



RELEVANCE OF BIOPHILIC DESIGNS IN AN OFFICE



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The increasing trend of biophilic designs in an office will make you wonder whether you should go for it. Here is why you should.

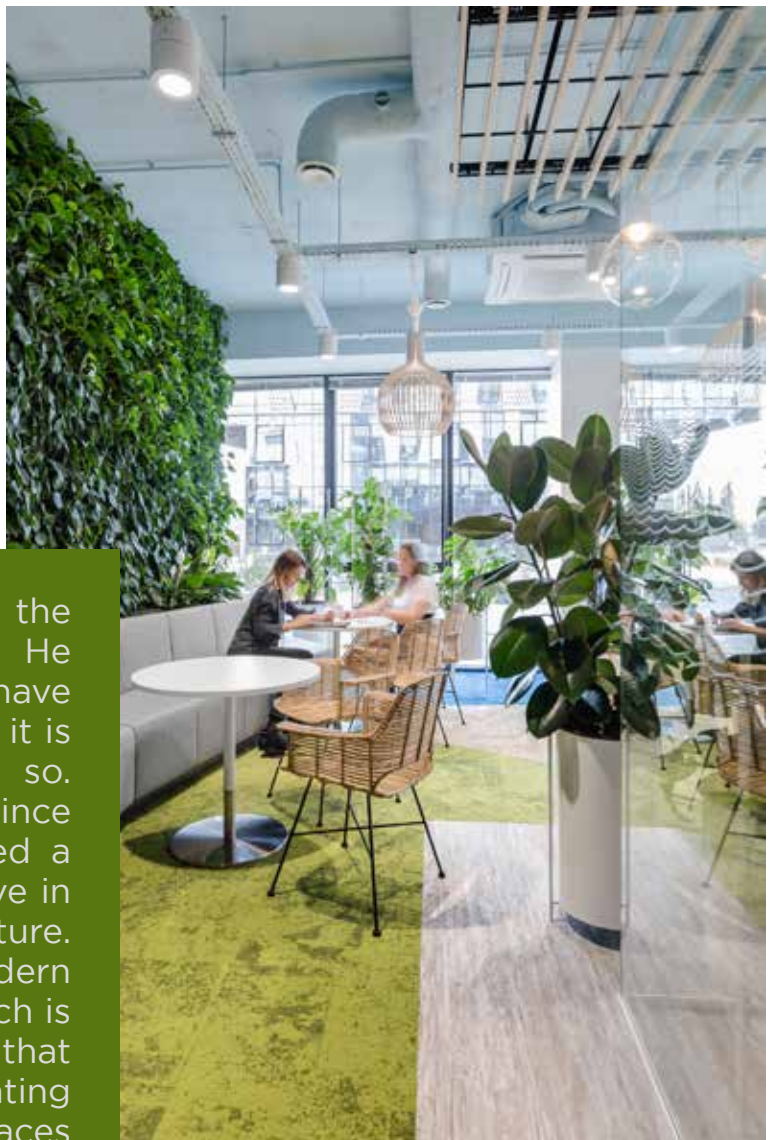
Before we understand what biophilic designs are, we need to understand what biophilia means. The meaning of biophilia is the love for any and all living organisms. So when we refer to the term “Biophilic Designs”, we are referring to the integration of nature or natural designs into an urban and industrial setting. The movement took over major cities of the world very quickly. Countries like Japan, Singapore, China, Vietnam, and many more have incorporated biophilic designs into their infrastructure. Why did they come to this decision?

Why are biophilic designs so important in today’s world?

How can we integrate it into our own offices?

Stephen R Kellert.

Stephen R Kellert pioneered the biophilic design movement. He accentuated that human beings have always been one with nature and it is our inherent need to remain so. Humans used nature to live; and since we lived in nature, we developed a part in our brain that is productive in the presence of nature. Industrialisation and modern architecture blocks this need which is not fulfilled. Kellert believed that humans should start incorporating biophilic designs in their workspaces to quench our basic need to be one with nature.





There are countless benefits in integrating biophilic designs in office spaces. Some of them are as simple as the aesthetic calms the mind, while others are scientifically beneficial to the human body. Offices are usually designed in a very sensory derivative way. This means that there isn't enough exposure to nature, or even natural light. The biophilic design movement encourages an environment more in touch with nature to promote a productive, hygienic, and creative environment. Since the movement started, many of the world's most beautiful office spaces have implemented these designs in their workspaces.



What is the relevance of Biophilic Designs in an office?



Biophilic Designs

There are multiple reasons why an office should implement biophilic designs in their offices. The main ones are their aesthetic experiences, their palpable physical and mental benefits, increase in productivity and creativity, sustainability, and of course, saving the planet.



| Synthetic vs Natural Experience



VS



Synthetic vs Natural Experience

Biophilic design can be implemented in two ways in an office: the synthetic way, which includes bringing nature into the office.

For example, building a plant/green wall. You can also add potted plants to your office. A lawn that is added in the recreation space or any other space is also a synthetic example of biophilic design. The designs can be inspired by patterns and shapes in nature like a bridge designed to look like a tree root, seating areas designed to look like rocks, or building a waterfall or fountain in the office.

The second way is by exposing the office to the already existing natural environment. Letting natural light

into your office is the best way to expose your office to nature. Open window concepts or an indoor garden in your office is a great way to expose your offices to existing nature. Building a pond in your outdoor area is also considered as an exposure of the office to nature. People also prefer using natural materials like marble and wood to build their infrastructure which has become the new and more sustainable choice.

What are the Benefits of Biophilic Designs in an Office?



Since the biophilic design movement is built on nature, the benefits of having nature in your workspace are immense. Biophilic designs not only beautify the office space but also include a huge list of health benefits that it offers.

Health:

Because you will be implementing actual nature into your office space, people in the office will subsequently have health benefits. As Kellert says, it is an inherent need for man to interact with nature. This has been proved in studies that conclude that the exposure of nature lowers blood pressure, provides pain relief, improves illness recovery, accelerates healing. Letting in natural light instead of artificial light decreases the risk of eye damage and also lets in the sun's nourishing rays into the office.



Not only does it help the body in these physical ways, it also facilitates mental health by reducing stress, coping, concentration, and calming the mind—thus reducing anxiety—, which keeps the office tension low leading to lesser conflict. In an office that satisfies the mind, employees are more likely to get attached to their place of work, thus reducing absenteeism.

The feeling of being in nature exudes creativity and mental activity in the employees. As opposed to conventional office designs that include sensory deprivation—a common misconception that believes that isolating a person from the outside will reduce distractions—biophilic design encourages creative thinking, problem solving, and social interaction.



Sustainable:

Because biophilic design deals with organic nature, it is the most sustainable kind of design you can incorporate in your office. There is no pollution being caused because the plants are doing the opposite. The plants breathe fresh air into the office and also keep the room cool. The need to maintain nature in the place of work

will also prompt the employees to be more sustainable and care for their place of work. Using natural materials instead of manufactured ones consequently reduces companies' carbon footprints.

Climate Change:

Climate change is of course, the bigger picture that can be fought by iterating biophilic designs in an office. Many people in the world are dedicated to fighting climate change and saving our planet one step at a time. The biophilic design movement is one such small step that helps with coexisting with nature instead of overpowering it. Many major cities like Hong Kong and Barcelona have become biophilic cities or green cities. They too, started small by integrating their offices with nature.





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