experience Lab. “Our approach to evaluating our design began with these fundamental brain-and-body principles.”

Good Design is Good Business Award

Architectural Record’s annual Good Design Is Good Business Awards recognize projects for their contributions to attracting and retaining talent, enhancing employee well-being, improving community relations, increasing productivity, acquiring more customers, and boosting the client’s bottom line. The awards honor the architects and clients who best use design to achieve these strategic objectives.

To read more about Perkins+Will’s award-winning, business-savvy workplace designs, see the April 2017 issue of Architectural Record, or visit

<http://www.architecturalrecord.com/articles/12471-perkinswill-offices-by...>

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