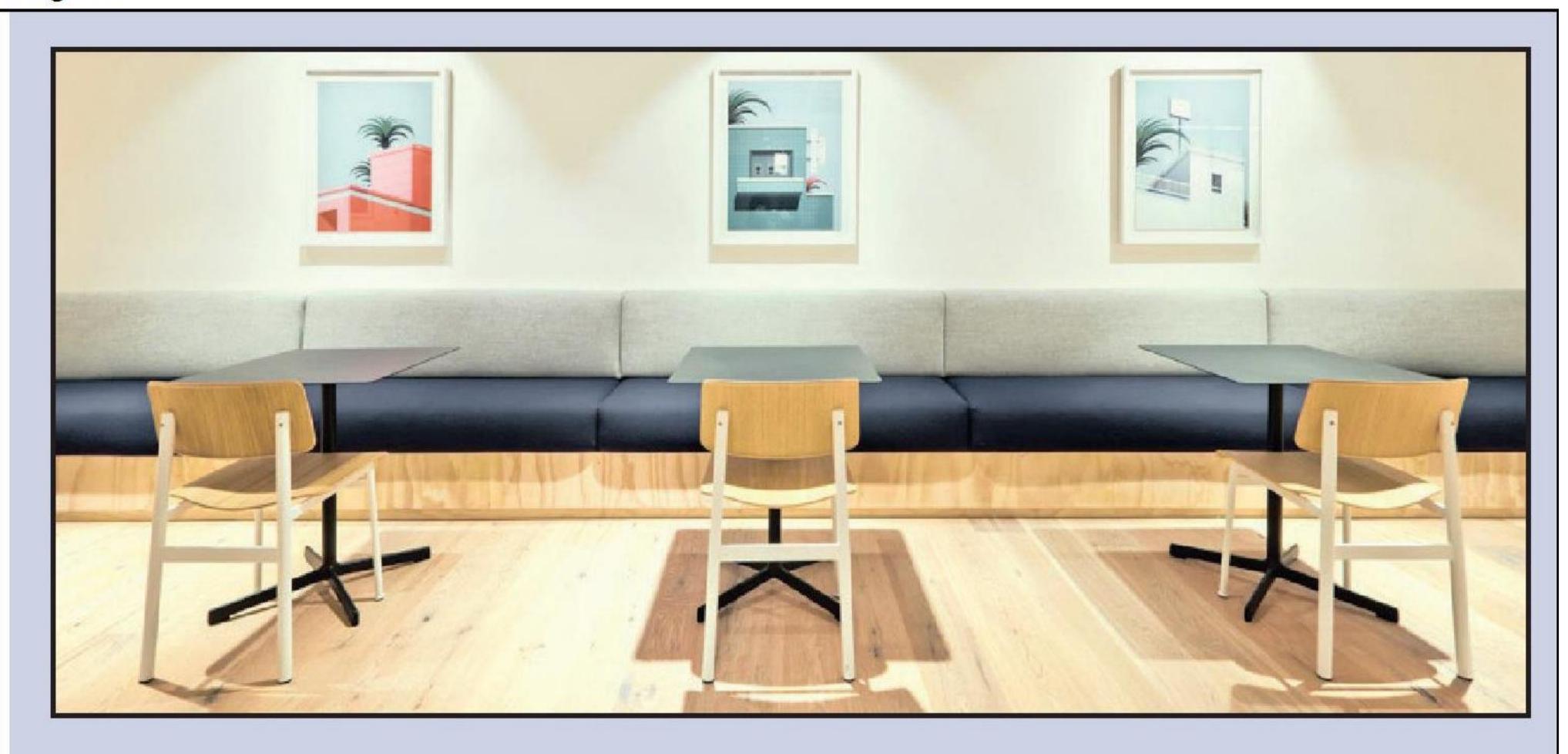
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Office space design needs to balance social interaction with private meeting and focus areas.

PICTURE: TREND GROUP

Collaboration for best results

THERE are a few key interior architectural principles which underpin effective co-working space design, says Paragon Interface's Claire D'Adorante.

Collaborative spaces that stimulate creativity and enable social interaction are important, while there is also a need for private meeting spaces and focus zones to balance all the activity.

She says key factors are:

- Flexibility to maximise space use and identify potential growth areas in the building.
- Efficiency, which means creating multiple-use spaces.
- Adaptability to respond to changing requirements and technologies.
- Sustainability, which relates to green and healthy work environments which support the wellbeing of all staff.

An additional criteria is privacy, which means:

Adding quiet rooms, focus spaces

and concentrated work areas.

- Using acoustic materials to minimise noise transference.
- Dividing open spaces with planters, cabinets and screens for personal space.
- Using colour and texture and stimulating furniture and fittings to create dedicated team areas.

Themed environments suited to the particular needs of specific businesses is also a factor to consider in the design of co-working spaces, says Trend Group's Dorethe Swiegers.

"Create smaller pockets within your office space that foster a sense of belonging. For example, seating can be assigned for groups rather than individuals.

"The teams may be mobile, but still have fixed desk spaces.

"Co-working spaces relate to access to communal resources and amenities, as well as activity-based working."