TOP 3 COLOUR TRENDS IN WORKPLACE DESIGN 2020
You want to create a workplace environment that will help people to work in a way that best suits their needs. Which is why the choice of colour is so important.

With its natural ability to alter our behaviour and mood, colour plays a vital role in workplace design. Creating spaces that are conducive to concentration and focus, along with environments that feel uplifting, sociable and inclusive.

To inspire your creative vision, we’ve put together a series of palettes to highlight the top 3 colours influencing workplace design. Exploring the type of mood and experiences they evoke, and the kind of behaviour and activity they support.

Whatever the size and scale of your workplace, our visual sourcebook will help you to select the colours, patterns and textures that are guaranteed to set the right tone.
Taking a deep dive into the naturally soothing shades of indigo, denim and lavender blue, our palette spans dark, rich mid-tones and pale hues and provides a reassuring and comforting backdrop to the workplace.

Rich and intense tones emulate the velvet inkiness and intensity of the deep pacific ocean, while crisp, light and bright shades of powder blue remind us of expansive clear blue skies and the wonder of cloud formations.

Frosted lilac, violet and blueberry tinged with lavender, signal a significant shift from the true blues that have dominated in recent seasons. Providing a new and perhaps unexpected shade to see in the workplace.
While so many shades go in and out of vogue, it seems our love of blue stays true. The world over, blue remains the most popular colour and is the most democratic and accessible shade of all.

Perhaps it’s because blue is a colour that has so many positive associations in the natural world; reminding us of bright, expansive blue skies and warm, calm seas. It is also said to imbue a sense of peace and tranquillity. Indigo in particular is often referred to as the ‘third eye’, inspiring contemplation, mindfulness, serenity and calm.

It may also be because it’s one of the only shades that is truly timeless. Deep inky and stonewashed hues are bringing the everyday beauty of denim into interiors. Much like your most cherished pair of jeans, it’s a look you’ll never tire of. In such uncertain economic and political times, it’s perhaps unsurprising that blue has become one of the most popular shades of the day.

Blending comfortably into this palette are subtle, chalky shades of purple, mixed with blue and grey for intensity and depth. These paler hues represent the transition from Ultra Violet, which was Pantone’s colour of the year back in 2018, towards paler, cooler, more liveable shades.

It’s interesting to note the iconic beauty brand Aesop embracing subtle purple tones in their latest store in London.
Indigo, denim and lavender were prevalent in Milan, with many of the most notable designers and leading furniture brands sharing collections in these shades.

Celebrating the beauty of denim in all its glory, the Indigo Experience Lab by Moooi, in partnership with ECCO leather, Shin-Denim and Denim City, invited visitors to take part in interactive workshops and get acquainted with some of the new materials and methods the brand has been experimenting with.

The apartment installation named ‘Perfect Darkness’ was purposefully designed as the antithesis of the “cold” showroom, with every room in the apartment decorated in rich and intense shades.

As our affection for this colour strengthens, we’re beginning to see these hues filter into our homes.

Ripples of blue have become a recurring theme in bathroom design, as watery and inky-tones create deeply relaxing and luxurious spaces.

Bolder blues are also adding character to kitchen design, with many designers opting for variations in tone, with irregular finishes or a mix of materials in the same shade. Flashes of bright white and metallics shine particularly well when backed by blue.
Our colour palette reflects the differences between night and day, emulating the feelings and mood they create. From crisp and light tones that awaken our minds, to warm inky-tones which naturally aid concentration.
Brighter, lighter shades of blue pave the way for fresh thinking by creating an uplifting workplace that helps us to think calmly and clearly.
Swathes of deep, intense colour set the scene for more focused concentration and discussion.

A heavy dose of navy or indigo add a sense of depth, while clearly defining the space - ideal for open-plan areas.

Layer differently textured surfaces in these eye-catching hues to add further depth.
Soothing shades of lilac, violet and lavender blue combine with pewter and neutral tones to create a calming environment with an unexpected twist.
Our warm and nurturing palette creates a welcoming and familiar working environment that has a softened tone.

A calm and serene mix of pale plaster-like pink, salmon and rose blush bring a sense of revitalisation and new-beginnings, creating spaces that feel sociable and spirited.

In contrast, sumptuous colours of the earth including red clay, terracotta, burnt umber and russet tones, radiate a sense of nostalgia for simpler times.

Collectively, these shades create workplaces that feel both uplifting and nourishing - inviting people to settle into their work with comfort and buoyancy.
Building on the seemingly unstoppable rise of Millennial Pink, Pantone’s selection of Living Coral as their colour of the year in 2019 further amplified the popularity of these feminine shades.

For 2020, we see a natural evolution of these light-hearted and vivacious hues towards an altogether more grounded collection of muted, chalky and softened tones.

The naturally heart-warming qualities of this colour palette resonates very deeply with consumers today, many of whom are seeking the antidote to their digital lives and craving authentic, personal connection.

The fashion catwalks of London, Paris and New York were ablaze with rich, burnished shades of terracotta and muted clay, as many of the most influential designers shared their AW20 collections.

It’s interesting to note the translation of these hues into restaurant and hotel design, with two of the most luxurious and iconic hotels in London - The Berkeley and The Connaught - recently unveiling new restaurant and bar concepts enriched with shades of salmon and dusty pink.

Equally, in retail design, these shades create an vibrant yet comforting space, with Gina Tricot in Stockholm and Le Cube skate bowl installation in Le Bon Marche, proving that pink isn’t just for girls.
Ever the barometer of what’s to come, Milan Design Week 2019 was rich with references to this light-spirited palette. Not only in the design of the furniture on display, but in the set-design of the exhibits.

The ‘Tell Me More’ installation explored the intersection of spatial experience and emotional connection. Inspired by the feeling of entering a beloved space, the two-part installation consists of an arrival chamber and expansive lounge, which served as a backdrop to explore human connection.

It seems that interior designers are also rapidly falling for these shades, bringing this powdery palette into the comfort of our own homes.

At one end of the spectrum, designers like Bergman & Co. are adding a burst of sunshine to bathroom design and creating a statement with hedonistic colours and a vibrant cocktail of shades.

Taking a more reserved approach, ‘Rosa Perlino’ tumbled marble brings a subtle rosy glow into kitchen design with putty and clay tones. Used sparingly, a barely-there blush provides a delicate, grown-up glow to contemporary kitchen design.
Louder than pink and softer than red, our colour palette creates a refreshingly different workspace environment.
The lighter hues in our colour palette combine together to create an uplifting workplace that feels calm and serene.

To complete this look, explore tone-on-tone patterns, along with a thoughtful and considered selection of tactile and textural fabrics and materials.
Transform spaces into striking statement pieces by introducing playful accents and highlights.

Not only will this help to create distinct zones, it will naturally introduce character and warmth.
A palette of classic new neutrals are uplifted with a dollop of spice to create an energising workplace.

Warm sunbeams of golden yellow, mimosa and citrine combine with a pinch of mustard to add a playful twist to softer shades of cream, barley, and cashew.

While a delicious mix of earthy and rich terracotta, saffron and tumeric creates spaces that ooze warmth and comfort.

These gleaming golden and ochre-based tones are guaranteed to take the edge of a stressful working day.
The zesty yellows of previous seasons make way for calmer, ochre-based tones, as yellow remains a key colour for interiors in 2020 and beyond. This is a deviation of pure yellows towards a palette of more muted shades.

In many ways they provide a subtle nod to the 70’s revival we are witnessing in interior design today; with nostalgic shades with a deep, aged quality.

This colour direction also mirrors and reflects the uneasy economic and political climate, as we naturally welcome those colours associated with optimism. These rich jewel and spice tones ooze luxury and warmth, as they gather you in and naturally evoke positive thoughts.

In architecture, the burnished bronze hues of Thomas Heatherwick’s infamous and iconic ‘The Vessel’ in New York perfectly reflects the trend.

It’s interesting to note the translation of these hues into restaurant, hotel and retail design, with the awe-inspiring restoration of the historic Fondaco dei Tedeschi department store in Venice, and the recent renovation of Harrods’ food hall; whereby the designers salvaged remnants of the original tiles and painstakingly recreated the exact shades.

These golden shades instil a much-needed sense of light-heartedness within retail environments, with precious yellow onyx and inserts of gold leaf adding glimmers of warmth to the Forte Forte store in Chelsea, and homely pastel tones infused with bursts of sunshine yellow in the Ganni store in Soho, London.
Golden, buttery tones are an instant way to energise interiors and lift our moods.

Many designers are opting for a single shade and sticking to it, using it over as big a space as they dare. Pairing with neutral accents, or picking out the same bright hue on patterned tiles.

Vogue Italia opened its office to a host of designers, who gave the Milan headquarters a temporary makeover for the city’s annual design festival. The exhibition, called ‘Life in Vogue’, saw eight creatives reinterpret the interiors of the magazine’s editorial offices, including JW Anderson who painted the fashion editor’s room in a vibrant shade of yellow typically found in British stately homes.

These tones of mustard, ochre and burnished bronze are also overwhelmingly popular in furniture design, as almost all of the most notable brands have embraced these hues.

Reflecting the more earthy and neutral shades of our colour palette, the pared-back gallery and workspace for Kinfolk magazine in Copenhagen perfectly illustrates how a lightness of touch can create a calm yet uplifting environment.
Whether used in moderation - with just a dollop of spice or a burst of bright - or embraced in its entirety, our warming palette has the potential to create an energising and upbeat workplace.
Nuggets of gold, saffron and mustard spice up an otherwise neutral interiors scheme.
Sunbeams of golden tones add a burst of brightness to workplace environments and zone areas in a playful, energetic way.
Warming shades of straw, opal and ginger provide a natural glow.
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