Coworking

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COMMUNITY   COLLABORATION   INNOVATION

W⚙RKING
in the "UnOffice"

A Guide to Coworking for Indie Workers, Small Businesses, and Nonprofits

NightOwlsPress.com

BUILD ENTREPRENEURIAL MUSCLE.
Over 300 pages of straight talk, tips, and strategies for improving your business or organization in collaborative workspaces.

FIND PROOF OF IMPACT AND GET INSPIRED.
More than 100 pages of interviews with 33 coworking members.

GET INSIDER ADVICE.
19 founders of spaces like The Hub, Indy Hall, NextSpace, and Affinity Lab give their candid views on working independently with others.

About
Working in the UnOffice: A Guide to Coworking

One of the first all-around guidebooks on the concept of coworking in the U.S. This info-packed edition chronicles the rise of coworking and the social and economic trends making it possible, as well as helps readers find and select the perfect space and learn the ropes to adjusting to collaborative environments. Learn the secrets to "accelerated serendipity" as members and founders recount their experiences of how coworking became a driving force behind critical business decisions and breakthroughs.

"Part anecdotal narrative, part practical, how-to guidebook, this book has amassed tips and the shared wisdom of coworkers all over the country on making the most of a collaborative environment to spark ideas and enhance productivity. With this illuminating and no-nonsense take on coworking, you'll get inspired to change how you work."
– Campbell McKellar, CEO, Loosecubes.com

For more info: www.CoworkingGuide.com

Foreword by Campbell McKellar, CEO, Loosecubes

PREFACE: *Coworking - Triumph of the Commons*

1: Sharing How We Work & Thinking Outside the Space

The Making of the Coworking 'Perfect Storm' - Discussion of trends contributing to the rising popularity of coworking (e.g. shift to a 'sharing economy' and collaborative consumption; rise of telecommuting, home-based businesses; cloud computing; and the science of group innovation).

2: Coworking Deconstructed

Free, Un-tethered— but Alone - Discussion of the big drawbacks of independent working: Isolation, lack of productivity, and distractions– and how it stifles creativity and productivity.

Ditch the Dash, Rev Up a Revolution– Coworking Begins - Discussion of the movement's origins, how it evolved and is defined today, and why it's regarded as the future of work.

Coworking's Core Values - Collaboration, Community, Sustainability, Openness, Accessibility (with real-life examples from coworking space founders and members illustrating each in action).

State of the [Coworking] Nation - Summary of coworking stats from the latest surveys and studies.

3: Making the Leap

What's So Great About Where You Work? - The good, the bad, and the ugly of your workspace options, mainly: home offices, coffee shops, serviced offices, and coworking spaces (with insights from coworking space founders and members discussing each environment).

Finding a Coworking Space - Discussion of directories and portals, such as Loosecubes.

Selecting and Test-Driving the Right Coworking Space - Critical factors for every prospective coworker to consider, such as: #1 Type of Community (e.g. incubators, D-I-Y/hacker spaces, industry-specific, etc.); #2 Industry Requirements (fields that thrive in spaces); #3 Membership Costs and Plans; #4 Membership Turnover; #5 Stability of the Coworking Space; #6 Access to Multiple Locations; #7 Diversity of the Community; and #8 Amenities and Programming.

4: Recalibrating Your Business for Coworking

Coworkers share their experiences and strategies on what to do during the first 1-3 months:

The New Kid on the Block - Break the ice; Let socialization happen naturally; Master the art of the polite deflection; Mingle; Expect a drop in productivity levels during the first month; Get the lay of the land to master the open floor plan; Get with the program; Conserve energy and supplies.

Playing Well With Others - Don't be a space hog; Follow common courtesies; Lend a hand; Get involved; Watch out for coworking space politics; Promote others.

Getting in the Groove - Work on the cloud; Organize events; Check out the Coworking Visa; Collaborate; Get a work buddy; Invest in a good pair of headphones; Observe when there are downtimes and busy periods; Be more aware of who's around you when working on sensitive info; Update your address; Rethink your company dynamics.

Tools of the Coworker Trade - Recommended apps and tools for coworkers.

For more info: www.CoworkingGuide.com

PROOF of IMPACT

Joey Coleman, founder of Design Symphony, member of Affinity Lab
"Within three months of getting a desk at Affinity Lab, I had been referred business by my coworkers that covered my rent for the first year. Dozens of Affinity Lab member companies have become clients of mine, creating direct revenue opportunities. I've received approximately $50,000 in direct revenues from Affinity Lab members and another $100,000+ in referrals."

Lisa Van Damme, Performance Impact, member of Boulder Digital Arts
"With a home office, I felt compelled to work at all hours of the day and night. As soon as I moved to my coworking office, I gained much better control over my hours and better work/life balance. I certainly feel happier in my job now that I have my coworking space."

Phil Hughes, co-founder of Clustered Systems, former member of TechShop
"We started with an idea that neither of us had much experience with nor the experience to implement. That's really where TechShop helped because they had all the tools. We could build quick prototypes and try something out with immediate feedback. If we had done that at a regular machine shop, it would have cost us over $100,000."

Jason Barnett, director of The UpTake, member of CoCo
"Organized coworking environments are ideal workplaces for modern organizations that are interested in partnerships, collaborations, and a healthy work environment."

Lisa S. Malul, director of Action Alliance for Children, member of The Hub Bay Area
"I think that [coworking offers] a tremendous savings in overhead for almost any organization. There are reasons for large organizations to stay in their own independent spaces, but I think for smaller organizations that need to be very nimble and meet many changing financial demands, I think that coworking is a great solution."

5: Getting the Most Out of Coworking

Coworkers share their experiences and strategies for optimizing the coworking experience:

Interact - Be interested in others and get to know people; Turn to your community; When you have a bad day, talk it out with a member; Use your coworking space as a testing ground for ideas; Feed off the energy of people around you; Establish personal and business relationships; Participate in community group projects and outside user groups.

Share - Share ideas; Share contacts; Share expertise; Share problems.

Play - Take a break and laugh; Eat, drink, and be merry; Share interests and hobbies.

Participate - Brown bag lunches; Networking nights (or days); Seminars and workshops; Bar camps, hacker nights, and forums; Community events; Social events.

Maximize Your Space - You don't have to work at your coworking space every day; Make the most of the space even if you aren't working there; Accept that there are good and bad days; Get to know your coworking space founders; Take an active role in designing the coworking space experience; If someone or something bothers you, speak up.

Enhance Productivity, Creativity, and Serendipity - Discipline yourself against distraction; Court creative sparks by engaging in conversations; Practice filtered hearing; Don't ditch the office structure completely.

Use Collaborative-Friendly Resources - List of organizations that focus on helping startups and entrepreneurs, either with financing or business development.

Create Meetup Groups - Coworking creates community. Leverage that sense of community into a Meetup group to enhance your credibility.

Plan Your Exit Strategies - It's sometimes inevitable. Members have had to leave their coworking space because they couldn't drum up enough clients to justify the membership costs, or because they were so successful they outgrew the space and needed to relocate to accommodate their growth (includes advice from people who have 'graduated' from their respective spaces and how they maintain ties as virtual members).

Epilogue: Coworking as the Future of Work?

Proof of Impact: 33 coworking members interviewed

Movers & Shakers: 19 space founders interviewed

Target Audience: A book for freelancers, startups, small businesses and organizations, and telecommuters

The book is a fun read, a raucous chorus of insights and experiences about getting out of the work rut. Hear people's raves, confessions, and straight talk on working better.

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Alex Hillman, co-founder of Indy Hall
"[Coworking] has allowed us to form relationships before a transaction takes place. I get to know my coworkers based on what they are interested in, what they do/don't do well. Then, when we're working together it's more enjoyable because we have common interests beyond the money at the end of the rainbow."

Jeff Shiau, director, The Hub Bay Area
"You're not just saving on rent, but you're also able to make connections, to build a community around your ideas at a creative level that's beyond what you would be able to do working by yourself."

Chase Granberry, founder of Authority Labs, member of Gangplank
"With issues, it all flushes out quicker through discussion and collaboration rather than trying to figure it out on your own."

Angel Kwiatkowski, founder of Cohere
"Members' work has improved by coworking because they can now outsource tasks to one another. There's probably a member who loves to do what you hate! I've seen a web architect subcontract out proposal writing to a writer, and a writer subcontract out graphics to a designer."

Anna Thomas, Loosecubes, former member of New Work City
"Working among a diverse group of independent professionals was invaluable. There were numerous times when we were able to connect with a neighbor who provided insight on our product that we wouldn't have received otherwise."

Suzanne Akin, founder of Akinz, former member of Cohere
"One of the hardest things to get used to is to have to constantly schedule work to avoid ups and downs in my workflow. I would have a big down cycle and would simply put the word out to my community that I needed work and it never failed that something would end up on my to-do list."

Mike Muldoon, founder of Infrno.net, member of NextSpace
"Need a cable for a ten-minute project? Somebody's got it, and you don't have to burn half a day spending $40 at OfficeMax for a part you'll never use again. Whatever your problem is, there is probably somebody with help to give."