

Open Office Etiquette

Brought to you by the Employee Engagement Committee

OOE, yeah you
know me!



CONTINUING EDUCATION &
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

In some ways it's really simple.

- ❶ Be a good resident of our new space.
- ❷ Respect your neighbors.

That's it, right?

Well, sometimes, that's not it. We're moving to an open workspace. We're going to experience some conflict. How do we deal with that? By defining what is and isn't neighborly.

That's what we're going to do on the following pages. Let's navigate these waters together.



Open Office Etiquette

Success in our new environment depends on awareness of your neighbors. Please be considerate and conscientious of how your actions impact your colleagues. Likewise, please be willing to address issues personally first, before getting anyone else involved. Kindly ask a person who is driving you crazy to cease and desist. Sometimes you will bug people, and they will tell you. Sometimes people will bug you, and you should tell them. If we build the expectation that this is a conversation that can and will happen, then we can work happily together.

handle it
before you
escalate it

Noise

Here are some pointers to maintain concentration in a collaboratively focused setting.

- Modulate your voice. No need to whisper – just be considerate of your neighbors when speaking near individual workspaces.
- Use phone discretion. Speakerphone use, lengthy conversations and interactive webinars should only happen in enclosed spaces. If you are using a cellphone, removing one earbud can help you keep your voice at an appropriate level.
- Be conscious of non-verbal noise. Keep cell phone and other devices on vibrate or on a low ringtone.
- Take advantage of huddle and gathering spaces. Move noisy or personal conversations away from individual work settings. Lounge and break room spaces are designed for impromptu, small group meetings.
- Reserve enclosed spaces when needed. Conference spaces are available for larger or longer meetings.
- Phone rooms are provided for extended conference calls, and private one-on-one conversations.

if you need
to be noisy,
use the right
space

Interruptions

Successful co-existence in an open office setting relies on clear communication and mutual respect.

- Signify privacy preference. When appropriate, close your door if you have one, use headphones, or other methods to manage distractions and to indicate that you are engaged in focused work.
- If you need guaranteed uninterrupted work time, it may be wise to use an empty conference room, or take yourself off-site with approval of your supervisor. It's easy to forward your desk phone to your cell phone so you don't miss customer calls. If you don't have a laptop, you can check one out from Student Services.
- Read and respect privacy cues and personal boundaries. If your neighbor is wearing headphones or otherwise signaling they are doing focused work, hold your thought for another time or send them a message. SLACK is a quick and easy way to get their attention and send them a message that can be answered without interruption.

it's safer
to assume
someone is
busy

Confidentiality and Security

In an open office environment, confidential matters should be discussed in a setting that supports the privacy of that conversation. Use discretion and judgment and be particularly conscientious when working on confidential projects.

- Utilize enclosed activity spaces. Small conference rooms are located throughout the space for sensitive or confidential face-to-face or telephone conversations or work.
- Modify your surroundings. In your individual workspace, leverage your monitor arm to provide forward-looking seated privacy.
- Leave no trace. Clear cache and log out completely of any shared technology device. Shred confidential documents when disposing of them.
- Lock up your purse, wallet, or other valuables. Don't leave your cell phone on your desk when you walk away. Be smart about your personal and valuable belongings. Never take anything from someone else's desk.



be aware.
open space =
less privacy

Sharing Spaces

Enjoy the plethora of shared spaces, common and meeting areas, but please consider the next occupant.

- Honor your reservation time. Make a reservation for spaces that require it. Update or cancel your appointment if meetings shift or end earlier than expected.
- Return to order. Ensure you leave all spaces as you found them. Allow sufficient time before vacating to clean the room so it is ready for action by the next party.
- Reset and turn off A/V equipment. Wipe off white boards.
- Clear tables. Remove dirty dishes and utensils. Take food waste with you.
- Return furniture to its original layout. Push chairs back into place.
- Return any borrowed equipment or supplies sourced elsewhere.
- Please do not swap out or re-locate chairs, non-mobile technology, artwork or plants.



leave it how
you found it

Visual Appeal

The openness of our space provides a fresh, appealing visual for our people and our visitors. Please make your space your own with décor and plants, however within a few boundaries. Here's how we can all control clutter and help keep it that way.

- Utilize storage provided. Coats should be hung in wardrobes. Personal items should be stored in desk cabinets.
- E-file. Minimize paper piles and files by limiting copying and printing in favor of digital archives.
- Keep horizons clear. Maintain open vistas and access to daylight. Do not place plants or other items on top of overheads or higher than panels or up-mounted screens.
- Keep surfaces clean. Allow windowsills and vertical surfaces to remain clear. Do not block windows. Refrain from attaching paper or pictures to the glass dividers above the cubicle and office walls. The main goal is to keep a clear line of sight above cubicle spaces so that we can all share the sunlight from the windows without distraction.
- Tidy as you go. When you're leaving your workspace, especially for an extended period of time, push in your chair, turn off task lights, organize your piles and make sure that the space is visually clean.



keep it lookin'
fresh

Odors

In an open environment, odors are experienced by all members within a close space.

- Consider eating snacks and lunch in the break room or student lounge. Refrain from eating strong-smelling foods at your desk. Consume popcorn and other pungent snacks in the break room or lounge.
- Keep food under wraps. Store food in sealed containers in the break room or in a lunch bag/box.
- Steer clear of scents. Avoid using strong-smelling perfumes, lotions and room fresheners in the open workspace.
- Take all food and waste from meetings or other group events with you.



keep it
smellin' fresh

Wellness

We encourage you to take advantage of all opportunities to preserve mental and physical health and well-being.

- Maximize movement. Take the internal stairs whenever possible instead of the elevator. Enjoy a walk at lunch.
- PEAK offers fitness classes in Research Park. Explore the options available closer to our new building.
- Use the standing feature on your desk for part of the day. Consider a walking or standing meeting.
- Bring your healthy self to work. Leave “sick” germs at home to keep shared spaces and close working environments healthy for all.
- Conceal cords and clutter. Avoid tripping hazards by containing loose items and keeping cords out of traffic patterns.



stay healthy.
sick = home

Sustainability

Small efforts by all help us meet our mission of living green and reducing our carbon footprint.

- Recycle. Use designated receptacles to dispose of paper, cans and bottles.
- Minimize. Bring only what you will use in a day to store in refrigerators.
- Conserve power. Turn off lights when areas are not in use. Turn off all equipment (including your computer and monitors) at the end of day.
- Dispose of trash. Keep our grounds and parking lots litter-free. Use designated receptacles.
- Think digital. Avoid printing, copying and accumulating paper when digital filing and sharing will suffice.



love your
mother (earth)

Shared Kitchen

Also fits under Sharing Spaces, Odors, Cleanliness, Wellness, and Sustainability.

- Treat the refrigerator space as if it was a parking lot. Don't bring your giant RV of a lunch bag to work. Please only bring food for the day and only refrigerate what needs to be kept cold. Space is limited, so you can't leave bottles of salad dressing and creamer for longer than the week.
- Clean up after yourself. You spill it, you clean it. Don't leave dishes in the sink. Clean them immediately.
- Take any leftover food home with you on Thursday. Please don't do science experiments in our shared space.
- We will all share in the responsibility of the Thursday afternoon refrigerator throwaway. You can look forward to getting a schedule of responsibility.
- Don't eat anyone else's food unless it has a green dot on it signifying it is fair game.
- If you're leaving food for everyone to enjoy, please label it as fair game. On the flipside, if there is food on the counter, but there isn't any note, don't assume it's for you to partake. Also, wait until the end of the day to package up any leftovers for taking home.



gross
fridges are
gross. we all
have to
help

Animals

Also fits under Sharing Spaces, Odors, Cleanliness, Wellness, and Sustainability.

- Pets, other than service animals, are not allowed in the CECE building.
- We know this is a sad thing for some of us. The Annex was good to us in some ways...



nice
building, no
walls = no
dogs