"HOW" IT WORKS

A NEW WAY OF DESIGNING

The integration of knowledge of environmental psychology offers a new method of designing spaces by enabling designers to base design decisions on credible scientific research and to make righteous and legitimate presumptions about the impact of design elements on users. As a consequence clients and stakeholders can make better-informed financial decisions that can be an adequate basis for a business case.

The new way of designing not only involves the use and application of scientific literature, but also requires a **PRE DESIGN ANALYSIS (PDA),** a research study that assesses the current situation PRIOR to the design process. It yields information about problems and possibilities of the existing environment and the needs and wishes of users regarding their perception and use of the environment. The pre-design analysis ideally serves as input for the design team by showing opportunities, concerns and pitfalls of the current situation. By translating the results of the analysis into informed design decisions a tailor-made design is possible for each individual organization and its unique characteristics. Ideally this new design method requires the long-term commitment of an interdisciplinary team that stays involved during the whole design-process. To create empowerment, ownership and confidence in a new environment, D/Science ultimately also strongly encourages the participation of users in the design process.

EVALUATING DESIGNS

Feeling an economic and social responsibility that we cannot longer solely rely on assumptions that a new design will have the desirable effects, D/Science applies EVIDENCE-BASED DESIGN (EBD) to systematically evaluate the impact of environments on people. EBD implies an essential change in the way organizations think about, deliver and manage buildings. It reflects the ability of an organization to transform and innovate, a willingness to measure organizational outcomes and confront the results of an evaluation.

Effect-research, also known as a **POST-OCCUPANCY EVALUATION (POE),** is conducted in the new environment (after occupancy) with the purpose to evaluate the new environment regarding the quality and the actual effects of the designed environment on people's comfort, health and productivity. A POE therefore represents a vital opportunity in real estate to relate physical design features to organizational outcomes and employee perceptions regarding health, well-being and productivity. It offers insight into the performance of a building and to what extent the environment is successful in stimulating productivity, supporting behavioral lifestyle changes or facilitating the achievement of any other key performance indicator. If a pre-design analysis has been conducted prior to the design process, the study ideally can compare the 'old' to the 'new' situation, which allows much stronger conclusions about the factual impact of the new design (before-after comparison).

MONITORING EVALUATION at last implicates a repetition of the Post-Occupancy Evaluation (POE) to evaluate the stability of the effects of a design. Monitoring Evaluations can be conducted one time only or in a structural periodical manner to serve as a continuous source of information about the performance of the environment over time. The benefits of structural monitoring are that issues regarding the environment as a result of changes in the organization, new challenges, structural developments, employee or size modifications can be detected early and adaptations of the design can be made accordingly. The extent of a Monitoring Evaluation can be adjusted according to new insights gained along the way or changes that could not be accounted for in advance.

TIMELINE

Depending on the moment in time a research study is conducted, it can be used for different purposes. This timeline shows the different moments of research. A POE should be conducted no sooner than 6 months after a change.