

Innovation in the Workplace



Innovation in the workplace

A Steelcase Seminar

Designers
Course Number: 8603
Units: 0.1

Architects
Course Number: SC0721
Units: 1

Today nearly everyone agrees that innovation is the only way to supercharge an organization and shift it to growth. The ability to see new opportunities and harness resources to pursue them is a fundamental advantage for any organization, from super corporations to start-ups.

But many are uncertain about just how to make innovation happen, especially when the pressure to stay skinny and do more with less remains strong. Management wants to get the most out of every effort and avoid dead-ends, and by definition innovation is never a sure thing. At the same, thanks to advances in the social sciences and the growing influence of design thinking as a problem-solving methodology, more knowledge is available than ever before about how to incubate innovation and assure it flourishes.

By closely observing innovation in action in various organizations, Steelcase researchers have identified several critical components in the emerging science of innovation. Space is the stage for the overall experience and, as such, it needs to work hard on all fronts: supporting the business processes, positively influencing the culture, and fully accommodating the latest technology and tools. When seamlessly integrated, these components comprise a multi-dimensional “surround sound” that supports successful innovations, one after another.

This seminar focuses on the findings of secondary and primary research conducted by Steelcase, which included observation studies with clients that helped to identify innovation behaviors and processes in actual work settings. Adopting methodologies from anthropology and other social sciences, Steelcase’s Applied Research Consultants and WorkSpace Futures teams, in collaboration with architects, designers and corporations worldwide, are discovering new insights into the types of spaces that work hardest to support meaningful interactions, foster collaboration, and deliver on innovation.