

Affordances: What We Should Expect of Our Workplaces

Course Numbers

AIA Course #: HAW601 – HSW

Project Planning & Design/Building Design

IDCEC Course #: 106448R1 - HSW

Subject Code: 3. Interior Design Education/1. Instruction

Course Description

Affordances are the characteristics of a space that encourage certain behaviors. This course presents the physical, emotional, and cognitive affordances employees need in order to do their work, as well as the role of the workplace in providing support. A well-designed workspace participates in enabling optimal human performance—cognitively, emotionally, and physically.

This 1-hour course explores the concept of affordance, which when applied effectively in the workplace can help create the conditions that support well-being—allowing people to do their best work and enhancing the workplace experience.

Learning Objectives

- Explore the concept of affordance and how it relates to the physical workplace.
- Explain the three physical affordances—anthropometrics, ambiences, and movement—and describe the role of workplace in supporting physical comfort and health.
- Explain the three emotional affordances—affinity, authenticity, and well-being—and describe how the workplace plays a part in helping to create a positive emotional atmosphere.
- Investigate the four cognitive affordances—access, insulation, externalizing, and embedding—and show how the workplace can literally help us think.

Course Outline

1. Introduction and brief affordance exercise
2. Explanation of physical affordances and their principles
3. Explanation of emotional affordances and their principles
4. Explanation of cognitive affordances and their principles
5. Discussion with Q&A