

# Office Space FIT FOR A MILLENNIAL

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When you walk into the new TForce headquarters, it's not what you'd expect. There is natural light streaming in everywhere. People are gathered in small collaboration rooms. Others are sitting or standing at open space work stations.

There's a feeling of energy; of newness; of something stimulating that's invigorating the TForce workforce. It's inspired by their new office space in North Dallas. "This new space couldn't be a bigger change for us," says TForce President Scott Leveridge about the company's new 16,000 square foot headquarters. "It's actually smaller than our old space, but it feels so much larger; so much more open; so much more welcoming. Our old space was very much a traditional home office with high cubes and traditional executive private offices. Our operations were spread out throughout Texas. Everything about the way we used to work kept people in their own silos. Not anymore. This space is open with lots of glass and polished concrete floors. There are so many options for people to work on their own or together. And there's no room for paper, by design! All those file cabinets of the past are gone. Electronic storage means we simply don't need to take up all that space for files. With less paper comes more room for collaboration."

## **A Silicon Valley Feel**

The space feels like a high-tech firm in Silicon Valley and that was very much intended. It features few hard walls and open work stations and many varieties of collaboration spaces. There are private spaces that can accommodate brainstorming meetings for two and a training space



that can hold up to 35. The flexibility of the layout means workers have their choice of privacy rooms for projects that require concentration and training rooms for a crowd. And there's every size collaboration room in between. You'll also find an open concept dining area that connects to the training room.

It's no secret that this kind of space is made to attract a younger workforce. Millennials want workspaces that encourage collaboration and openness and showcase a company's open corporate culture. "When we interview younger workers, we'll often get responses like, 'Wow, this looks like you have a great culture here!' That's exactly what we want to hear," says Leveridge.

## **Meet Me in the Roger Staubach Room**

In fact, much of the idea for the design of the new offices came from employees. "We had a committee of employees who played a significant role in the design process and choice of the color schemes. They even came up with the ideas for naming the huddle rooms," says Leveridge. By popular demand, those gathering spaces were named after Dallas Cowboys players. Need to gather a few people to



work on a tough problem? How about meeting up in the Roger Staubach room? Looking for new ways to give a little extra pampering to a special customer? Try gathering a few of your co-workers in the Troy Aikman room. Or, how about coming up with new ways to cut costs with a small group brainstorming session in the Tony Romo room?

“The amazing thing is that we actually downsized from our previous space, while still being able to combine our data, operations and service centers. We went from a 50,000 square foot corporate space and offices throughout Texas to one 16,000 square foot space. And it feels like it’s a perfect fit,” says Leveridge

What motivated the change? “We needed to bring all our functions under one roof and we wanted to respond to the preferences of the changing workforce,” says Leveridge. “Millennials look for workplaces that encourage collaboration. They don’t want to be sealed off from their neighbors in their own little cubbyholes. They want to share and communicate. They expect to work for employers that look like they encourage a collaborative culture.”

### A Crazy Idea?

The TForce executives knew that such a radical change might be tough for long-time employees to swallow. “We’d been in the old space for 14 years. We wanted a fresh start. This concept was so radically different that we knew we had to give our long-time workers a heads’ up about the

change. We introduced the concept in a Town Hall-style meeting for all employees. We told them, “This is a different concept. It will take time to get used to. They were used to having their own little cubicles. We did worry that some long-time employees would say it was a crazy idea. How do you explain that their workspaces were going to be smaller, but that there would be more room? We were pleasantly surprised, though. It didn’t take very much time for them to adjust. They really loved the amount of natural light. In a switch from the traditional office layout (where only the executives had access to natural light through windows) we put the few hard-walled offices in the interior so we could get as many work stations near the windows. The employees love that. It’s drastically different and they are really enjoying it.”

And how do the TForce team members feel now that they’ve been in the space for awhile? Scott Leveridge sums that up this way: “The new office space has allowed our organization to nourish community, culture and inspire innovation in everything we do. I see smiling faces and what a positive impact this has made for our team. I couldn’t be happier for our employees and how they have utilized the improved space. It has allowed us to grow as a team.” **CLDA**