Space to Create:
Socio-environmental antecedents of creative performance

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In response to the need for creativity to ensure organizational success, organizations are exploring diverse means of supporting employees’ creative performance. At Google, not only can employees unicycle, take their dogs to work and move around the office via slippery dips, they can utilize up to 20% of their work time to work on projects of personal interest to them (Von Jan, 2011).

Creativity has often been studied as a function of individual differences (Amabile, 1988; Tierney & Farmer, 2002), teamwork or interaction (Hagadon & Bechky, 2006) or organizational support in the form of incentives (Eisenberger & Cameron, 1998), supervisor support (Shalley et al., 2004) or social process (Shalley, Zhou & Oldham, 2004). Increasingly, however, attention is turning to where creative work takes place (Backhouse & Drew, 1992). The way we work, and the workplace’s role in it, is undergoing a fundamental shift, with creativity being viewed in part as a function of place (Csikszentmihalyi, 2002), with firms like IDEO finding their environment and infrastructure improves their creative performance (Kelley & Littman, 2001).

This research extends our understanding of workplace creativity by developing a model of the role of place – including social and physical factors – in increasing creative self-efficacy and creative performance. I propose a staged multi-informant survey approach to test the propositions of the model.