



Get comfy: Optimal thermal comfort

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The average American spends 8.7 hours a day at their office and work 1,790 hours annually. With a 40+ hour work week, it is imperative that the quality of the work environment is conducive to productivity. People often have no choice in the amount of time they spend within the confines of the office, so it is up to the executives and property owners to maintain satisfactory standards. Although there are many factors that go into workplace health and wellbeing, one important way to improve the employee experience is to provide ideal thermal comfort standards.

Optimal thermal comfort can be achieved only when the air temperature, humidity and air movement are within the specified range often referred to as the "comfort zone." Almost everyone can agree that being in an office setting that is either too hot or too cold can make the workday a less pleasant experience. This can lead to discomfort, distraction from their task at hand, and negatively impact their overall well-being. In turn this can lead to a decrease in motivation and reduced concentration at the office. These factors will significantly affect a company's bottom line and ultimately impact revenue. It is important that the decision makers within a company put thermal comfort at a high priority. To ensure proper thermal comfort is achieved, the MEP engineers must be consulted during the design and maintenance of an office space. For instance, a LEED Certified building may design to meet the ASHREA 55 standard. Additionally, surveys can be handed out to employees at set points during the year to gather feedback on how the building is performing and if comfort standards are being met.

Ensuring thermal comfort is beneficial for both the company as a whole and for the satisfaction and wellbeing of the employees. Comfortable employees are more productive, alert, and into their task at hand. Those working spend most of their time in an office setting and deserve a comfortable place to spend long hours. So take off the huge sweater, turn off the personal desk fan, and let the building mechanical systems work to make you comfortable.

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