

# HUDDLE UP: Small Spaces With Big Ideas



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Open plan office design has led to some interesting discussions and very forward-thinking ideas. Not the least of which is where and how these discussions take place.

Large conference room spaces have given way to smaller seating groups strategically positioned around the office for a quick huddle. These small spaces have big ideas for the unused spaces in your office by encouraging stylish collaboration on the fly.

With square footage at a premium, businesses of all sizes, professions and levels have begun creating these agile spaces as a way for impromptu idea sharing and collaboration. They're typically inexpensive to outfit and require little physical space. Awkward areas and unproductive corners can become the most productive places in the building with a few mindful updates.

Whether your office is just starting up, retrofitting, or you're just looking for more spaces to collaborate, you'll want to include these five must-haves in your huddle space design:

## **Multi-Tasking Furniture**

Huddle spaces are a great opportunity to try out a unique new look or furniture style in your office environment because they are meant to be a creative departure.

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A typical space would be wifi ready, accommodate 4-5 people and have a table or table top alternative. Experiment with it.

Have fun with color in these spaces and make them a destination! A grouping of colorful high-back chairs that are wired for connectivity will be a welcome departure from a cubicle for solo projects or creative group banter.

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## Monitors/Digital Display

When it comes to technology, fit out your huddle space with large wall mounted screens. Whether you're brainstorming concepts for the latest marketing video or analyzing data in a sales report, the availability of a display to screen share is critical. Go as big as your budget and your space allows. A 32"-50" range display is sufficient for most spaces.

When deciding on a mounting height, stay as close to eye level as possible. If the space is utilized for other purposes, plan for a creative solution to conceal the monitors when they are not in use.

## Whiteboards

Good old fashioned brainstorming often requires writing it out. Whether it's traditional white enamel, interactive or clear glass... ideas can ebb and flow quickly with whiteboards.

These are great for targeting an agenda so you stay on task, listing ideas you're not ready to act on yet, visualizing your priorities and providing an easy method to modify ideas when you're nar-

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rowing things down in a brainstorm session. At the end of your meeting, simply snap a few pictures of your work so you don't have to write it down again.

## Ambience

In an open plan concept, it's more important than ever to have designated collaboration spaces free from noise and distractions. Demountable glass walls have been a great solution for keeping things open and keeping light moving throughout the space.



If you have a dedicated presentation room, acoustical panels can absorb and prevent noise leakage in and out of the room. But don't stop there! Today's acoustic panels can make a huge design statement with color, pattern and texture.

A professional-grade microphone setup can significantly increase the quality of a meeting with native ambient noise reduction and full room coverage.

Natural lighting has been connected to better health and increased employee engagement. Even in open office environments window walls are avoided because they interfere with monitor display causing glare. Huddle spaces provide a great opportunity to take over a window wall. Providing a wide open view to inspire some outside the box thinking.

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## Video Collaboration

Telecommuters, remote workers or regional offices need not feel left out of the conversation. Video allows them to have a seat at the meeting from wherever they are. A videoconferencing solution is a smart investment to maintain collaboration from anywhere within the company.



When equipping your huddle room with videoconferencing, be sure to look for a solution that provides the same robust features found in a boardroom, like one-click calling, corporate directory with presence and guest user invites.

Just because you're meeting in the smaller room, your experience shouldn't be any different. HD video collaboration can dramatically improve the effectiveness of your huddle space.

Defining collaboration has driven the office design industry to some beautiful solutions for huddle spaces, multitasking reception areas and breakrooms, and taken odd little used corners to a whole new level of engagement.

Office Furniture NOW! has some great solutions to make your huddle space a success.

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