

spaces

Photography • Industry News • People • Projects

Issue 9

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Message From The President

The Secret Space & Your Best Work

When I was a little kid I had a favorite thinking space in my home. The space was a teeny, little hidden area behind where we would place our Christmas tree. To get to my secret thinking space I would crawl under a little storage hutch next to the tree and when the tree was decorated you couldn't tell I was back there. Thankfully, my mom put the Christmas tree up early and I was able to enjoy my space for almost a full month.

I still like the idea of being "alone" in my thinking space. I don't have a Christmas tree up all year long, but I do have a location and time where I get my best thinking done. My office is relatively empty between 5am - 6:30am so I have a quiet place and time where I can get some of my best thinking and subsequently my best work done.

What about you? Where do you get your best work done? Do you have a time and place to go to where you feel comfortable and can do your best work? If not, I highly suggest you do some reflection on the subject and identify when you are at your best. Then make sure you recreate that time and experience as often as possible.

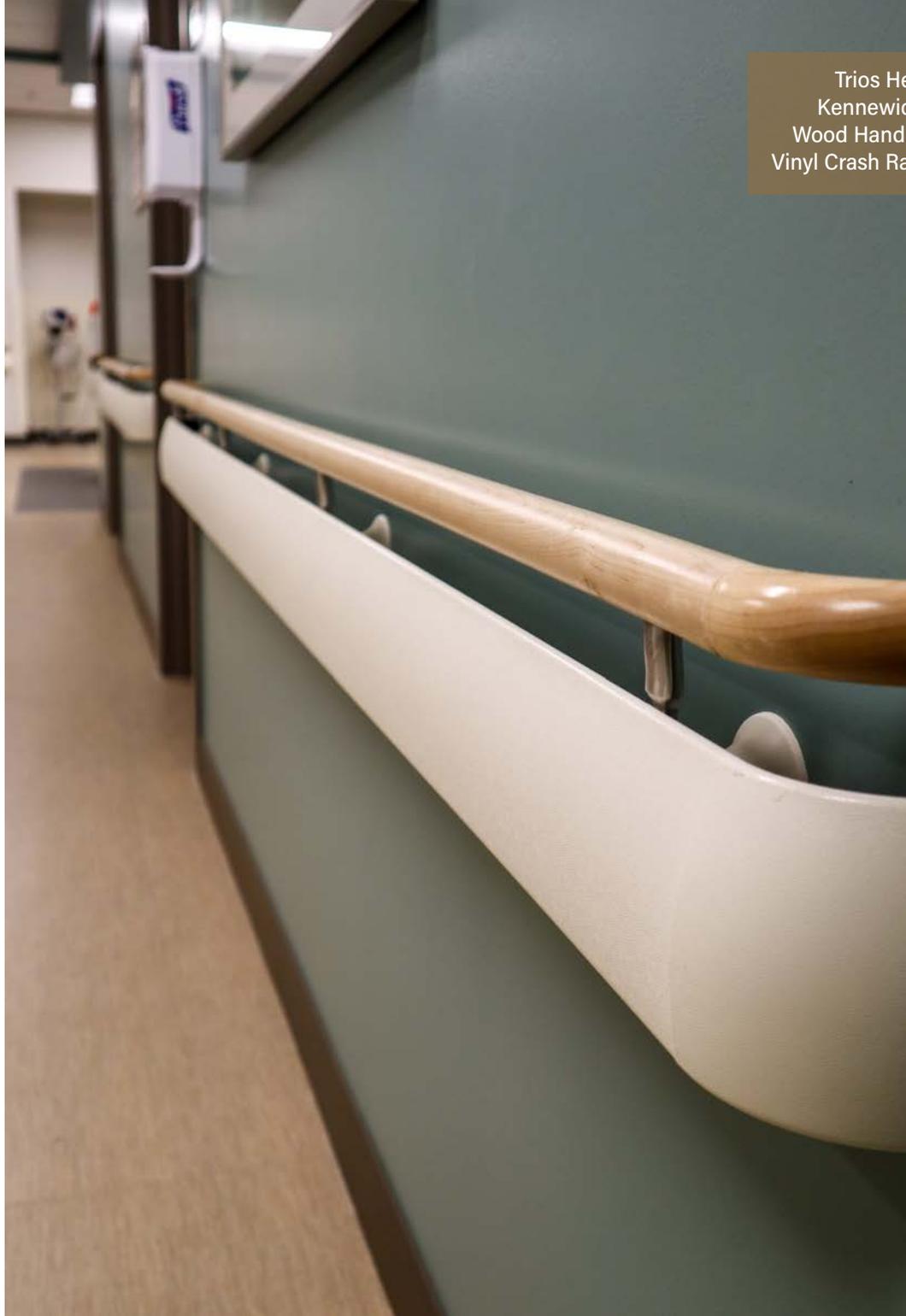
Scott Galloway
President

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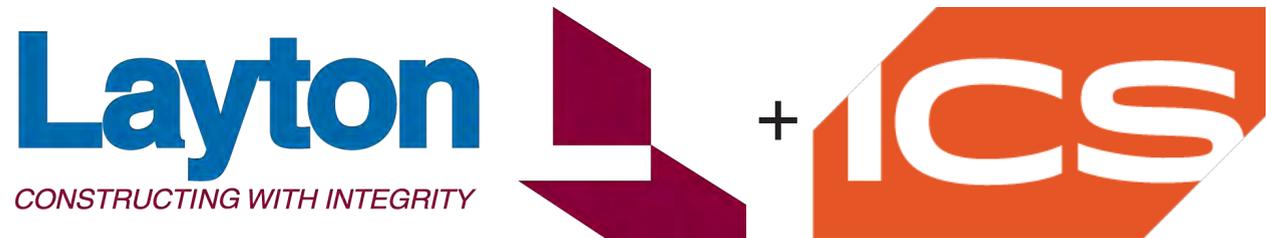
Trios Health
Kennewick, WA
Wood Handrail (Top)
Vinyl Crash Rail (Bottom)



Idaho Dept. of Permits & Licensing
Boise, ID
Steelcase Answer Panel system
AMQ S-Series Height Adjustable
Desks & Peds



Tracey Felix & Jason Horst
On location in Meridian, ID



Layton Construction has been in business for almost 70 years. It has grown from a small, family-held construction company to a major Contractor operating in eight states. Idaho is just one of the states where Layton's Interior Construction Specialists (ICS) branch operates. To learn more about Layton and the incredible team at ICS, OEC met with ICS Senior Project Manager Tracey Felix and Layton's Superintendent Jason Horst at an active job site in Meridian.

Dark To Dazzling

At the moment, Elase Medical Spa is a 3,400sf gray jungle of

metal framing. However, in the fall of 2022, it will be a dazzling white, high-ceilinged consultation and treatment center offering everything from BOTOX and CoolSculpting to skincare and laser hair removal. This Meridian branch will be Elase's fifth location, with the other four currently in the Salt Lake region. The project is a design-build, and even as Tracey gives the tour, there are decisions she is making with the owner. What kind of bottle filler do they want, how can they get the most usable space out of their storage room, and how will OEC install the gauzy blue curtain in their lobby? Having a trustworthy construction partner

like ICS is what brings customers back time and again.

Local ICS Projects

ICS was founded in 2000 to supply the demand for sophisticated, quality tenant improvement and remodeling services. Since its founding, ICS has become the Top TI Contractor in the Intermountain West. It's not just Elase that has built a trusting relationship with ICS over the years - companies like Traeger Grills, Google, Pluralsight, Zions Bank, and Workday, to name a few - have partnered with ICS time and again to ensure the most quality, predictable outcome. ICS expanded



Elase Med Spa
Sugar House Location
Salt Lake City, UT

to Denver, Colorado in 2018 and last year, officially opened an office in the busy Boise market.

The Key To Success

What is the key to their success? It differs depending on whom you ask. Tracey says, "I think it is the fairness to subcontractors. We want to see them succeed and that is why we are so particular about whom we hire." Jason plays off Tracey, adding integrity as a significant factor. "We always want to do the right thing and hire people with integrity. We don't cut corners, and we want to get it right the first time by communicating with owners."

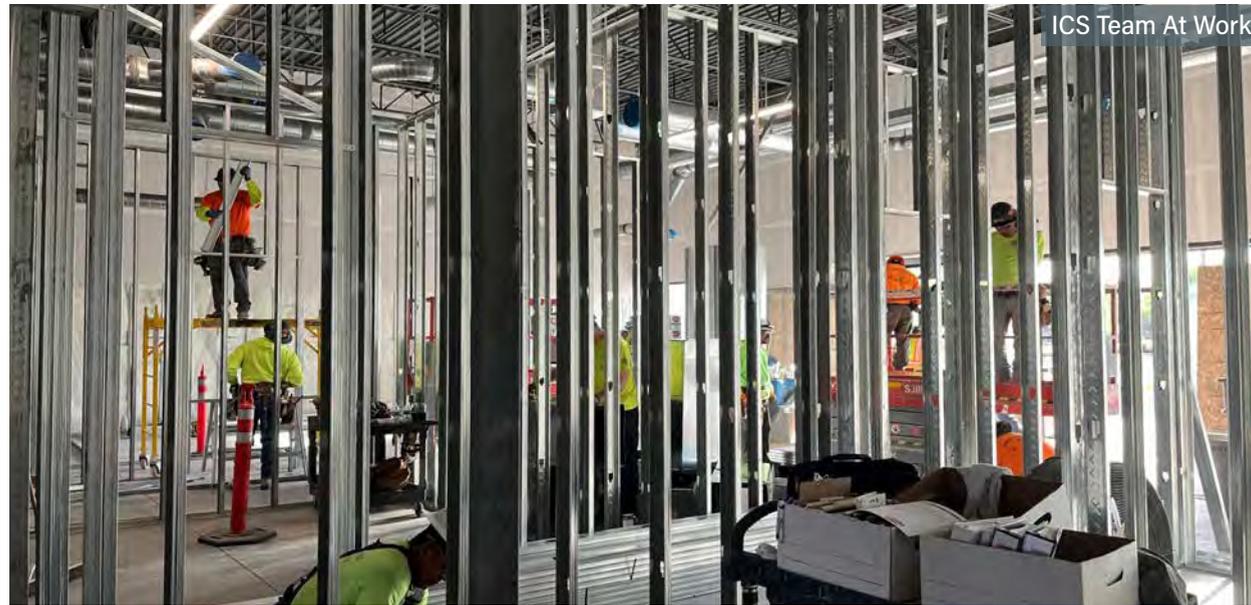
Layton's Integrity

Layton headquarters would be proud of these two. According to their value statement, Layton's goal is to construct with integrity through honesty, safety, unity, and quality. Honesty includes having sometimes hard but truthful conversations with owners to make good decisions. They are also intensely dedicated to the safety of their teams. Their teams stretch and flex every morning and conduct random safety checks to ensure everyone is compliant. Layton also implements unity through mutual respect and guarantees quality by paying close attention to the details.

Celebrating Their Staff

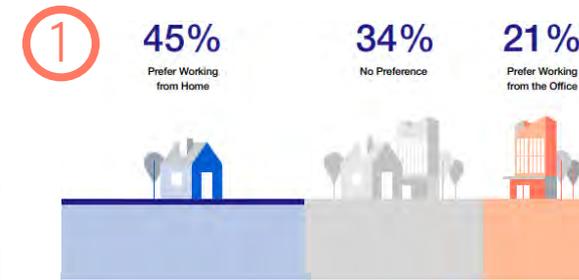
By staying true to these values, Layton and, by extension, ICS retains excellent talent. For example, the Elase Job Superintendent has been with the company for over fifteen years. Layton also celebrates their staff on their five-year anniversaries by giving them a paid trip. Their teams work hard, and they take care of their teams in return.

When considering the fantastic work Layton and ICS are doing on its projects, it is no wonder Elase is partnering with them again. Under the watchful eye of ICS and Layton, Elase will be having its grand opening in no time.

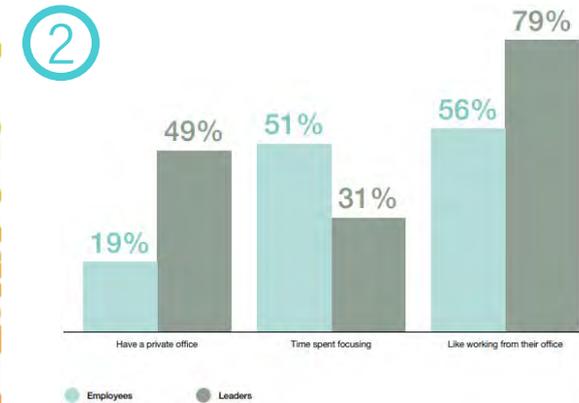


By The Numbers

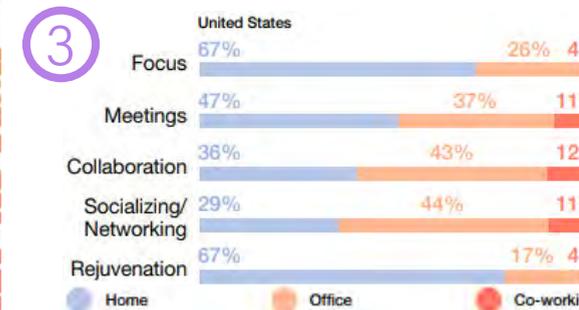
Steelcase conducted 12+ global studies with over 57,000 employees and business leaders in 11 countries. Here are three key findings from their research.



While 87% of employees will spend some time working in the office, the majority prefer to work from home.



Leaders are more likely to have a private office at the office but less likely to use it for focus work. The research suggests that employees prefer to work from home because they can gain control over their work experience and more privacy.



People need the office to support all work modes. Research shows that employees prefer to do different types of work in different places. While the home is more conducive for focus work, collaboration is done better in the office.

The Great Workplace Compromise

Employees Weigh In

Covid changed the workplace forever as employees adopted work from home. Now employers want their teams back in the office. Can they compromise? In this issue, employees make their case for wfh and share the lessons they learned.



David Berry
Senior Project Manager in Boise
POWER Engineers

David Berry is a busy man. When he isn't managing design teams at five different locations with POWER Engineers, he is brokering deals between companies, lecturing at BSU, and helping his wife care for their five-month-old twins. For some, juggling these jobs would seem impossible, but as David says, "I'm a short attention span person that likes a challenge." And a challenge is exactly what he got when he was sent to work from home over two years ago. He quickly went from traveling about one hundred days a year to ten and does most of his work in his laundry room office.

Improve Communication & Onboarding

One of the main challenges David has discovered is

communication. "So much of the way we communicated and interacted before the pandemic was face to face. Since then, direct communication has fallen off, and there are also generational aspects to consider. Our younger staff is very good at using instant messaging and emails rather than phone calls, but they struggle to ask questions effectively. Mentoring has been a difficult process over the last two years, and younger staff need to know how to find information and problem-solve to be successful." David has been creating time templates or outlines for onboarding so they can get remote staff up to speed quickly.

"Mentoring has been a difficult process over the last two years, and younger staff need to know how to find information and problem-solve to be successful."
-David Berry

Learn How To Disconnect

"Walking a couple of rooms over to work is great, but it is also harder to disconnect. My team and I are billable commodities selling our time to firms, so we are always on call. It's difficult to shut off." David often works an eleven-hour day, but being home allows him

to help care for his kids, which is impossible to do in the office. Having the hard stop for family time keeps him from inevitably being drawn back to work. "I think everyone will continue to struggle with defining those work/life boundaries because working from home has become the norm. It will be interesting to see how that affects our mental fatigue and burnout."

Prevent Burnout By Recharging

The idea of burnout has not gotten a lot of analysis or investigation. Those who have worked from home can attest to how easy it is to work longer hours, and David makes a good point. "No one can really go from college to a twelve-hour workday. In the same way, very few people can work longer hours without recharging. Some can push through weeks with sixteen-to-eighteen-hour days like accountants in tax season, but then they allow themselves to recover. It is the same way with working from home."

Realign Client Expectations

The best way David has learned to recharge is by realigning client expectations. "I want to be the manager I feel like I never had in my first ten years of work. I never felt like my manager would bump a schedule for me or fully advocate for the production staff when we were stretched thin with deliverables and deadlines. So, I am trying to align customer expectations, so my team members know I have their backs. If we can't make a deadline or feel as though quality is suffering because we're rushing, I will do what I can to internally address items, and then I will have a transparent conversation with the client to reset their expectations."

*David will be featured in our next edition discussing the work from home compromise from a leadership point of view.



Brendan Spillane
Senior Project Manager in San Francisco & Boise
Autolist

Before Covid, Brendan was living and working full-time in San Francisco with an apartment in Presidio Heights taking the bus into work every day. Now, he works remotely and splits his time between the Bay Area and Boise. As a Product Manager at Autolist for their Android app, Brendan can work remotely as long as he has his computer and a good Wi-Fi connection. When Covid hit, San Francisco shut down, so Brendan decided to spend part of his time in Boise, where he grew up. "I get the best of both worlds. San Francisco and Boise are very different, and I enjoy both, so traveling back and forth has been great." When he made the change, there were still many unknowns about when the office would reopen, and luckily Autolist did not require a hard and fast return.

Onboarding Is Critical

However, remote work isn't for everyone. Autolist has had to be proactive about bringing on new, remote staff. "If you were established at a company before the company went remote, it's easier to keep strong relationships with other teammates. But if you are starting new at a remote company and don't know anyone, it is more challenging. At Autolist, we believe onboarding is critical for new hires to meet

the broader team. Each new hire has a 20-minute casual meeting scheduled with every other teammate (we only have twenty-five people), which helps the new hire meet everyone within a couple of weeks."

Set A Strick Calendar Schedule

For those used to the office, transitioning to a full work-from-home experience was hard. "I learned how important it is to set a strict calendar schedule. When working remote, there is not a natural end to your workday like leaving the office to commute home. Work and personal time can blend together, and it can be hard to keep these priorities separate. I learned to set a strict schedule and put both work and personal responsibilities on my calendar in order to achieve a healthy work-life balance."

"I recommend people invest heavily in their home office space. If you are going to sit in a chair and use a desk all day, getting the right equipment to create an environment for success is super valuable."

-Brendan Spillane

Create A Productive Environment

Brendan's favorite thing about working from home is his office. "I like that I can customize my home workspace more than I could in an office. With a stipend, I can buy anything from wall art to a desk plant, which allows me to set up an environment where I can be most productive. I recommend people invest heavily in their home office space. If you are going to sit in a chair and use a desk all day, getting the right equipment to create an environment for success is super valuable."



Dave Stout
Test Development Engineer in Boise
onsemi

Make Information Accessible

Unlike many who were sent home, Dave was partially prepared for remote work. As the manager of test engineering for onsemi's industrial and commercial sensor division, Dave is used to managing teams in Meridian, Taiwan, and Bangalore, India. "Managing remotely is not a new thing for me, but I definitely think working from home is new for the individual contributors." Dave started managing a local team before taking on his remote groups, so he had to learn a different management style. This semi-prepared him to help foster the development and the transition of other people from working strictly in the office to working out. "In a way, it was perfect preparation for when we all came home for COVID. It allowed me to use similar methodologies for my local team. In the beginning, I spent a lot of time showing employees how to find information on what they were doing in different systems. Now, it is more efficient for them to check our system."

Eliminate Distractions

However, managing remotely is different than working remotely yourself. "I have a wife and three kids (two kids at the time) and a dog. The kids didn't

have school and figured that since I was home, I could play. We had to figure out how to coexist during working hours while two kids were doing school online, and my wife and I had constant conference calls." Once everything settled down, Dave discovered that he got more done at home than at work. "I love working from home. My kids know not to bother me, whereas when I am working at the office, someone will come to talk to me, and I'll get distracted. I feel like I'm a lot more efficient at home because I can eliminate the distractions of the workplace."

Do Five Minute Remote Check-Ins

Unfortunately, working from home does not work for everyone. Some of Dave's team needs to be in the office to be most productive, while others split their time. With this new flexibility, Dave has implemented some procedures he does with his overseas teams. "When there are issues, we will have daily meetings for a few minutes. I can ask if there are any problems I can help with and be done in five minutes compared to an entire hour. It is a way we can stay in tune with each other as if we were talking over the cube wall."

"Working from home allows me to be more creative, energized, focused, and intentional at work and with my family."

-Dave Stout

Use Your Flexible Schedule To Be With Your Family

Maintaining a good work/life balance is hard in the tech industry because it is cutthroat and busy. It can often look like eight-to-ten-hour days in the office

with additional work at home. For Dave, working from home helped him relieve the stress and find balance. "With my first two kids, I didn't spend nearly as much time with them as I could with my third child when she was born. When the first two kids were born, I took three or four weeks off, and then it was back to work. There was a lot of growth in the first two years of their life that I wasn't there for. At home, I can walk into the kitchen, and there's my 18-month-old running around and running up to me. I get to spend more time seeing her develop and participating in her development. My other kids come home from school now, and I can spend time with them. Then I get back to work after they go to bed and catch India as they are coming online. Working from home allows me to be more creative, energized, focused, and intentional at work and with my family."

Solve Problems In -Person

As great as it is to work from home, there are times when Dave chooses to go into the office. Typically, it has to do with solving problems. "When we are jotting down ideas to solve problems, it is important to have someone's full attention and brainpower. People don't have their cameras on working from home, so I don't know if they are actually paying attention. A lot of times, they are multitasking. So, when I need someone's full attention, I'll ask for us to sit around a table and hash it out, which gets better results. The other thing is the personal relationship with employees. Having face-to-face contact is important for developing relationships. It is easy to turn off a computer screen at home and not form relationships, so improving my relationship with my team will always pull me back into the office."

*Dave will be featured in our next edition discussing how onsemi is handling the work from home compromise.Le



Magic Valley Electric
Boise, ID
Steelcase Currency Pedestals and
Wardrobe Towers



Steelcase Universal
Surface with AMQ
Activ-Pro Base
AMQ S Series Box
File, Steelcase
Answer Panels

Magic Valley Electric & Magic Services

When Magic Valley Electric (MVE) decided to build their first office in Eastern Idaho, they wanted something special. It had to be a place that reflected their values and was also an exciting place to work. Owner and President Billy Salts started the company in 2013 because he wanted to create something different in the trade. The company has two wings. Magic Valley Electric offers electrical for new construction, including agriculture, industrial, commercial, express, automation, and solar, while Magic Services (established in 2019) provides electrical, plumbing, and HVAC for the residential market. The expansive offering is not the only thing that sets the company apart. According to Salts, "We have an amazing team, and that comes from our core values. We hire and fire off our core values: attitude, character, integrity, vision, and determination. They are our true north."



Owner & President
Billy Salts

**"We hire and fire off our core values: Attitude, Character, Integrity, Vision, and Determination. They are our true north."
-Billy Salts**

Building Something Different

Salts started in the trade after graduating from high school with no intention of starting a business later. However, after loving the work and moving up in some great companies, he wanted to create something special in the trade. "None of us knew what culture was back then, and the construction industry has always been a little behind the times regarding treating and valuing people. I wanted to be transparent with my team and empower them to be leaders in the company. I wanted to see people succeed and one day take my position. My vision was to build something different; something focused on our team."

Bright Colors & Open Sightlines

Thanks to their values and excellent team, Magic has just moved into its new location in Boise. When you walk into the building, it looks very different than other electrical contractors. With bright colors, clean furnishings, and open sightlines, it creates an energetic atmosphere that makes it an amazing place to work. It is the same way for all the offices. With such a unique space, no one would know how close Magic came to looking like everyone else.

Environment Affects Culture

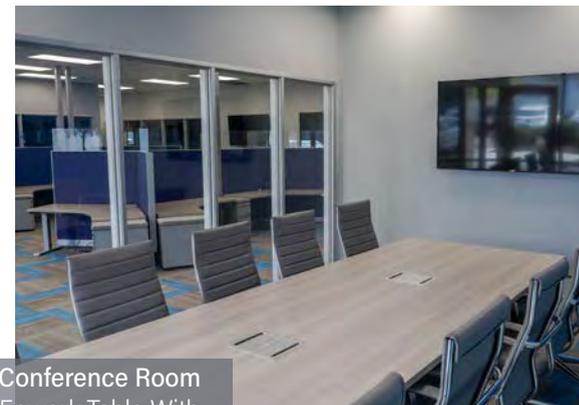
In 2018, just before finalizing design plans for Magic Services' building in Jerome, Salts visited DMA, a lighting vendor in Boise. He had an office design that he didn't love but was ready to move forward with when a chance encounter changed things. While walking through DMA, he noticed how great their desks looked. The owner quickly shared that the Steelcase desks had come from OEC down the road. Salts stopped by the OEC showroom to investigate and was blown away. "I remember taking a ton of pictures. We were about to move forward with an expensive build that, while special to us,

wasn't going to be different. After leaving OEC, we stopped everything and redesigned our entire office. Our culture is so important, and our environment makes it so much better."

Culture In Action

The strong culture at Magic and MVE has enabled them to accomplish a massive project recently when they landed a solar project for Circle D Farms. By pulling together their whole team, 215 solar trackers were installed on 43 different sites in the Minidoka and Murtaugh counties. The entire project was done in-house, including six miles of trenching, thirteen-hundred yards of concrete, and a very tight deadline. "It took every one of us from our admin team to everybody in the field to make it happen, and we finished within two days of the deadline. It challenged us to dig deep, and that is when our culture really showed up. Our people were smiling and running and gunning and when we finished, it was a celebration. So many of us grew from it, and now we know we can take on even more."

With teamwork as the focus and a great new office to support its new Boise team, the Team at Magic and MVE is excited to see what the future has in store.



Conference Room
Enwork Table With
Foundation Panel Base



Grid Collection by Established & Sons

A colorful room-within-a-room, the rawshell of the Grid frame provides a base for modular meeting room seating, shelves, tables and screens, which can be integrated in different ways to create a playful and multi-functional environment for informal meetings, presentations or simply hanging out.



Slab Table & Dining Chairs
By Tom Dixon

Inspired by the stance and general demeanor of a bull; its haunchy aspect and muscular poise were translated into a chair and table set. Each piece has generous proportions, solid materiality and is softened with a gently radius edge.

Wine Bank
Menlo Park, CA
Wine Lockers

We create amazing spaces
where employees love to work



www.oecworks.com