

KNOWLEDGE WORKER PRODUCTIVITY



"Is there a 'Holy Grail' to measure productivity?"

If only we had it, we could prove our choices - lower panels, white noise, blue walls, more natural light, etc. - have a positive effect on productivity (or not). We'd be able to prove causation with proven data instead of subjective opinions.

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A research team formed by Advanced Workplace Associates (AWA) and the Center for Evidence Based Management (CEBMA) set out to determine what is known about effectively measuring workplace productivity.

They found six factors that had high statistical correlation with the performance of teams involved with knowledge work. In order.....

6 factors

- social cohesion
- perceived supervisory support
- information sharing
- vision and goal clarity
- external communication
- trust

800

individual
research papers

35

meta
analyses



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01

SOCIAL COHESION

psychologically safe environment

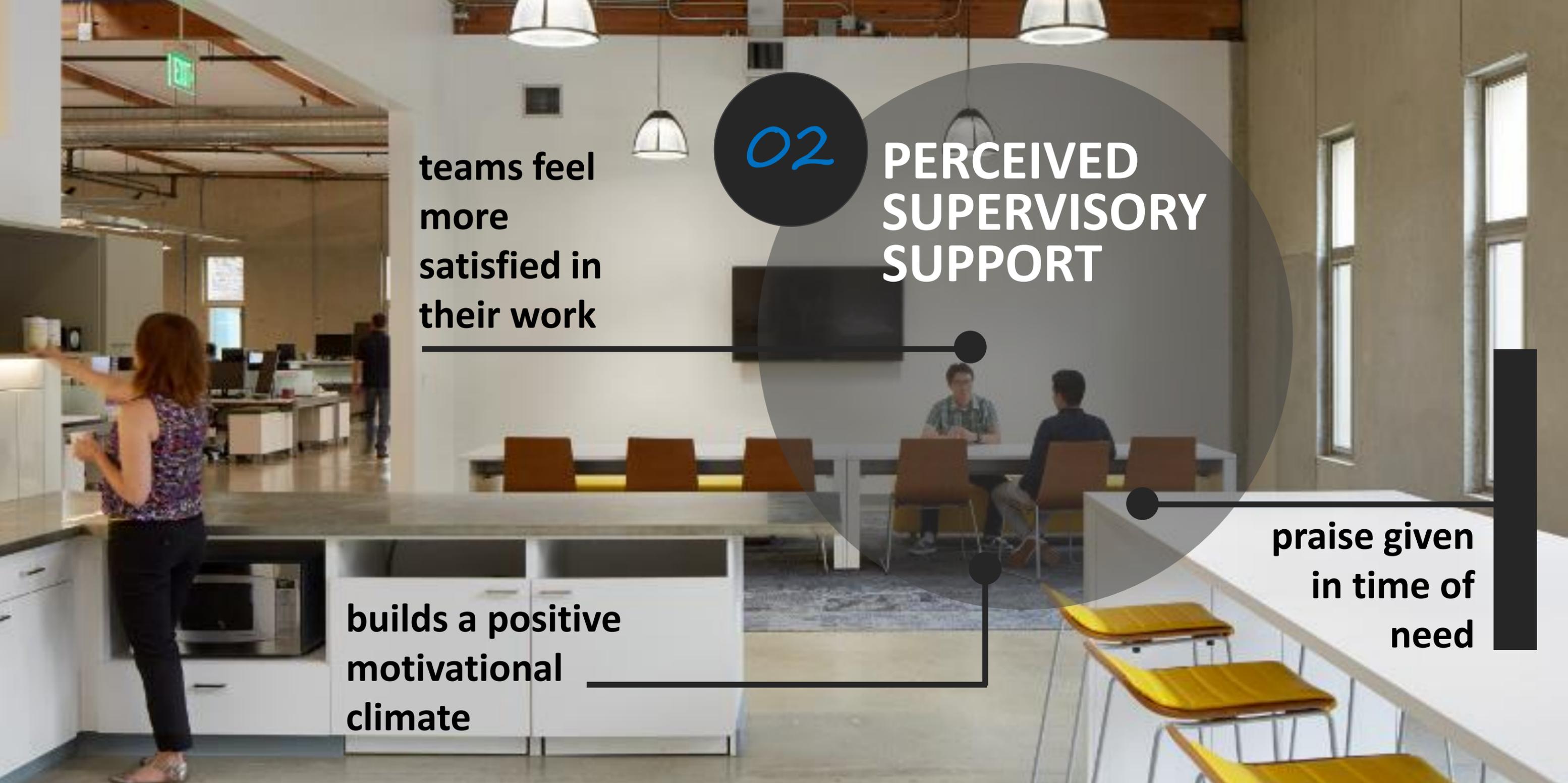
take judicious risks

exchange of ideas more likely



"Members of our team help each other on the job."





02

PERCEIVED SUPERVISORY SUPPORT

teams feel more satisfied in their work

builds a positive motivational climate

praise given in time of need



"My supervisor is willing to extend him or herself in order to help me perform my job to the best of my ability."

strongly disagree



strongly agree



03

INFORMATION SHARING

utilize each team member's distinctive knowledge

improved decision making

enhanced team performance



"Our team members share their experience or know-how with other team members."





04

VISION AND GOAL CLARITY

vision sets direction

clarity focuses team priorities

"If I have more than one goal to accomplish, I know which ones are most important and which are least important."



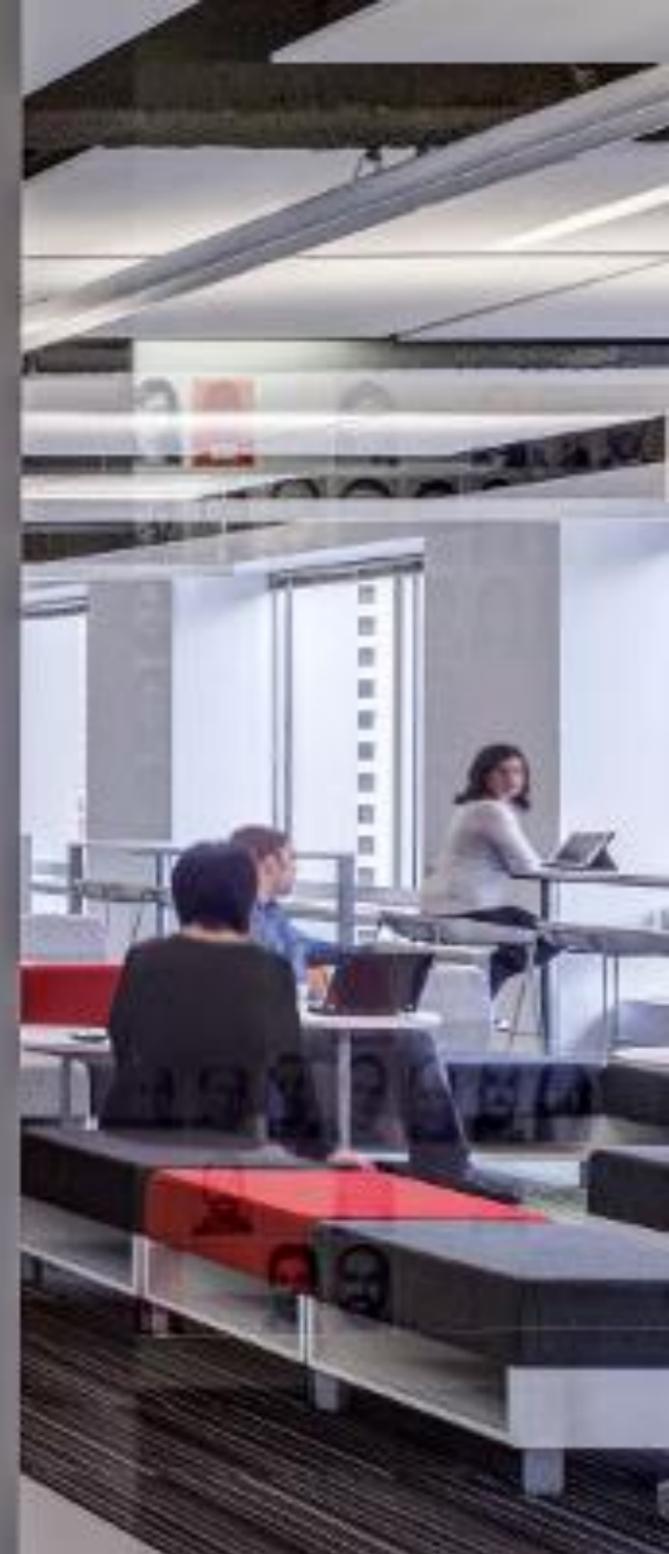
05

EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION

interpret signals

shape external opinion

proactive with outsiders



"Our team scans the external environment for ideas and solutions."

strongly disagree

strongly agree

06

TRUST

actions of others will be beneficial or at least not harmful

having regard for others



"Our team members do not withhold information from each other."



Armed with this information...



so while there is no definitive evidence that any generalized methods of measuring knowledge worker productivity exist, AWA and CEBMa findings

- the six factors -

are closely associated with the performance of teams involved with knowledge work; and can credibly act as “proxy measures”



Connect the dots between space, resources, policies and other forms of behavioral support to enable a holistic approach to optimizing the work of the organization





social cohesion



supervisory support



info sharing



vision & goal clarity



external communication



trust

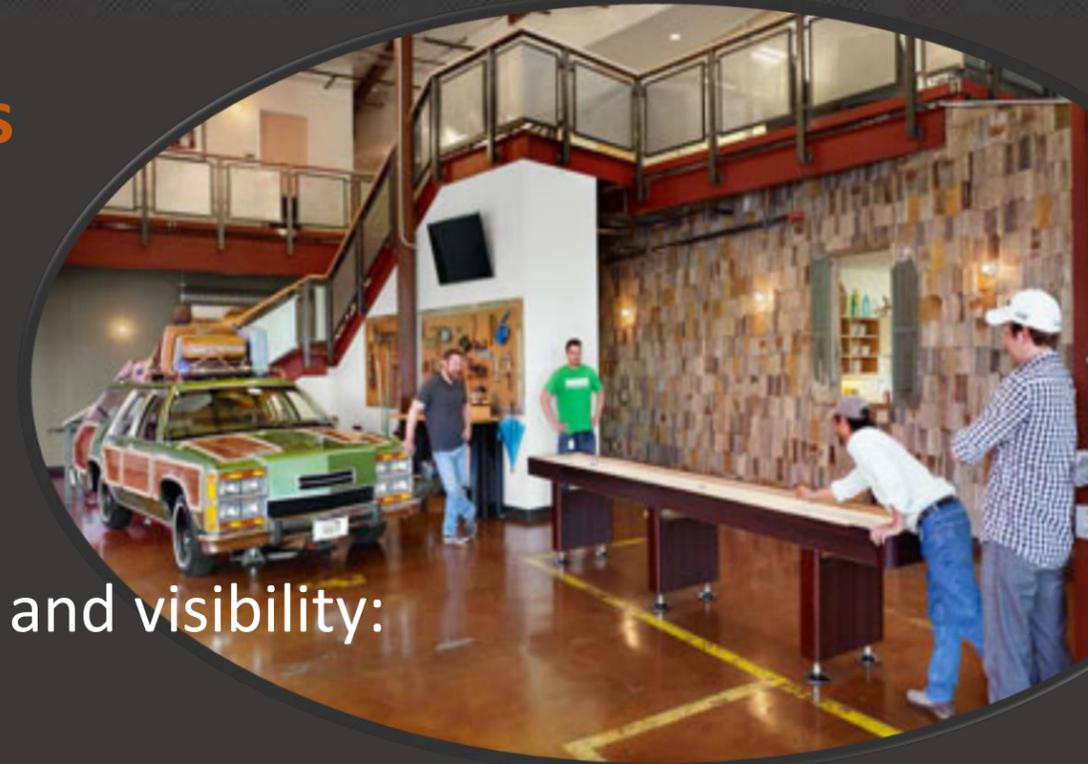
While these factors are not spatial in nature, they give us valuable insights into how team performance might be positively impacted by the way space can support the behaviors we're after. For example.....

Break down physical or procedural barriers to information sharing and visibility:

leverage "free address" seats to enable leaders to sit with their people and provide coaching, or to enable a related team's member to co-locate to coordinate or consult

place white boards in a central location with the team to record and make visible their mission and objectives, or their milestones and work-in-progress

...and finally, make visible the activities, trials and tribulations of leaders so that nothing seems to be secret and it's ok to have challenges...to build trust



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