

# Nook provides an agile, effective system to nurture and champion the Neurodiverse workspace

**Much is being said about emerging from the current pandemic into a ‘new normal’ which embraces lessons learned from our time under lockdown. Certainly, where workplace routines are concerned, many employees are already questioning the patterns of old. If future planning is being discussed, neurodiversity must form a central part of the office-space conversation.**

The prevalent ‘one-size-fits-all’ nature of much of today’s open-plan workspace is unsuited to many current and potential employees. Everybody is to some extent differently abled - ways of thinking and operating differ from one person to the next and this neurodiversity cannot be shoehorned into one type of workspace. Indeed, to do so is a recipe for problems which result in higher-levels of employee absenteeism and burn-out.

The kind of implementations Nook is talking about are relatively simple, are proven to benefit all and do not mean a total re-design.

Relatively simple solutions exist for the three top considerations when creating a workspace suited to neurodiverse individuals :

- **Noise levels** - Noise permeates and impacts concentration, anxiety-levels and general wellbeing. Creating an environment that enables individuals to escape from noise is key, but also to sub-divide areas with differing functions and noise levels. Interestingly, an environment that is too quiet can also be an issue for many, preventing them from speaking up, making calls or expressing themselves fully.
- **Lighting** - Light is proven to have a powerful influence on mood, energy levels and the ability to process information. Light can be used zonally, creating pockets of space that are comfortable to individuals. Different colours create different moods and can help provide sensory support for autism, dyslexia and visual impairment.
- **Personal space.** It is important to enable employees to regulate their own personal space without making them feel like they are in the spotlight for doing so. Creating withdrawal spaces is key - discrete areas that provide separation without totally isolating users from the workspace. Placing these close to work desks enables people to hop casually into the space for respite or for a more intimate conversation.

By thinking about individuals, organisations start to perform better as a whole.

Many of the workspace changes suggested for neurodiverse individuals focus on wellbeing, on delivering havens of calm and the opportunity to take a break from the hubbub without isolating completely from colleagues. These priorities are now also high on the wish-list of *every* employee – priorities formulated as they experience new ways of working.

Now is the time to ensure that neurodiversity is a central part of that planning.

DESIGNED FOR WELLNESS AND NEURODIVERSITY. Built on the foundations of the most successful neuro-happy workspaces, Nook manages acoustics; allows the user to control lighting; and provides a personal withdrawal space which does not isolate.

**AN AGILE SYSTEM, BUILT FOR CHANGE.** Designed to maximise people density AND personal safety, Nook Huddle, Solo and Open spaces and accessories are mobile and modular. As an example, Solo can be deployed now as an open booth, converted to enclosed phone booth later. All Nooks are

**PUTTING HEALTH AND SAFETY UP FRONT.** Nook is tuned to provide shelter and protection without creating confinement.

## **About Nook**

NOOK – a New Type of Furniture for New Ways of Working.

With the rise of increasingly open plan workspaces, Nooks were created as a quiet refuge for introverts or those on the autistic spectrum in the workplace. Thanks to their mobility, flexibility, acoustic design and integrated technology, Nook is recognised for improving productivity, communication, and one of the hottest topics this year – wellbeing.

Workers need a focus space, a flexible area that encourages creativity and productivity in all its forms. And introverts? Well they need their privacy back, but actually, so do the extroverts. The point is that people – labels aside – should be provided places to have private conversations. And it needn't be at the cost of feeling isolated from the rest of the team; meeting rooms can again be returned to occupiers needing meetings, as opposed to being used for confidential conversations.

David O'Coimin, Nook Pod's Designer & CEO, is passionate about bringing New Ways Of Working, neuro-inclusivity and agility of space to organisations, believing that happy brains in happy spaces lead to better living and working. "Whether it's a small ad-hoc meeting that's required or a quiet personal focus zone, we're creating flexible intimate spaces accessible to everyone and helping organisations to take steps forward in addressing workplace wellbeing and productivity challenges" says David.

Acoustic comfort, privacy, enabled technology and instant flexibility are all incorporated in Nook to counterbalance what has been missing for the last few years. Better focus, greater engagement and quite simply some peace and quiet will lead to a noticeable improvement in personal wellbeing.

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