desk.ly

Who is in the office?
3rd Floor

KJ
AT
MJ

Aktenarchiv
AT
KJ
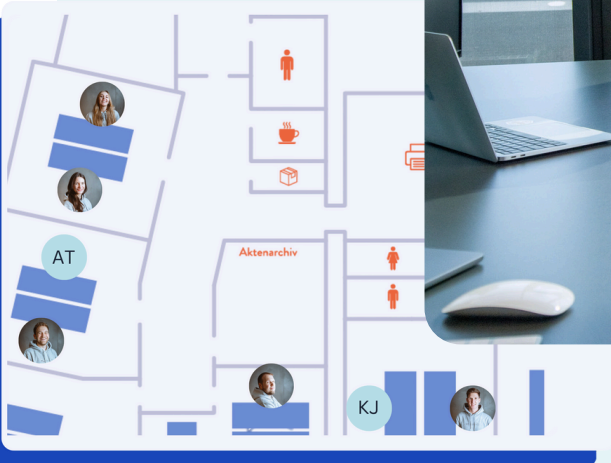
Desk Sharing

7 best practices from start to optimisation

Why desk sharing?

Desk Sharing is revolutionising the work environment as employees no longer have permanently assigned workplaces, but can share them flexibly as required. This offers companies many advantages, such as adaptability and efficient use of space. It promotes cohesion between employees and their mobility. The greater flexibility can also improve the work-life balance in the long term.

However, the transition from the classic office model to desk sharing also comes with challenges. It requires a clear concept, rules, and proactive change management. The following 7 best practices based on real-life user experiences will help you to successfully implement desk sharing in your company and to dynamically optimise your workplace management.

In this whitepaper
7 desk sharing best practices

1

Develop a desk sharing strategy
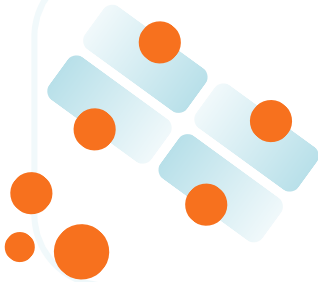
Energie Zukunft Schweiz AG grew strongly in 2019 and many part-time employees joined the company so that there were more employees than workplaces. Workplace management became a real challenge. A new office concept was needed that took into account the different working hours and models of the employees. The company implemented desk sharing.

Krones AG wanted to enable their employees to work more hybridly, up to 50% of their working time. As a result, many office workplaces remained unused. Krones implemented desk sharing, reduced desks and used the space gained for a completely new office concept with a focus on collaboration. Now the office is a meeting place for teamwork, creativity and social exchange.

These examples show how different the motivation for introducing desk sharing and accordingly the concept can be. It is therefore important to invest some time in the right strategy at the very beginning. The following questions will guide you through the process.

Guiding questions for your desk sharing strategy

What is your current status?

Analyse your current office situation with regard to capacity utilisation, existing equipment or investment requirements, employee preferences, and individual key points.

What is your goal?

What specific problem do you want to solve by introducing desk sharing? Would you like to use the available space more efficiently, promote collaboration, increase employee satisfaction through a more flexible working concept or something completely different? Derive specific requirements for desk sharing from your goals.

What is your time frame?

Create a roadmap for the transition to desk sharing and set milestones from planning through to implementation.

What resources do you need?

Define all the resources you need to implement desk sharing. This may include office equipment, time resources, but also the software you need to collaborate digitally and organise the bookings.

Have your employees been onboarded?

The introduction of a new workplace model is a change project that affects employees to a large extent. Therefore, involve them at an early stage and proceed with sensitivity. For more information, see the section on change communication below.

Do you have the necessary technical tools?

Room booking systems, also known as desk booking applications, ensure smooth implementation. Employees can use them to find and book available workplaces or meeting rooms. You can also evaluate the use of your office space and see where there is a need for optimisation.

2

Prepare the rollout
Test desk sharing with a pilot group

With the transition to desk sharing, you are not only introducing a completely new workplace concept, but probably also new software and organisational changes. That is quite a lot of change all at once. Before you start rolling out desk sharing on a large scale, it is therefore advisable to pilot the project on a smaller scale.

The advantage of a pilot group

You can evaluate the entire process in advance—from the concept through change management to implementation. Use this phase to anticipate challenges. These may include hesitation on the part of your employees as well as very practical problems that may arise due to local conditions, technology or similar.

Essential: gather feedback from the test group

Get as much input as possible from the participants in the pilot project. This applies both to their expectations (what hopes/concerns do they have) and to their experiences with the implementation as well as with the workplace management software. Answer questions such as:

- Does everyone understand the concept and feel included?
- Where do we need specific guidelines?
- How smoothly and intuitively does the booking process work?
- Is everyone happy with the work stations form which they can choose or do some need to be upgraded?
- What can we do better next time?

Ready for take-off

Change communication

Involve your employees

Get your employees involved at an early stage. This has two major advantages:

1. they won't feel blindsided
2. you will learn about possible concerns that you can prepare for.

Provide information

In the first step, it is particularly important to create transparency. Give reasons for the transition to desk sharing and emphasise the advantages that this change offers them.

Be realistic

Many teams welcome the flexible office concept, but not all employees will be thrilled if you take away their "personal" desk. They may fear losing their privacy or that the booking process will cause additional stress. That is why it is so important to actively address concerns to ensure that all employees feel taken seriously.

Offer support during the change process

Desk sharing doesn't just change where your team sits, it changes the way they work together. For many, this is a big step. Do not underestimate the impact this may have on them and support them in developing the skills they need to thrive in this new work environment, for example by offering appropriate training.

Change management
in 5 easy steps

Communication

Explain the reasons for introducing desk sharing and the associated benefits for employees and the company.

Include your team

Actively involve them in the process to understand and address their concerns and needs.

Training

Support the team in utilising new technologies and systems to increase acceptance and facilitate the transition.

Guidelines

Precise guidelines for the use and reservation of workplaces help to avoid conflicts. More on that later.

Feedback

What works well, what not (yet)? Get regular feedback from your employees in order to continuously optimise your collaboration.

Technology
Desk booking software

"The use of a central tool does not only facilitate the process of desk booking for the employees, but also ensures more flexibility and variety, as office space is not always shared with the same co-workers!"

– Fabian Multhoff, Stadtwerke Münster

With our workplace management software, you can organise the booking process in a simple and efficient way. What features do you not want to miss? This partly depends on your individual requirements and which other tools you already use. You certainly don't want to miss out on the following basics.
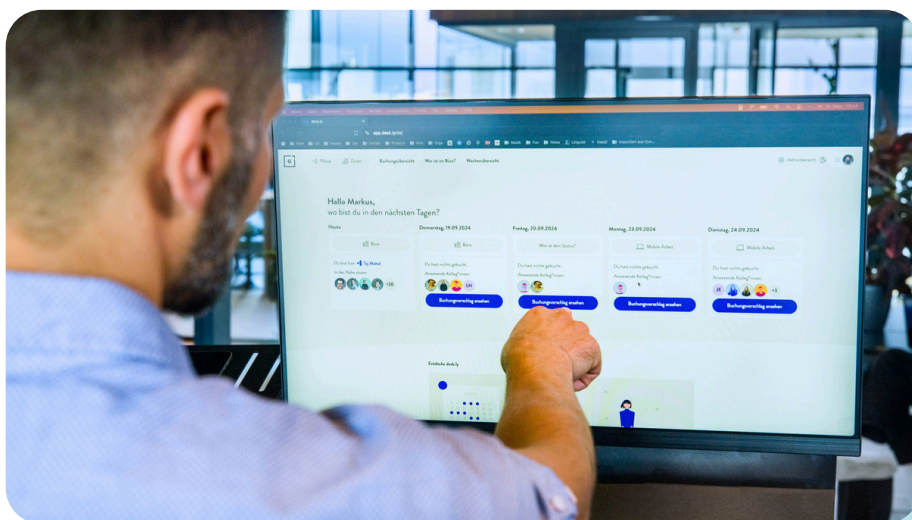
Intuitive booking process
The booking of workplaces should be simple and easy to understand in order to increase acceptance—on desktop and mobile devices alike.

Data security
GDPR compliance is a must for companies operating within the EU, as desk booking involves sensitive employee data. If the application is also ISO/IEC 27001 certified, you can rely on high IT security standards.

Software integrations

Integrations in HR or teamworking applications make it easier to manage contacts, bookings and integrate them into your existing IT system.

Individualisation

The software should offer sufficient options to tailor the settings to your specific needs, e.g. for privacy, how long in advance seats can be booked or whether individual time slots can be set. Also interesting: Can you customise desks, parking spaces, etc. yourself or does this have to be done (for a fee) via the provider?

Analytics

Pay attention to which analysis functions the software offers in order to evaluate capacity utilisation, employee booking behaviour and other insights from the booking data. They are a valuable tool for optimising the office and for increasing cost efficiency.

Choosing the right software

#1 Take a look at **reviews on rating platforms,** e.g. OMR Review. They will tell you a lot about how user-friendly the application is, what the support is like and other details.

#2 Have the product shown to you in a **live demo**. You can usually ask all your questions in this context.

#3 Take advantage of the **free trial**—if offered. During the test phase, you have time to thoroughly explore the tool or even show it to some employees.

desk.ly

Desk sharing with desk.ly

- Intuitive booking process
- 80+ integrations
- Customisable
- Workplace analytics

Register now for free

Guidelines

Your desk sharing "playbook"

Precise guidelines ensure a structured routine for desk sharing. They regulate aspects such as booking behavior and the use of resources. What exactly your rules look like depends on various factors that you should evaluate individually. They can apply company-wide or be defined at team level.

Use the feedback from the pilot phase to define specific guidelines. This is a good starting point for establishing a relevant and framework.

Sample questions for your desk sharing playbook

- **How far in advance** can/should workplaces be booked?
- Do you want to allow **permanent bookings**?
- Should employees **confirm their use** of the space or cancel the reservation if they do not want to use it after all? (Useful: booking software with a **check-in** feature)
- Are some employees entitled to a **fixed workplace**?
- Can **parking spaces or meeting rooms** also be booked?
- Do we need **quiet zones** for focus time?
- Is the choice of seats completely free or are some **areas reserved** for certain teams?
- Can several spaces be booked **at the same time**?
- How should the workplaces be **left behind**?

Workplace organisation

Labelling workplaces to make it easier to find your reserved space and providing storage options for personal items are just two examples of how to facilitate the use of resources.

Also: implement guidelines for how desks should be left behind, a so-called clean desk policy. This ensures tidiness and prevents conflicts.

Equipment

Why similarly equipped work stations are so important

Whether someone prefers to sit close to the coffee machine or in a quiet corner by the window is a matter of personal preference. However, nobody should arrive at their booked seat in the morning and find that it does not provide a monitor. Or realise that this particular table is not height-adjustable.

Equivalent equipment—why important?

On the one hand, the scenarios described above will be frustrating. On the other hand, there will soon be places nobody wants to book. To ensure that all resources and therefore the space are used optimally, it is worth making an initial investment in the necessary equipment. This primarily includes hardware (monitors, connections, etc.) but also ergonomic office furniture.

Exceptions allowed

This does not mean that all spaces have to be identical. While the "standard workplaces" should be as similar as possible, task-based areas can be useful. Some companies create quiet areas, noise-isolated workplaces for undisturbed phone calls or even places where your dog may accompany you.

height-adjustable desk

docking station

curved screen

Seat 17

Tue. 01.04. 8:00 - 17:00

Wed. 02.04. 8:00 - 12:00

Book

"The redesign of the office space has created attractive workplaces and various places to retreat in order to combine work and communication in the best possible way. I therefore appreciate the flexibility to choose my place of work according to my upcoming tasks."

– Silke Riedl, Krones AG

Privacy

Create storage spaces for personal items of your employees. Many companies use boxes for this purpose, which are stored on a shelf after work. Lockable trolleys or lockers are suitable for more privacy and confidential documents.
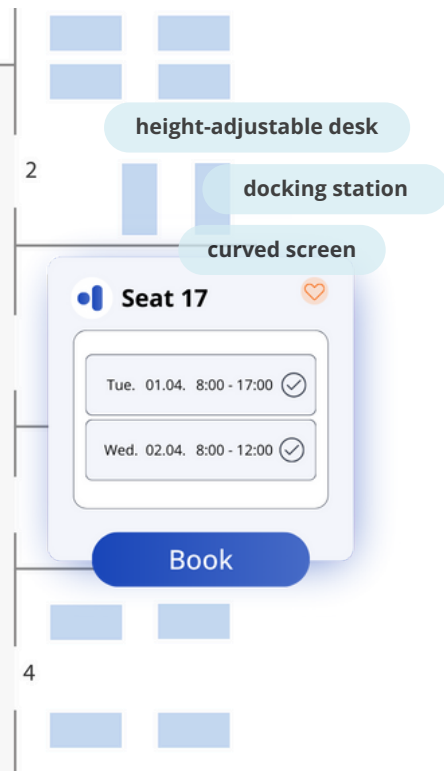
Keep improving!

> "I do not believe that the office is dispensable and it is more about designing the office in such a way that it is sustainable for the future."
>
> – Felix Mohr, Co-founder of desk.ly

Effective workplace management is the key to increasing productivity and making optimal use of resources. How high is the occupancy rate? Where do we need more workplaces? Which areas can we organise more effectively? With a workplace management platform, you gain insight into actual utilisation and can make data-based decisions.
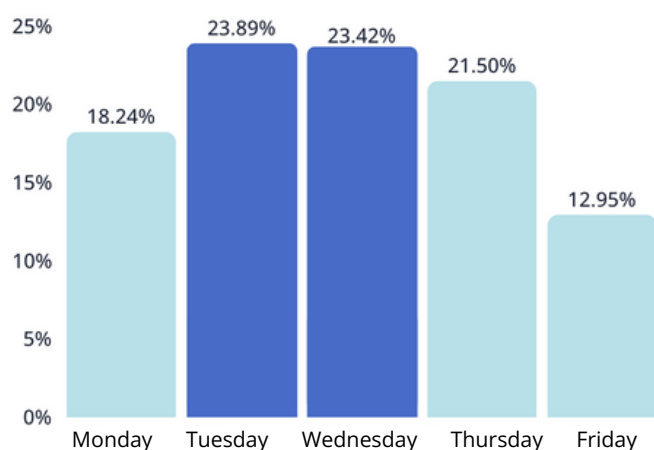
Set office incentives correctly

You have already invested in making your office more attractive? Utilisation analyses of individual areas and the visualisation of office use compared to mobile work allow valuable conclusions about which improvements produce the desired effects. They will show you which concepts can be transferred to other floors or locations and where there is still room for improvement.
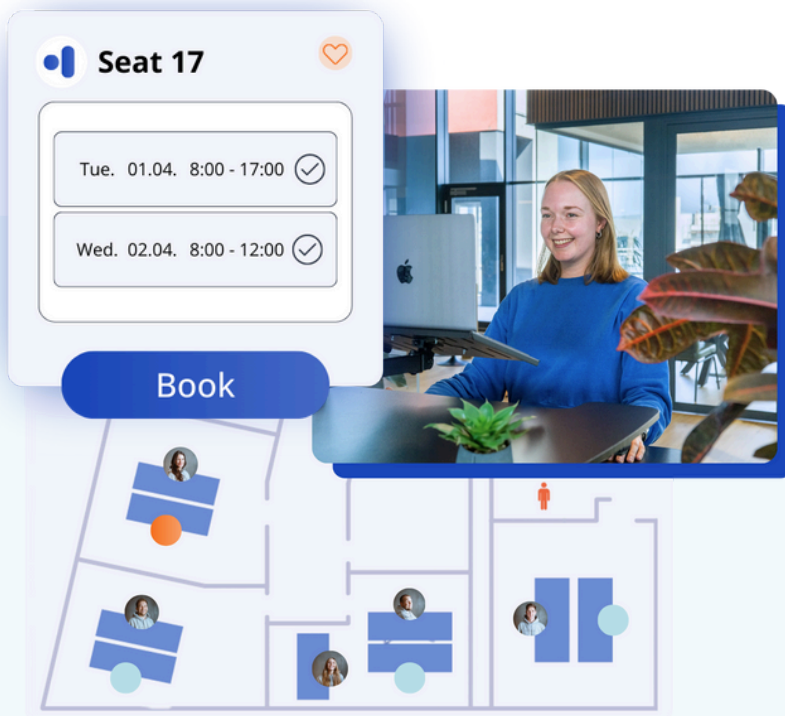
Optimise collaboration

The social aspect is the number one motivator when it comes to attendance at the office. Is the attendance particularly high on certain days? Use this data to plan team meetings, workshops and events on site.

Most popular office days

An analysis of over 4.7 million desk.ly bookings in 2024 reveals a clear result.

Bar chart — Most popular office days:
- Monday: 18.24%
- Tuesday: 23.89%
- Wednesday: 23.42%
- Thursday: 21.50%
- Friday: 12.95%

Hybrid work—simple & flexible

Teams around the world optimise their work environment with the workplace management platform desk.ly.

- Desk booking with check-in feature
- Meeting room booking
- Parking space booking
- Workplace analytics
- Various integrations

Get to know desk.ly now without obligation!

[Register now for free]

Or learn more at www.desk.ly