

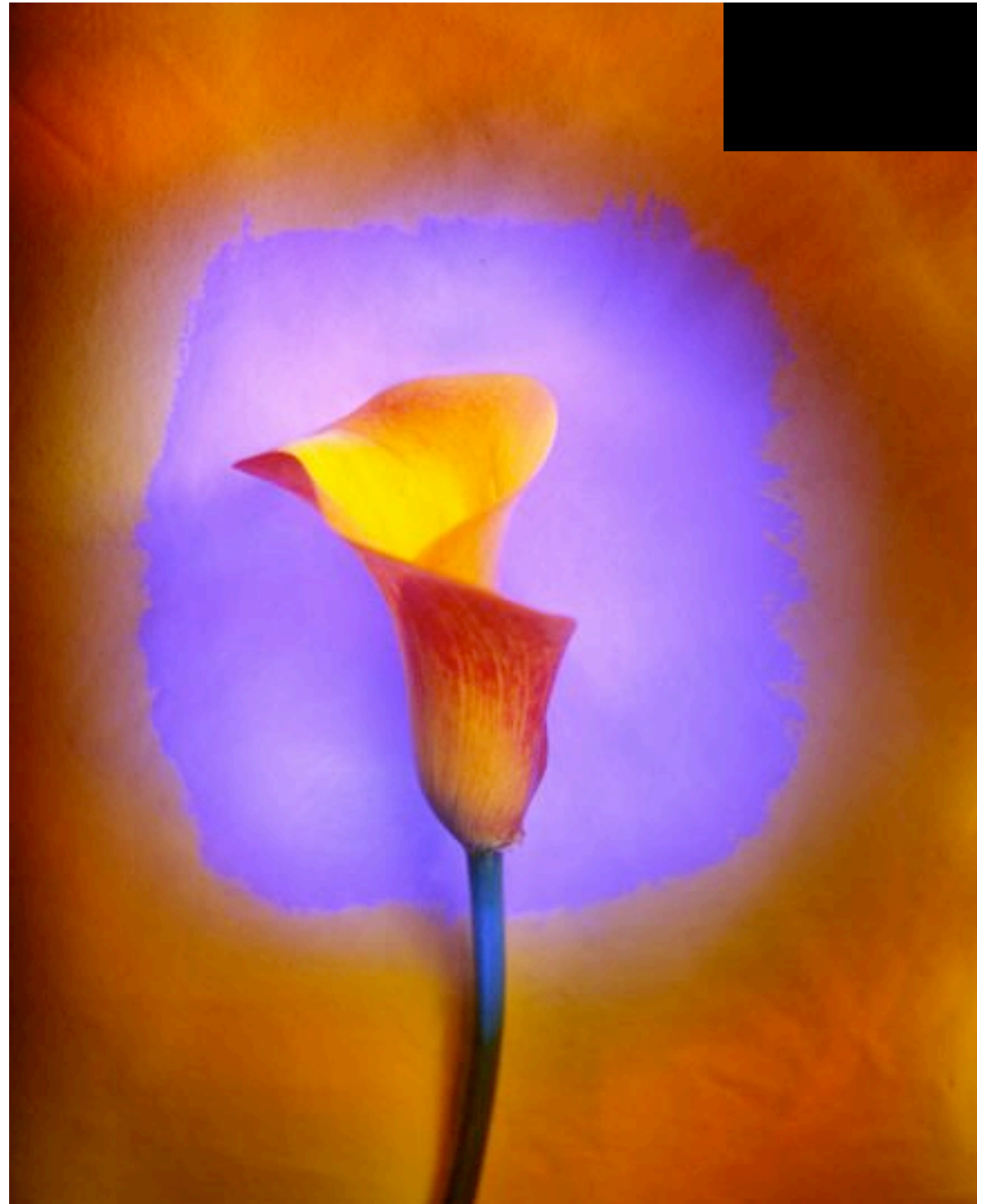


The Psychology of Office Space

(Knight & Haslam)

8th April 2009

IPSIS workshop



Overview

History of office design
BBC News Catalyst
Experimental Data
Where Next?



View of Typewriting Department. Twenty-one new \$100 Machines. Pupils Transcribing Shorthand Notes.

P psychological
R research into
I identity and
S space
M management

E · S · R · C
ECONOMIC
& SOCIAL
RESEARCH
COUNCIL

HAWORTH®
change by design

“The Holy Grail”

(Horne)

NOISE

Office
Improvements

Tangible
Benefits



Realities of contemporary office space

Flexible office territory

- Multiple workstation access (hot desking)
- Area depersonalization (clean desk/shared desk policy)
- Lack of a *home* space
- Creation of artificial group boundaries
- Diminution of personal and group agency

Office Development

- Pharaoh's Scribes
- Medieval Monks
- Dickensian Bank Clerks



Space Management & Identity Realization

- Increasing surveillance century

- 1860s
- 1890
- 1915

- Taylorist (Taylor, 1911) principles of consistency, standardization, and efficiency
- Development of High surveillance Low autonomy office environments

The Modern Office?

2008



1906



No. 23 MAKING A RECORD OF THE CUSTOMER'S ORDER.
SEARS, ROEBUCK & CO., Chicago, Ill.



Panopticon



- Bentham 1783
- Covert continual surveillance
- Clusters of inmates



Office Reality

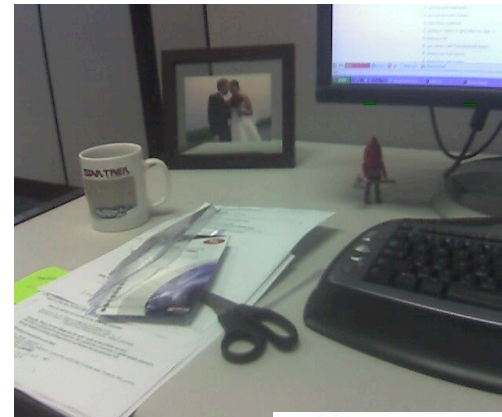
BBC 15th November 2006

- New rules in tax offices mean desks must be free from clutter to promote “lean, efficient business processing”.
- Revenue and Customs staff cannot have food at their desks
- Non-essential items targeted include money, memorabilia and packed lunches



Office Reality

- "Lean is all about offering a better service to our customers and staff. It is a key element in HMRC's plan to provide improved service and meet efficiency targets." (HMRC)
- Staff at Revenue and Customs (HMRC) have condemned "hare-brained" plans to remove items such as family pictures from work areas to boost productivity.



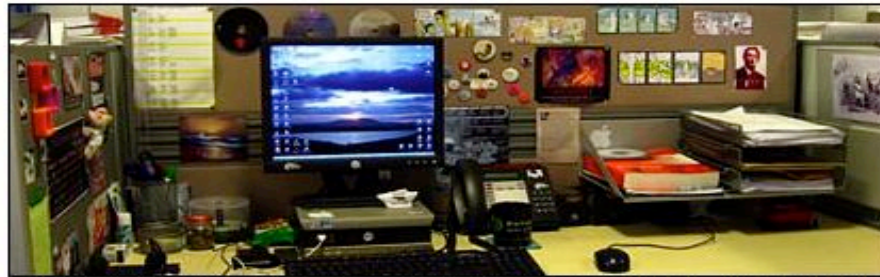


Last Updated: Friday, 17 November 2006, 11:13 GMT

E-mail this to a friend

Printable version

Your place or mine?



Reader James Hough's desk: "I work at a liberal publishing firm. Can you tell?"

By Alex Haslam and Craig Knight
Workplace psychologists

Forget clearing clutter in the office. Decorating your desk is good for you - and good for your boss, according to a set of workplace experiments.

Ever come back from holiday and been acutely aware of the fact that someone else has been working at your desk? The computer screen is at the wrong angle, the mouse is on the wrong side of the keyboard, your pens have been put in the top drawer together with the photograph of your cat.

What's the first thing you do? Put them all back. Why? Because this is your space and the way it's arranged says something important about who you are - both to yourself and to other people.

This article is illustrated with photos sent in by our readers.

Office design is continually evolving and improving. Despite this, employees have remarkably little say in how their place of work looks and feels. They may be able to personalise their desk, but their input will not be sought



Magazine



Faces of the week

Harry Potter grows up as Radcliffe enters a radical stage

7 days 7 questions

Dress for Oscars or 9th birthday?

Book bluffer unmasked

How to cheat on War and Peace

Dying to be green

Towards a carbon neutral death

MAGAZINE REGULARS



Daily Mini-Quiz

Jacko's in Japan, charging fans to meet him. How much for a second of his time?

Magazine Monitor

VISIT THE MAGAZINE INDEX

SEE ALSO

Customs staff in desk clutter ban
15 Nov 06 11:13 GMT

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Questionnaire on workplace design
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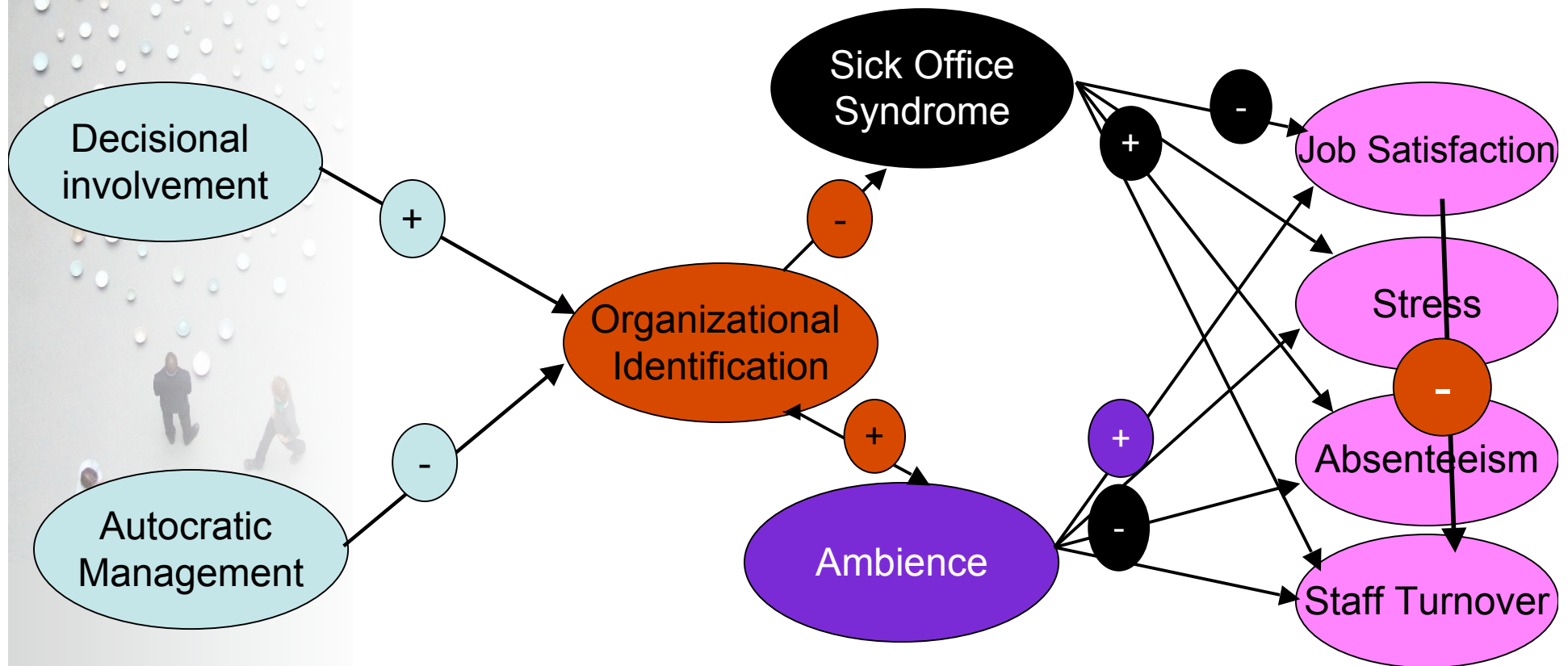
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1 Flights hit by BA sale to Flybe

Survey findings



- Survey of UK office workers ($Ns = 34, 61, 104, 302, 1,643$)
(Knight & Haslam, 2009)



Drawbacks of Survey Instruments:

- **Self report**
- **Correlational**
- **No causation**
- **No control**
- **No observation of behaviour**

The Experiment

Workplace Experiment

- experiment 2



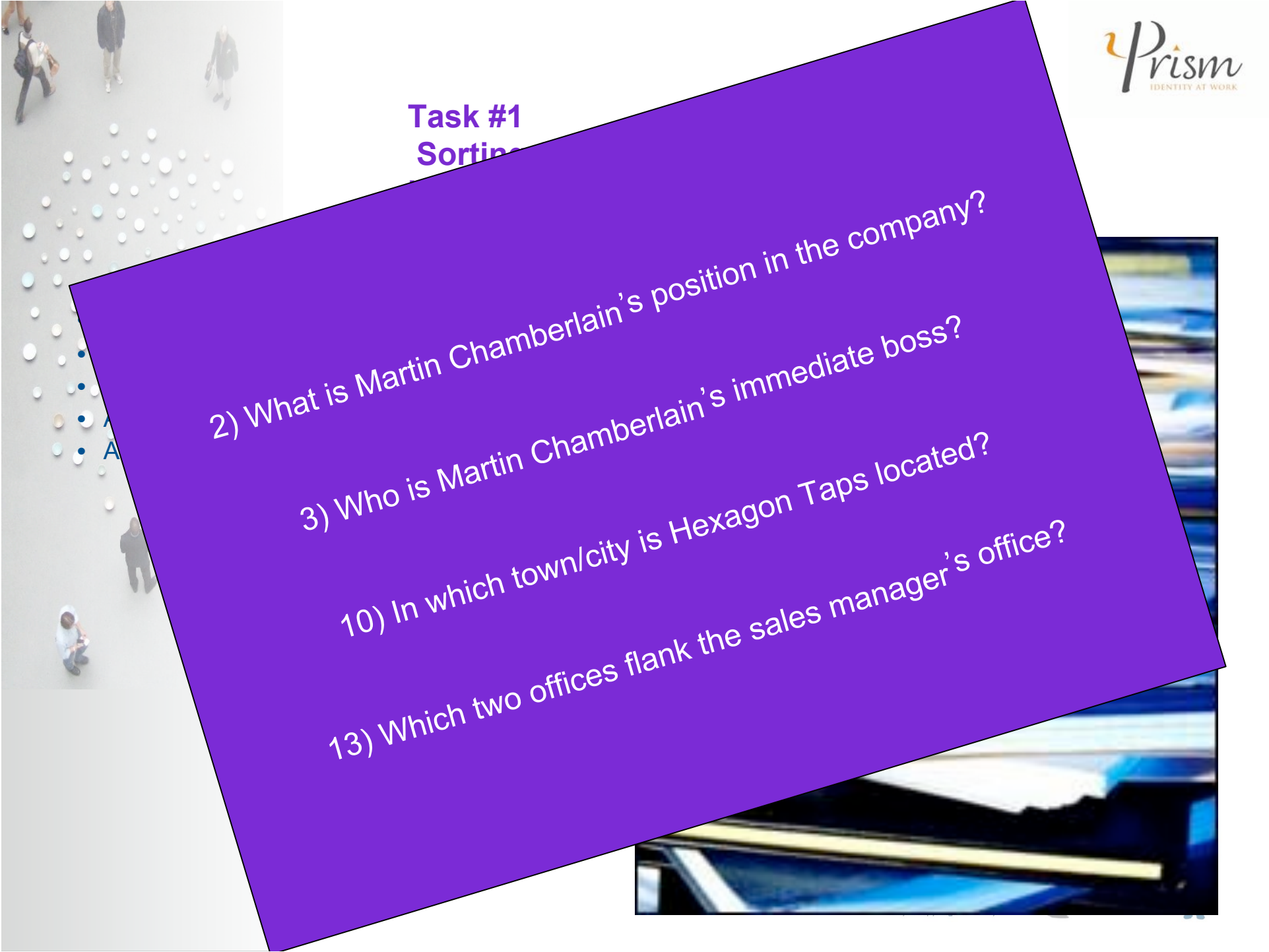
The experiment

3 Hypotheses:

- H1 — Decorating/designing a workspace will (a) increase workers' organizational identification **and** (b) enhance productivity/satisfaction
- H2 — Empowering workers to decorate or design their own workspace will (a) increase organizational identification **and** improve productivity/satisfaction still further
- H3 — Compromising workers' autonomy within the workspace will reduce organizational identification **and** compromise performance/satisfaction.



Task #1 Sorting

- 
- 2) What is Martin Chamberlain's position in the company?
 - 3) Who is Martin Chamberlain's immediate boss?
 - 10) In which town/city is Hexagon Taps located?
 - 13) Which two offices flank the sales manager's office?

Task #2

Letter Identification (Attention to Detail)

- A one-page magazine article.
- Strike out all the lower case letters 'b' as quickly and accurately as you can

A Life in the Day

BRYAN SYKES

The professor of human genetics at Oxford University is the author of two books: *The Seven Daughters of Eve*, and *Adam's Curse*. His company, Oxford Ancestors, offers people the chance to explore their genetic lineage through DNA. Aged 58, he has a son, Richard, 14, who lives with his mother

The geese on the River Cherwell often wake me up at 6. I listen to the Today Programme, then get up at around 7 and eat a bowl of Ready Brek — which I can't touch has cholesterol-lowering properties. I live in a lovely set of rooms in Wolfson College. It's a graduate-only college, friendly and modern and not yet fully marinated in the rich juices of Oxford tradition. When I first arrived in Oxford in 1975, I bought a brown velvet jacket and a pipe. I imagined I'd spend my time sitting around in a leather chair giving tutorials.

I lecture to several hundred medical students for a couple of hours at 9am on a Monday. They're incredibly bright, but you wouldn't necessarily know it. There's been quite a lot of mucking about over the past year. Genetics is something you either get or you don't, and some people will never get it. It might even be an inherited capacity.

DNA is the genetic material within all our cells that is handed down from generation to generation. Within it is written not only our personal history, but the history of the whole human race. DNA doesn't rot or fade; it has an incredibly strong chemical structure, which in the right conditions can survive for thousands of years. But it's not indestructible. Bone that's been in a cool limestone cave will yield good DNA, whereas a Saxon bone that's been lying on gravel and exposed to the air may have none. The oldest bones I've worked on came from the Cheddar caves — they were 12,000 years old, human hunter-gatherers from the Palaeolithic age. I find it deeply moving to think that we are here because of them.

After an early lecture, I have a coffee in Blackwell's bookshop. I spend a fortune on books. Then I go back to

my rooms and deal with paperwork. Most days, I get an e-mail from someone who wants to exhume a body and prove the person was related to someone else. Or: "I think Richard III had an illegitimate child and I know who it is." The question of cost discourages the more exotic inquiries. It takes a long time to extract useful information out of old DNA, but if there is a scientific reason to do it, I'll have a go.

If I'm working on an ancient sample — a tooth, say — I wear a head-to-toe gown and face mask and work in a room with filtered air. I'll drill into the tooth, hoping I don't crack an invaluable specimen. We use extremely caustic chemicals to separate the DNA from the surrounding protein. The big problem is getting your own DNA mixed with the sample — all of us shed DNA all the time, through skin

Number of lower case letters 'b'

33



from their fathers too. These genes pass down from generation to generation and they don't change except by a slow process of mutation. When we discovered this, people started phoning the lab to see if they could be linked to famous people — Anastasia, Richard III — whose DNA my team and I had been able to recover. Just recently we were able to trace a man back to Genghis Khan through the DNA on his Y chromosome, which was an exact match.

Wolfson is a very egalitarian college — everyone eats together. So I talk to archaeologists, linguists and historians over a vegetable curry. If it weren't for them, it would have taken me far longer to make connections. I'm vice-president here, so in the afternoon I might sort out bar opening and closing times and deal with any complaints. It never ceases to amaze me how enthusiastic students are — it's a delight to discipline them.

I try to write at least two days a week, but I need very specific conditions to produce anything worthwhile. In the holidays, I go to my house on the Isle of Skye, and in term time I have a particular spot in the Radcliffe Camera, part of the Bodleian Library. I sit at seat number 78, because it has exactly the right atmosphere, and I write in pencil on foolscap. If I'm really stuck, there's a bar in Venice where I can always work. I once

ALMOST EVERYONE OF EUROPEAN ORIGIN IS DESCENDED FROM ONE OF SEVEN ANCIENT WOMEN. THAT'S A MOVING THOUGHT

cells floating about and even through our breath. It's happened, but fortunately I know my own DNA, so when I find it I recognise it. The most exciting thing I've ever worked on was the Ice Man, who was found in the Tyrolean Alps in 1991. Carbon dating made him around 5,000 years old, but his DNA confirmed that he was directly related through his mother to a friend of mine whose DNA I had on our database. That was very emotional, because it was the moment I realised that DNA has the potential to link everybody in the world through the maternal line. I discovered that almost everyone of European origin is descended from one of seven ancient women. I still find that a moving thought.

The genetic material we all receive from our mothers is called mitochondrial DNA, and boys get the Y chromosome

sat in front of a plate of calamari for three days and finished a book.

I eat far too much. I'm dinnereed out by the end of term. There's always some function to go to. If Richard is with me, we eat spaghetti bolognese and play computer games, which he always wins. I often work until 2 or 3 in the morning, unless I've got an early lecture. I'll have some wine and by 1am I'm feeling really creative. I don't sleep brilliantly — my brain doesn't stop whirling. I haven't got a job, really: it's an ongoing fascination with ancestry. If I ever retire, I don't think I'll ever notice the difference ■

Interview: Caroline Scott.
Photograph: David Vintiner



Book the Christmas Party

Go to an awards dinner

Be responsible positive company publicity

Chair a prestigious committee

Attend a Dubai Conference





Task #4 Questionnaire

Attitudes and feelings

Participants complete questionnaire:

80 questions = 14 scales

- **Organizational identification**
 - I identify with the organization that's running this experiment
- **Control**
 - (During experiment) I had control over my environment
- **Sick room syndrome**
 - The air in the room was stuffy
- **Organizational Citizenship Behaviour**
 - If these were my normal working conditions I would stay behind to do extra work if necessary, even if I wasn't paid overtime.
- **Motivation Scale**
 - I wanted to do well in the tasks
- **Ambience Scale**
 - I felt 'at home' in the room during the tasks

INSTRUCTIONS

This questionnaire consists of a number of statements each with its own scale. These scales allow for seven shades of meaning from disagree completely to agree completely. For example, if you agree quite strongly with a statement you would cross the sixth box in the scale like this

Before you begin, please be assured that all your responses will remain anonymous and confidential

If you have any questions, please ask them now. Otherwise, please turn the page and begin.



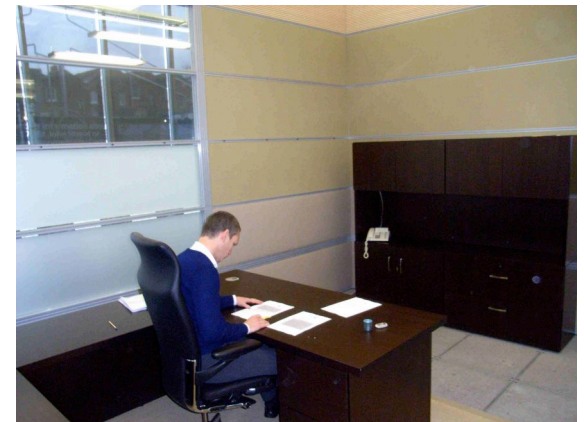
Condition 1: Lean (Bare) office

- Participant undertakes the tasks in a lean space
- No decorations



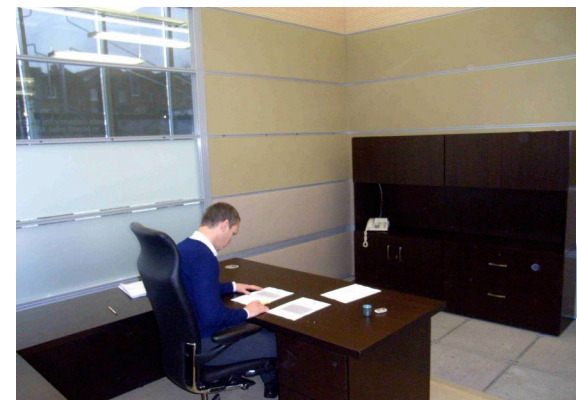
Condition 2: Enriched office

- Participant works in a decorated space
- S/he cannot change the room design



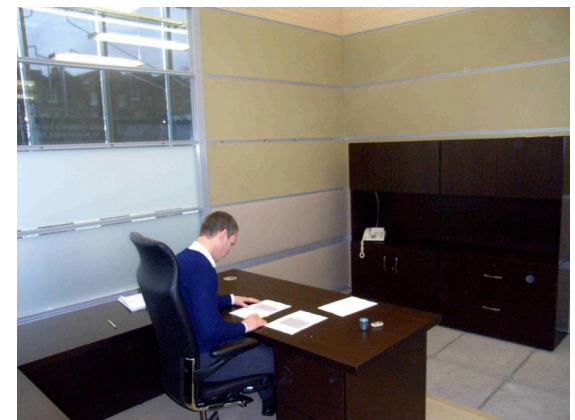
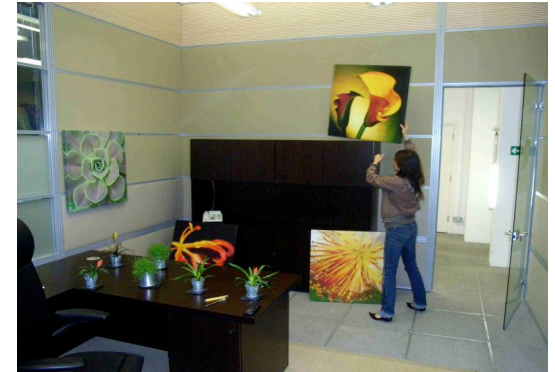
Condition 3: Empowered office

- Participant is asked to decorate the space in which they will work
- S/he can choose 0–6 pictures
- ... and add 0–6 plants



Condition 4: Compromised office

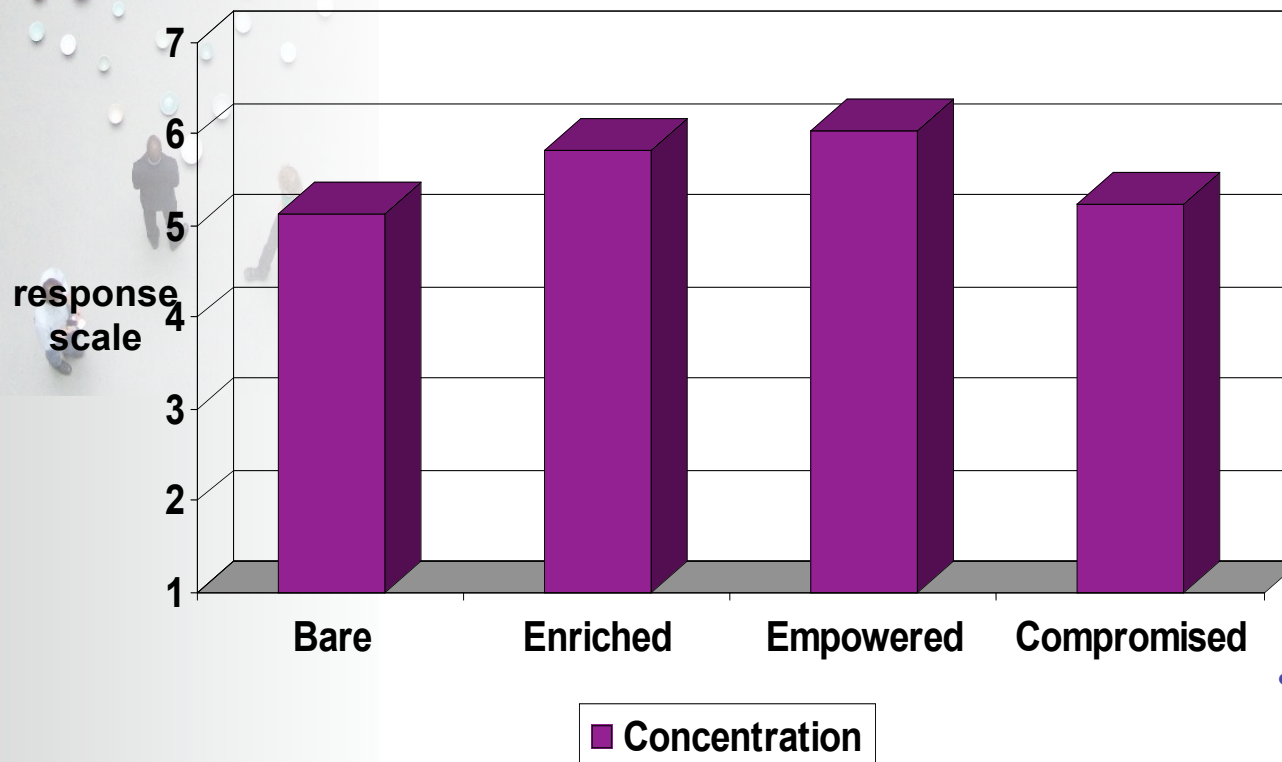
- Identity is realized as in Condition 3
- Identity is then compromised by the experimenter
- The participant then works under the conditions imposed by the experimenter



Well Being

Relationship between Space management, Identity Realization and Well-being

- Assessed in terms of (a) ease of concentration



Concentration: $F(3,108)=5.26$,
 $p < .01$, $\eta^2=.13$



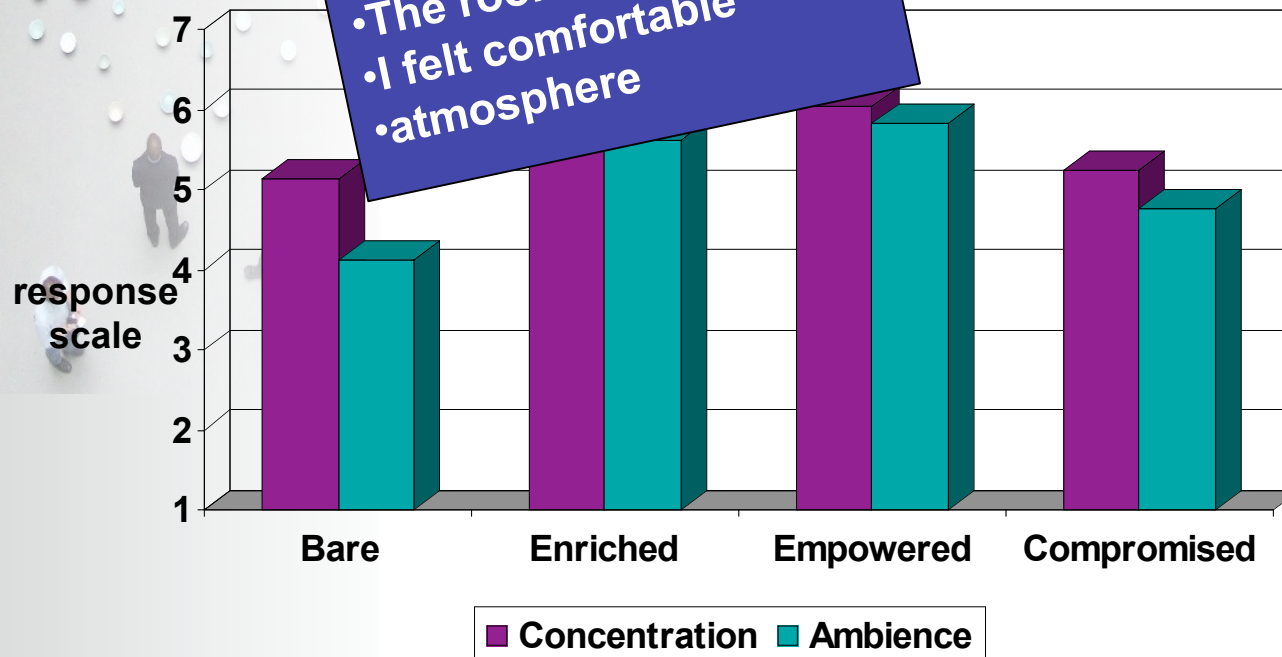
- Study of UK office workers ($Ns = 112, 47$) (Knight & Haslam, in prep)

Well Being

Relationship between Space management, Identity Realization and Well-being

• Assessed in terms of (a) concentration (b) ambience

- I felt at home
- The room felt soulless
- The room had a good atmosphere
- I felt comfortable



Concentration: $F(3,108)=5.26$,
 $p < .01$, $\eta^2=.13$

Ambience: $F(3,108)=15.95$,
 $p < .01$, $\eta^2=.31$

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Well Being

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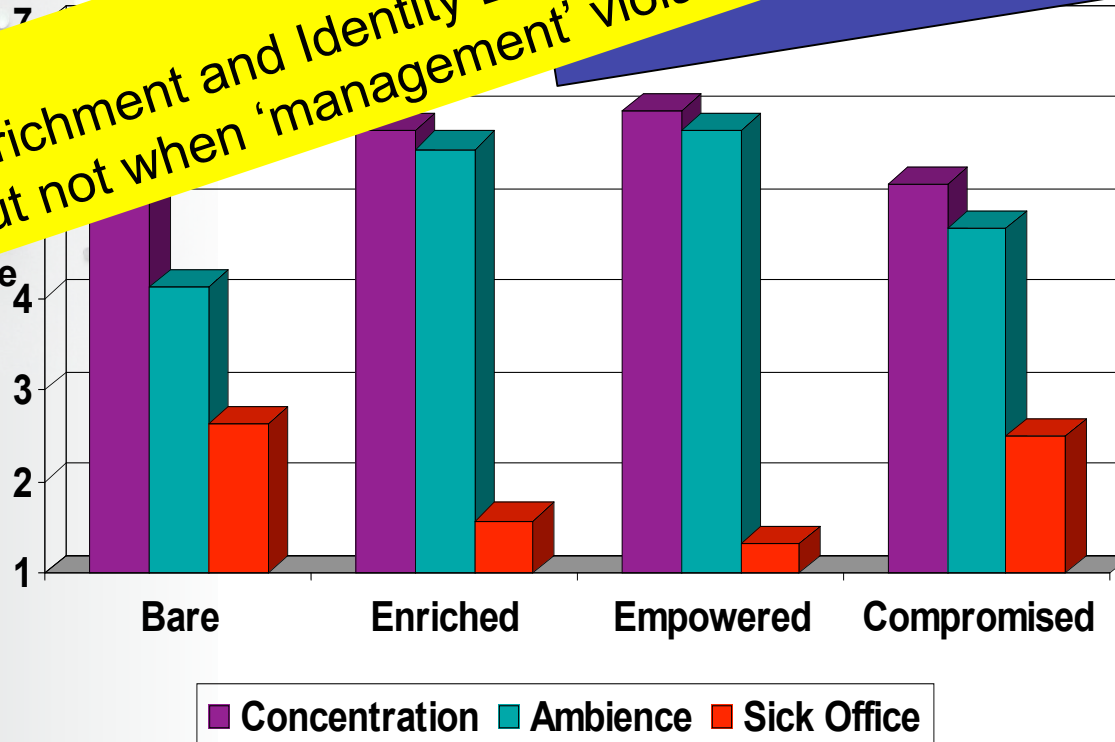
• Assessed in terms of (a) each
syndrome

• The air
Conclusions

(b) sick office

Enrichment and Identity Empowerment increase well-being
But not when 'management' violates identity-realization

response
scale



Concentration: $F(3,108)=5.26$,
 $p < .01$, $\eta^2=.13$

Ambience: $F(3,108)=15.95$,
 $p < .01$, $\eta^2=.31$

Sick Office: $F(3,108)=13.54$,
 $p < .01$, $\eta^2=.27$

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Organizational Identification

Relationship between Space management, Identity Realization and Organizational Identification

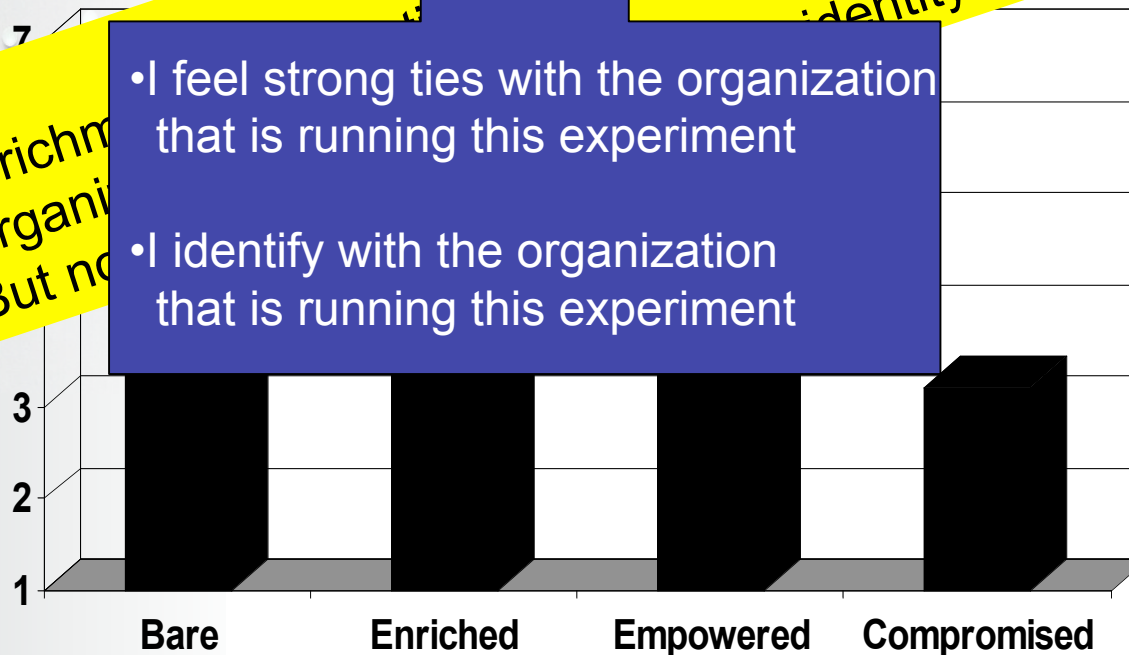
• Assessed in terms of (a) organizational conclusions

• Environment increase a sense of identity-realization

• I feel strong ties with the organization that is running this experiment

• I identify with the organization that is running this experiment

Organizational Identification
: $F(3,44)=4.29, p< .01, \eta^2=.23$



■ Organizational Identification

- Study of UK office workers ($Ns = 112, 47$) (Knight & Haslam, in prep)

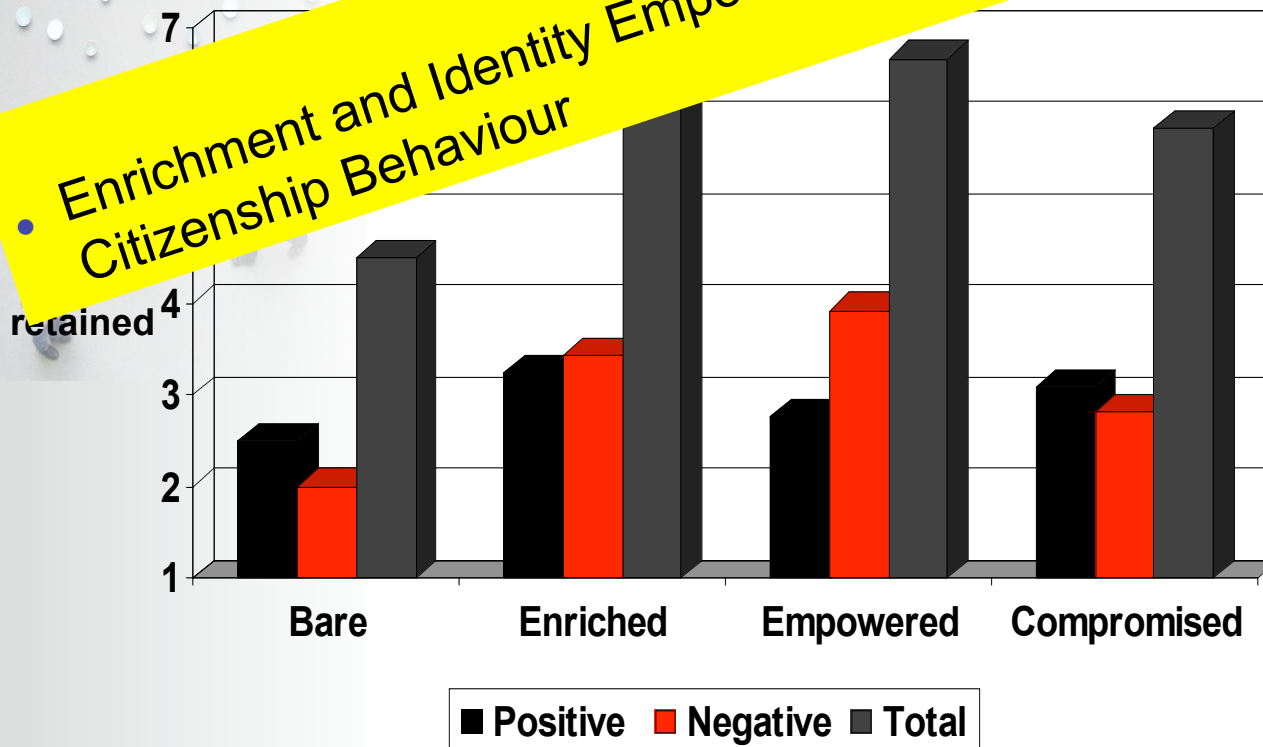
Organizational Citizenship Behaviour

Relationship between Space management, Identity Realization and Organizational Well-being

- Assessed in terms of (a) positive tasks retained and (b) negative tasks retained and (c) total number of tasks retained

Conclusion

- Enrichment and Identity Empowerment increase Organizational Citizenship Behaviour



Negative Tasks:

$F(3,43) = 4.20, p < .01, \eta^2 = .23$

Total Tasks Retained:

$F(3,43) = 4.77, p < .01, \eta^2 = .25$

- Study of UK office workers ($Ns = 112, 47$) (Knight & Haslam, in prep)



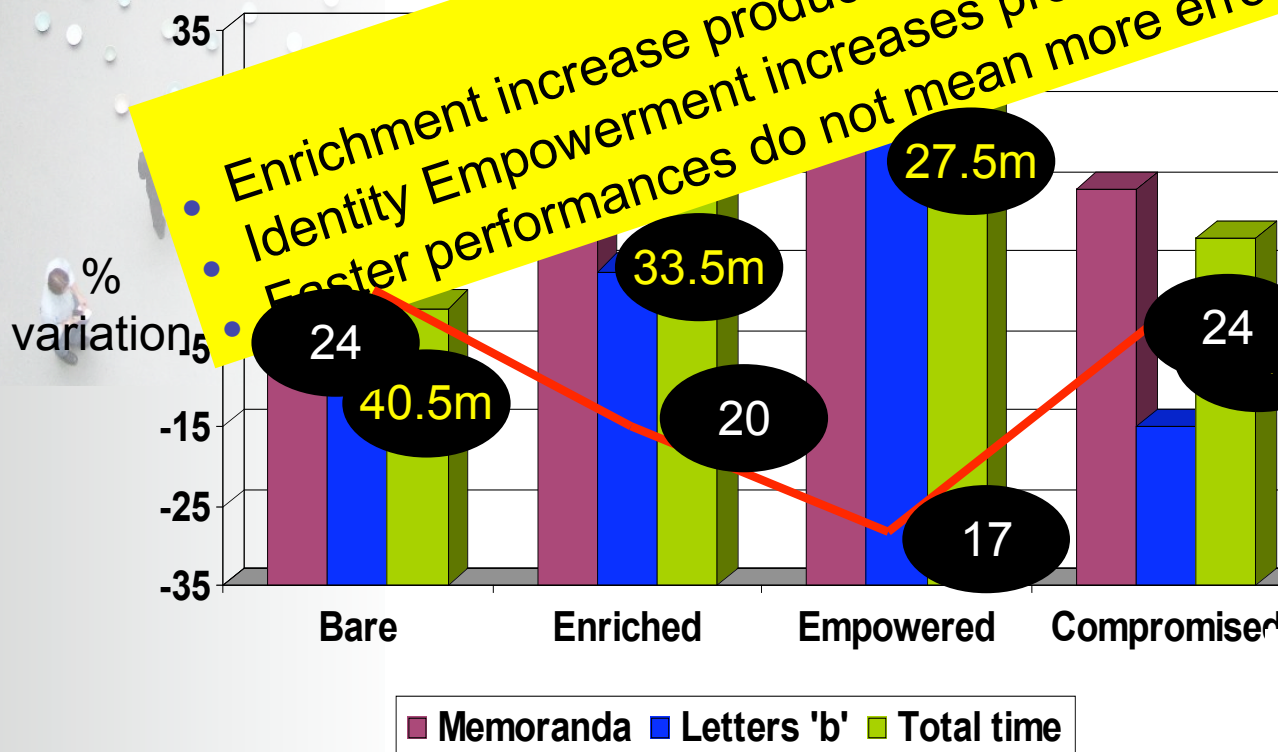
Productivity

Relationship between Space management, Identity Realization and Productivity

- Assessed in terms of (a) memo sorting, (b) letter sorting and errors.

Conclusions

- Enrichment increase productivity
- Identity Empowerment increases productivity still further
- Faster performances do not mean more errors



Memos: $F(3,43)=3.70$,
 $p < .01$, $\eta^2=.26$

Letters b: $F(3,43)=4.45$,
 $p < .01$, $\eta^2=.30$

Overall: $F(3,43)=4.58$,
 $p < .01$, $\eta^2=.24$



- Study of UK office workers ($Ns = 112, 47$) (Knight & Haslam, in prep)

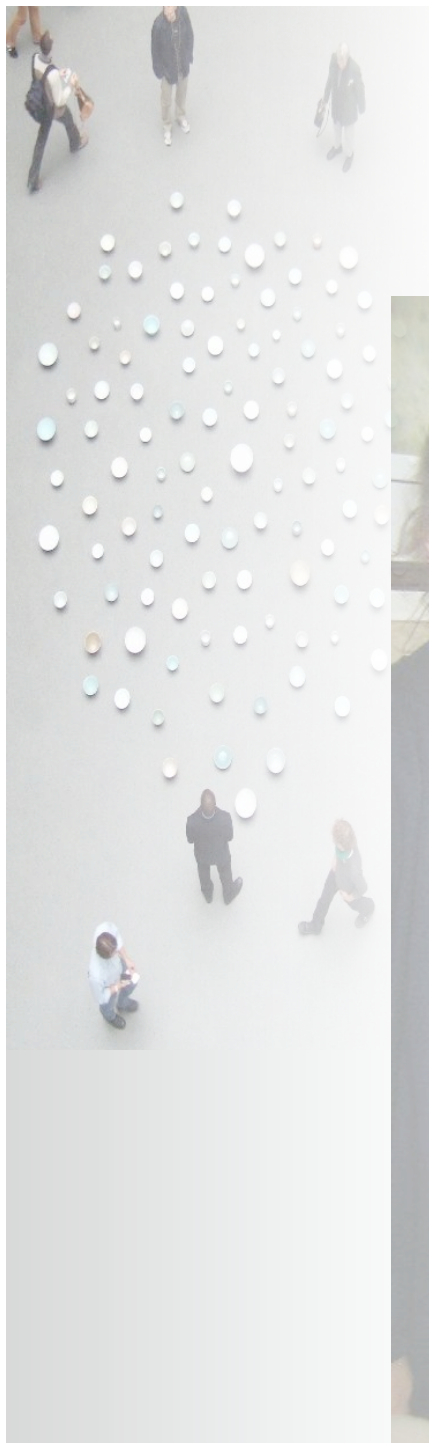
Conclusions

- Data challenges the idea that **productivity** can only be achieved through high surveillance and a lack of autonomy.
- In fact, the opposite may be true — a lack of autonomy (and an associated lack of input into managerial decision making) would appear to compromise **well-being**.
- The outcomes of standard, office management approaches can be very costly (in both economic and social terms).
- These studies (and the theory they support) point to the need to involve employees in the design of work space allowing for the expression of valued identities.
- Space management (e.g., business, architecture, design) needs to move from a philosophy of identity imposition to one of **identity realization**.

Conclusions

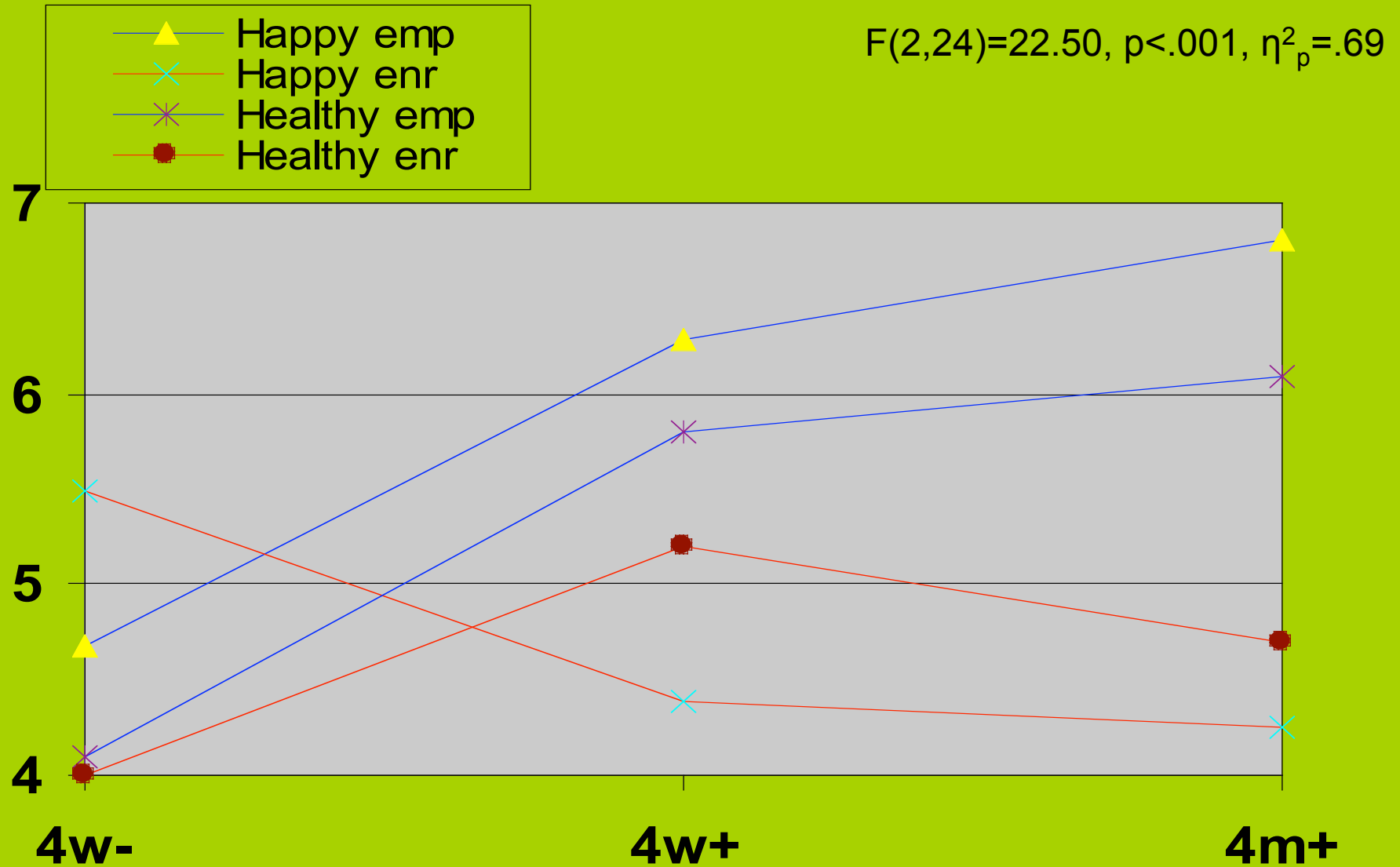
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Older adults in care

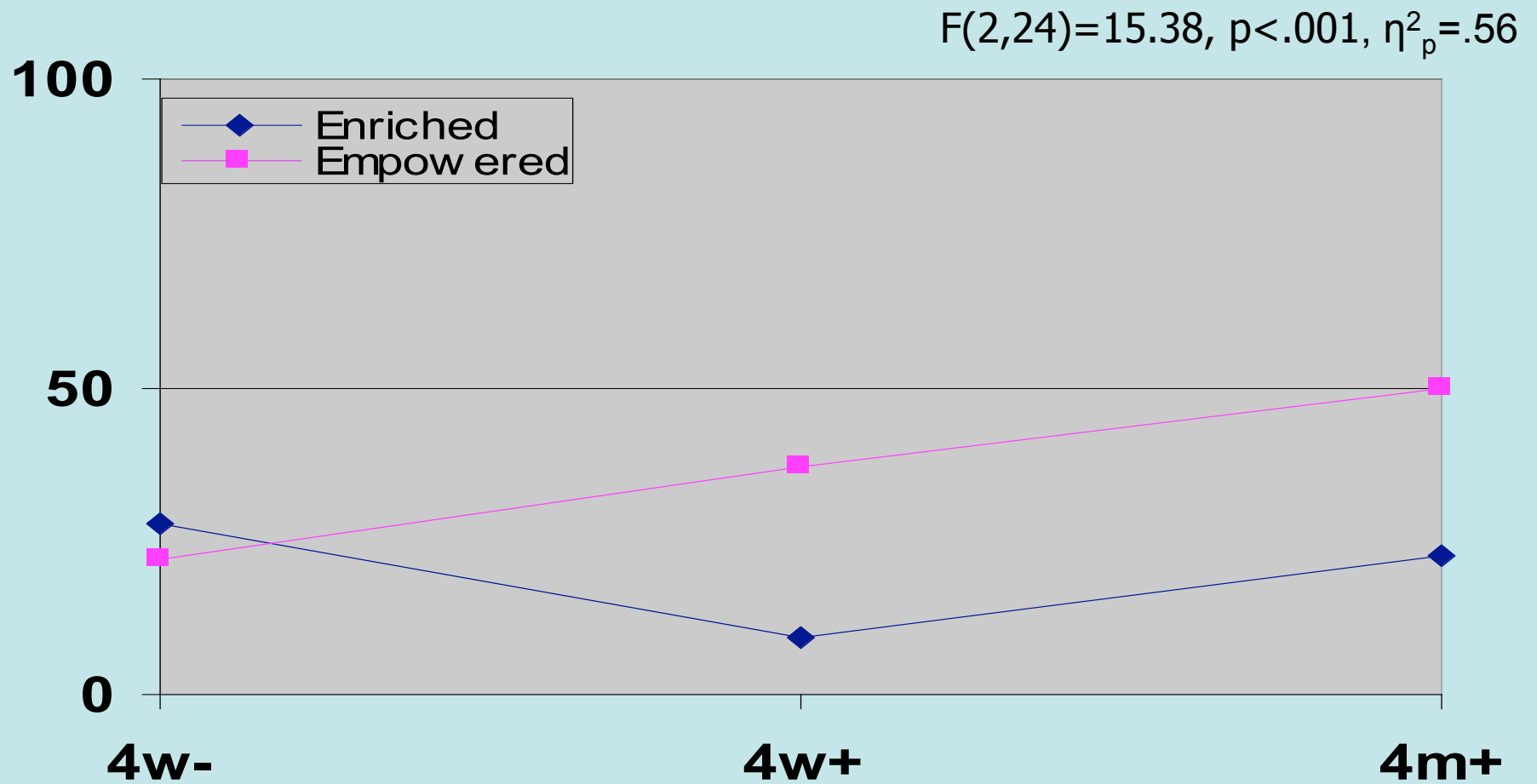




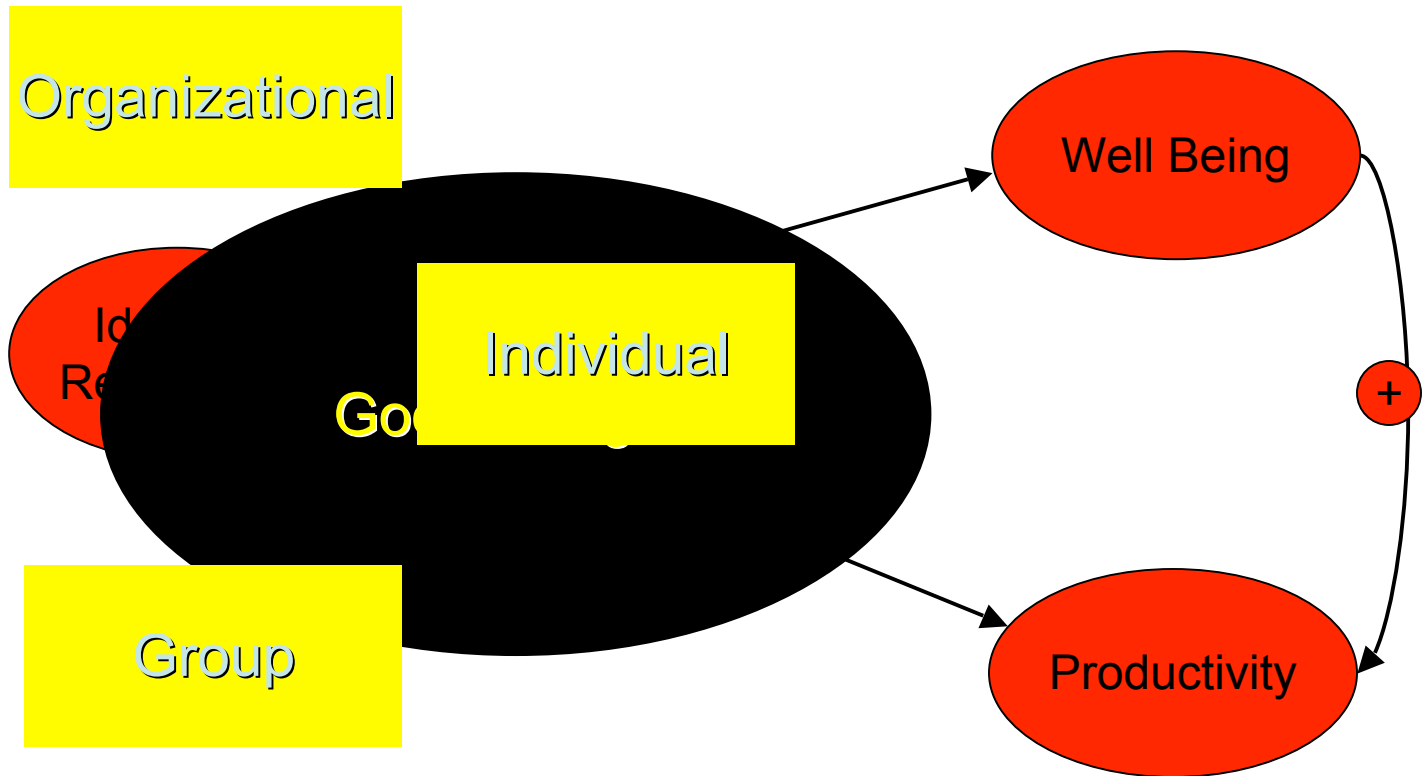
Happiness and (apparent) health of the residents



Total appearance means in the home's sitting rooms at 11am and 7pm



Good workspace design? Results to date



(Knight & Haslam, 2009)



Want to become involved?

- www.prism-identity.com
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- cpk201@ex.ac.uk





The Psychology of Office Space

(Knight & Haslam)

8th April 2009

IPSIS workshop

