



**The movement toward wellness in the workplace.**

**Steelcase**

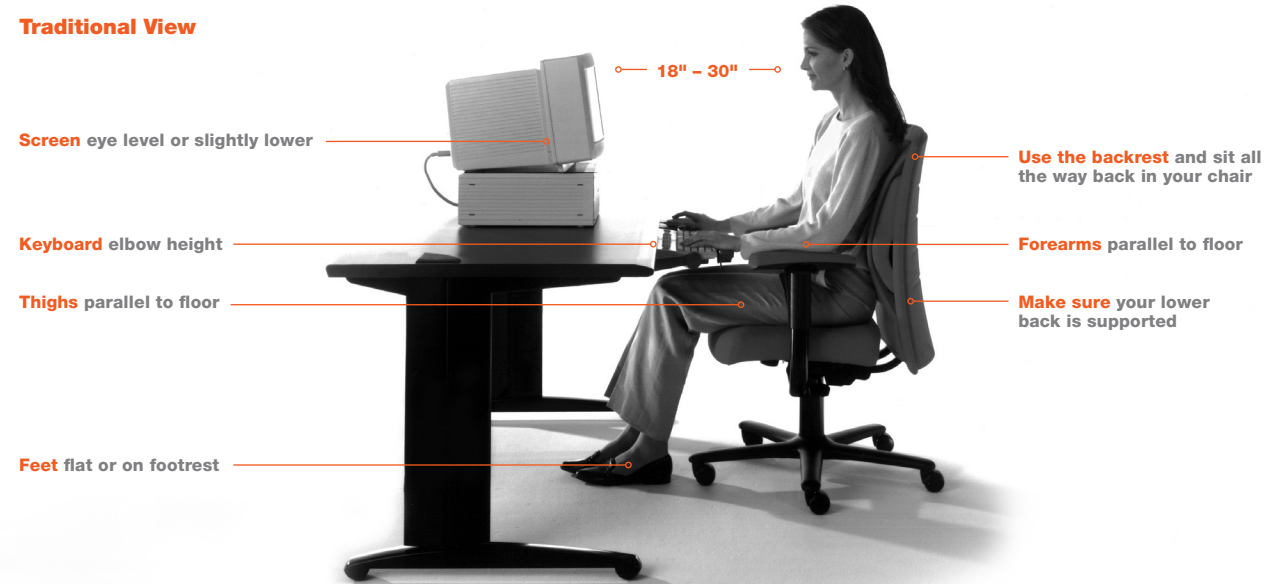
## Something has to change

When you hear the word “ergonomics,” you probably picture something like the image to the right. An image that barks out orders like your third grade teacher, “Sit still, shoulders back, feet flat on the floor... and no passing notes.” The traditional approach to ergonomics provides some good advice, but seems a little short-sighted and incomplete. There has to be more than just maintaining the perfect posture. Perhaps it’s time to focus beyond traditional ergonomics, and more on wellness.

**Why?** Boy, are we glad you asked.



## Traditional View



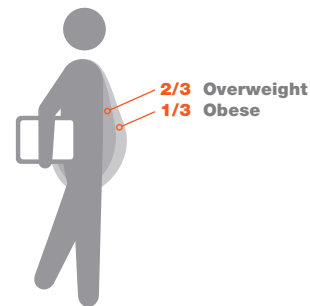
## We're just different

Today there is more diversity than ever in the workplace. Differences in job, gender, physique, age, ethnicity, culture and personal taste all place a unique demand on today's office environment. And the traditional focus on ergonomics has trouble keeping up.



### Generations collide

For the first time there are four generations at work, each with its own ideals, needs and characteristics.



### We're getting bigger

As much as 2/3 of today's workforce is considered overweight. 1/3 are obese.



### Our work has changed

Technology has given us freedom and independence to work anywhere, anytime. And we're collaborating with others more now than ever.



### People are still getting hurt

As office work increased over the years, back pain has followed suit. Back pain is now more than twice as common today as in 1950.



### **Traditional ergonomics is falling short**

The workplace is undergoing massive change. Mobile technology, new kinds of jobs and increased collaboration force people to work in spaces that don't support – ergonomically or otherwise – the way they now work. It's little wonder people are still getting hurt. And these changes will only accelerate. If you're feeling stressed, you're not alone. In fact, research shows that workers with stress are more likely to have back pain, costing employers over \$61 billion – yes, that's with a “B.”

**We think there's a better way**

Like bad posture, the traditional model of ergonomics has remained static. Today, we're seeing a shift from traditional ergonomics to a more proactive solution that encourages healthy living... one that focuses on the **physical**, **cognitive** and **social** needs of today's workforce and understands how they're related. It's a movement toward wellness in the workplace.

## The Wellness Perspective



### Physical

What the body needs



### Cognitive

What the mind needs



### Social

What groups need

## Physical (What the body needs)

Your third grade teacher was wrong: you shouldn't sit still in your chair all day. You should be able to sit, stand and even walk while you work. In fact, **movement** throughout the day helps increase blood flow to the brain and body, keeping you refreshed and energized. But what good is movement if it takes you away from your work? You also need to stay **oriented** to your work as you change postures. And don't fall victim to unsupportive furniture. Your workspace should change to **fit** you, not the other way around.



**Don't just sit there. Imagine an office that allows you to work while you sit, stand and even walk. It's possible.**



### **Cognitive** (What the mind needs)

Stress is real. We're being asked to do more with less. And it doesn't help when you hear, "I'm going to need this by the end of the day." But it's not just your boss that causes your stress level to rise. Stress can come from workspaces that don't support the way you work. People work differently and require different tools to effectively do their job. If workspaces don't give you the **control** you need, stress is inevitable. Oh, and don't forget to move. Research shows that movement keeps you **energized** and focused, which helps reduce stress.



**Admit it. You're either one of those "neat freaks" with everything in its place, or you have piles of work scattered across your desk. Either way, a workspace that supports your work style can help keep you calm, cool and in control.**



## **Social** (What groups need)

No one would argue that the ability to connect and collaborate effectively is crucial to today's business. In fact, we're working with others more now than ever. But as we step into collaborative spaces, has ergonomics followed? No wonder that one hour meeting felt more like a three hour meeting. You shouldn't be punished for working away from your desk. You need a variety of **collaborative solutions** that are specifically designed to meet the unique needs of group work.



**Away from your desk? Research shows as much as 80% of your day will be spent working with others. Make sure you bring those mints to the meeting. Not for you, but for everyone else.**



## Love how you work

Today, businesses are taking a more proactive approach to employee wellness in the workplace. Think about it. A lot of businesses are incorporating on-site fitness centers, health fairs and even offering incentives for healthy living. Imagine an approach that includes both ergonomics and wellness. Finally, a holistic solution that focuses on the **physical**, **cognitive** and **social** needs of employees. This holistic approach can help minimize healthcare costs, maximize employee productivity and attract and retain employees. Who knew wellness could help people love how they work?



## Isn't that better? We think so too.

The movement toward wellness in the workplace is underway, so jump on board. You can get started by using the checklist to the right for ideas on how to build wellness into your workplace.



### Physical Checklist

- Seating that allows dynamic movement and postural change.
- Workstations that allow you to work while you stand.
- Workstations that allow you to work while you walk.
- Seating that keeps you oriented to your work.
- Work tools that come to you and are easily adjustable.
- Seating that is easily adjustable and made to fit you, not the other way around.

### Cognitive Checklist

- Work areas that provide sufficient lighting.
- Provide a variety of solutions for privacy and interaction.
- Address information processing and storage needs of diverse jobs.
- Work tools that allow you to organize your information to accommodate the way you work.
- Workstations that promote movement, keeping users energized.

### Social Checklist

- Provide a variety of collaborative spaces.
- Offer collaborative solutions that work for longer periods of time, keeping workers refreshed.
- Train workers to use the ergonomic features of their work environment.
- Encourage health with employee wellness.

For more information, visit  
[Steelcase.com/ergonomics](https://www.steelcase.com/ergonomics)



**Love how you work.™**

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**details**

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