

# Raising **PRODUCTIVITY**

The huddle room way





# Introduction



Innovation can spark from the smallest of places. In a world of constant change and intense competition, when big ideas happen they need to be shared in real time. It's this premise that is driving one of the fastest growing modern-day workplace trends—the huddle room.

Today's modern workforce is made up of a diverse group of team members—onsite, contract, remote, and freelance. The huddle room is pivotal in supporting smarter ways of working and a growing need for more ad hoc and frequent collaboration.

Even the act of 'meeting' has changed—less about formal invitations and more about bringing the best people together for brainstorming, planning, problem-solving, and decision-making. These team meetings for working groups have given rise to the growing popularity of smaller meeting spaces, or huddle rooms in the workplace. While huddle rooms are typically casual working zones, when enriched with voice, video, and content-sharing technology they become productive spaces for anytime collaboration in person and with remote participants.

While you don't need a space equipped with expensive equipment to make great collaboration happen, a huddle room must serve its purpose in enabling teams to meet and share across any distance effectively.

This guide has been created to provide you with much of the information you'll need to raise productivity—the huddle room way.



# Huddle rooms in the modern workplace

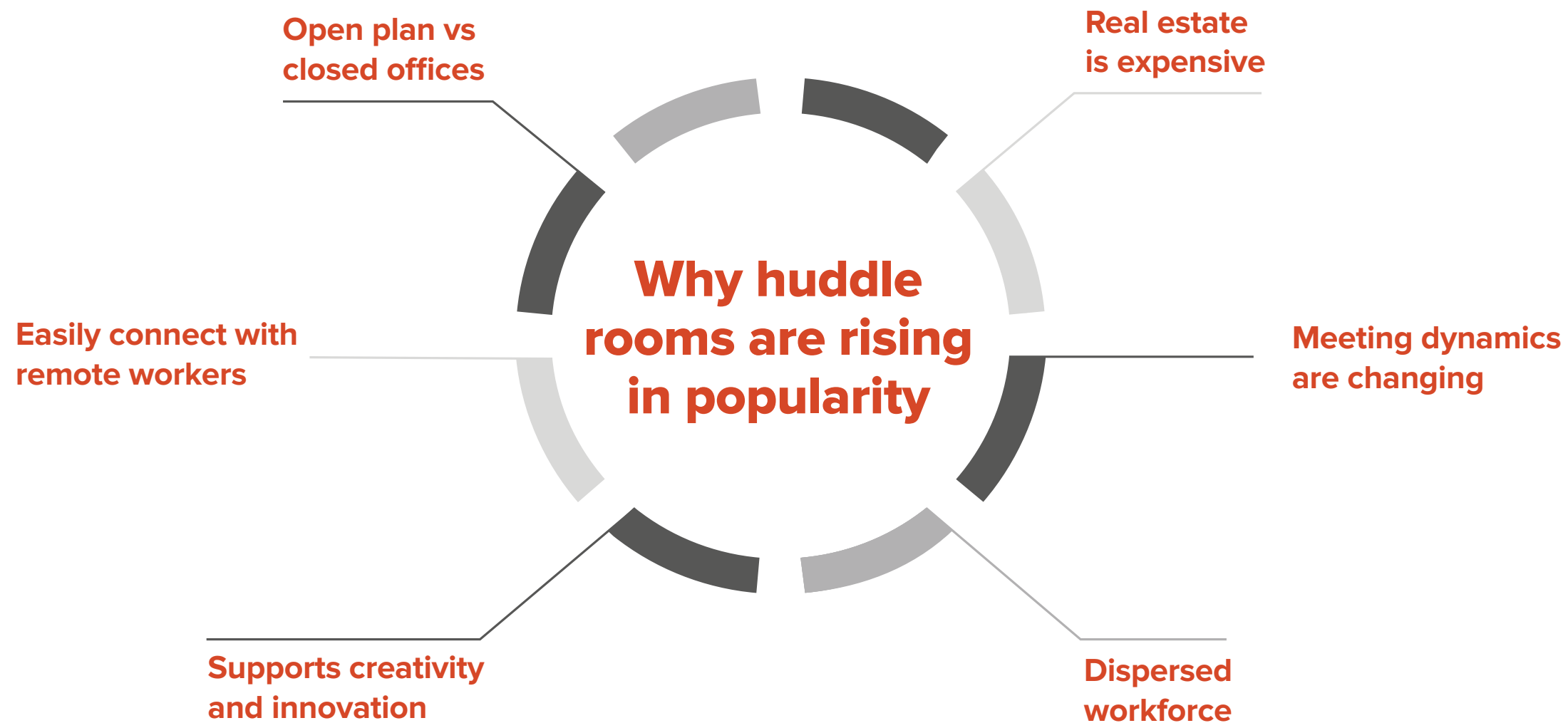
There was once a time when a person's career path or seniority in an organisation could be tracked by their progression from cubicle to private office. When walls went up, siloes were naturally formed, diminishing communication and team spirit. To connect people and reduce real estate costs, organisations actively created more natural and agile workplaces for teamwork and collaboration to thrive and so, the open office concept was born.

But one of the challenges added by open plan layouts and open group settings is that ambient noise and distractions increase as partitions are lost. Research has shown that it takes 23 minutes to recover from an interruption at work<sup>i</sup> and employees in the noisiest office environments are more likely to say they may leave their job in the next six months<sup>ii</sup>. In today's hyper-connected world, it therefore makes sense for organisations to create environments that improve productivity.

Similarly, larger meeting rooms with expensive and sophisticated equipment, aren't rightly designed for smaller groups and more intimate discussions. While conference rooms and boardrooms still serve a purpose, there has been a shift in how valuable office space is designed with small group interactions in mind. Modern workers need spaces which enable less structured, small group collaboration, which may either be a regular fixture in a team calendar or held more spontaneously as the need arises.

In a recent survey<sup>iii</sup>, Polycom uncovered the top 5 reasons for huddling were: internal meetings, customer/vendor meetings, creative brainstorming, training, and quiet space for individual work. Huddle rooms, when well-equipped and enriched with technology, are meeting a variety of needs and enabling productivity like never before.





Another positive workplace change has been the growing emphasis on developing cultural intelligence among teams. Increasing connectivity provides greater access to resources, knowledge, and talent<sup>IV</sup>. Provided with the right spaces, workers can be empowered to freely have dialogue, providing a real sense of community, although thousands of miles may physically separate them.

Business leaders are discovering that workplace innovation and redesign is key to maintaining momentum. By creating smaller, productive meeting spaces, they are enabling people to work together as one team more effectively.

Huddle workspaces, or small meeting rooms, accommodate three to six people and, when supported with technology, spur high energy interactions. These are today's workspaces for individuals and teams who need to be agile and highly collaborative. Although the huddle concept is not new, it's only in recent years with evolving work trends and technology, that organisations are beginning to truly harness productivity gains and enable big ideas to grow from small spaces.



# Huddle rooms—the right space designed for teamwork

Smart, high-performance organizations are realizing that combining space and technology enables the most productive outcomes. An engaged workforce can provide a multitude of benefits for organisations—from better products and services, enhanced customer experiences, and stronger relationships with vendors and suppliers. In a study by Harvard Business Review, 98% of the most highly engaged employees reported they had “the ability to concentrate easily” in their workplace, also scoring high on “being able to work in teams without being disrupted”<sup>v</sup>.

It’s no surprise that when it comes to building an engaged and productive workforce, these small spaces deserve a big place in an organization’s digital transformation map. Here are just five reasons huddle rooms and spaces contribute to productivity gains:

## 1. Offers privacy and focus

Although removing enclosed offices and cubicles encourages greater interaction between people, the resulting noise levels can be distracting. While some workers thrive in open group settings, others crave peace and quiet. Huddle rooms offer quiet sanctuary and privacy in open plan offices.

## 2. Meetings happen quicker

When needing somewhere for impromptu collaboration, huddle spaces provide the freedom to step away from a desk and into a quick meeting or conference call. The primary function of a huddle space is simply to empower people to come together as quickly and as often as required.

## 3. Remote and freelance workers are included

Well-equipped huddle rooms enable on-site employees to connect with remote workers, enabling them to contribute and be an integral part of discussions in real time. Huddle rooms also serve as a private space for travelling and freelance workers who may occasionally work from the office.



## 4. Maximizes real estate

Huddle rooms help make the most of a real estate investment. Instead of one or two central conference rooms, huddle rooms can be located throughout an office space in various configurations for small team gatherings. Wasted space can be converted into productive hubs and work pods, providing employees with greater choice in environments that provide great outcomes.

## 5. Creativity and innovation are supported

The best ideas happen in a space which encourages collaboration and creative thinking. More intimate than corporate boardrooms, well-equipped huddle rooms encourage people to brainstorm and share knowledge, from sharing presentations or ideas on screen.

# Creating huddle rooms to engage and connect teams

Traditionally, huddle rooms were equipped in the most basic of ways—a central table, some chairs, a desk phone, and perhaps a flip chart or whiteboard. However, today’s workers expect that technology is as unified and pervasive in their professional environments as in their personal lives.

Wainhouse Research points out that unlike the “best of breed” experience one might expect from larger spaces, organisations can and should follow the concept of “good enough” for their huddle rooms<sup>vi</sup>. This does not mean however, that huddle spaces should be uncomfortable, unprofessional, and not fit-for-purpose. Most offices would have always had these smaller ‘break out’ rooms that were often underutilised because they were simply not suitable for any purpose other than having private conversations.

One of the reasons for the lack of technology was that collaboration solutions previously designed for large conference rooms, were too expensive to install in smaller meeting rooms. The compromise would often be to use consumer-grade collaboration apps or web meeting services for convenience, but they offered limited functionality or security.

But that has changed. Hardware solutions are now purpose-built for huddle rooms at a lower price point, while software and cloud services are enabling easy connectivity.

You can now expect the following from your huddle room technology:

- **An enterprise-grade, collaboration experience for meetings (meaning business quality audio and video, not a desk phone poorly doubling as a speakerphone).**
- **A video solution with a camera that is powerful enough to capture everyone in the room. There’s no need to crouch around a laptop webcam to be seen on screen.**
- **Ability to pair your devices and share content wirelessly with meeting participants and instantly join meetings with one click.**
- **Minimal cables or gadgets cluttering and distracting.**

What goes into a huddle room is centered around the expectation of these spaces. Before introducing technology, consider the teams that will be using huddle rooms and what their primary objectives are. Huddle room-friendly solutions are adapting to people’s needs and feature innovations such as noise block technology, cloud-based video meeting services, speakerphones with USB-connectivity, voice-activated conferencing, intelligent camera framing, and wireless content sharing.

**“Smaller meeting spaces** equipped with smart devices and applications will be critical in driving workplace efficiency.”

– Frost & Sullivan







To get your huddle rooms fit for team collaboration, Polycom offers plenty of options to suits all requirements and budgets.

We recommend starting with the highest quality audio conferencing available. Improved sound and acoustics on calls will transform meetings. To create a lifelike experience across distances, nothing beats high definition video conferencing solutions which are modular and scalable across all meeting room sizes. Finally, energize your meetings even further by incorporating content sharing capabilities for the best, all-rounded collaboration experience.

Polycom Trio is an excellent, right-sized first choice for tech-enabling huddle rooms. When paired with the right accessories and peripherals, this smart phone solution has the unique capability of expanding audio conferencing into full collaborative meetings, including content sharing and video calling.

Bringing premium performance to huddle spaces everywhere, Polycom Studio delivers business-class audio and video capabilities in an easy-to-use USB video bar. Designed to work in smaller rooms, it's based on decades of technology expertise that you'd expect from more expensive enterprise video solutions.

Let's take a closer look at the three options:



## GOOD

### Huddle room with voice

[Polycom Trio](#) smart conference phones, scalable for all meeting spaces, features exclusive NoiseBlock technology and can easily be paired with a mobile device or laptop.



## BETTER

### Huddle room with voice + video

[Polycom Trio](#) + [RealPresence Group Series](#) add another dimension to audio conferencing with HD video bringing users and distributed teams closer together. Alternatively, [Polycom Studio](#) delivers outstanding audio and video with features never seen before in an easy-to-use USB device.



## BEST

### Huddle room with voice + video + content sharing

[Polycom Trio](#) + [RealPresence Group Series](#) + [Polycom Pano](#) for the full collaboration experience, add wireless content sharing from up to four users at the same time plus annotation and whiteboarding.



# Get started today

**“Creating intelligent workspaces** is the future of work. Small meeting spaces are fast becoming smart workspaces where high performance collaboration like problem solving and idea generation are taking place.”

— Audrey William, Senior Fellow and Head of Research, Frost & Sullivan

With a choice of collaboration tools, it's easy to turn your huddle room into a hub of productivity.

From being able to meet and collaborate with internal colleagues in more meaningful ways, to working more effectively with geographically dispersed teams, or interacting with business partners and customers, well-equipped huddle rooms are raising productivity by helping people work smarter.

Whether you are one of the early adopters of technology-enabled huddle rooms and now need an upgrade, or just beginning your huddle room journey, there are significant benefits to be gained by doing it right.

Are you ready to take the next step and discover the huddle room advantage? Find out how Polycom can help transform productivity for your teams and create a connected workplace where big ideas have room to grow.

[www.polycom.com/huddle](http://www.polycom.com/huddle)

<sup>i</sup> <https://www.ics.uci.edu/~gmark/chi08-mark.pdf>

<sup>ii</sup> <https://www.oxfordeconomics.com/when-the-walls-come-down>

<sup>iii</sup> Growing Big Ideas from Small Spaces, The Polycom Huddle Room Report, 2018

<sup>iv</sup> [https://www.randstad.com/workforce-insights/workforce360/archives/the-importance-of-cultural-intelligence-within-a-global-organization\\_186/](https://www.randstad.com/workforce-insights/workforce360/archives/the-importance-of-cultural-intelligence-within-a-global-organization_186/)

<sup>v</sup> <https://hbr.org/2014/10/balancing-we-and-me-the-best-collaborative-spaces-also-support-solitude>

<sup>vi</sup> Understanding the Huddle Room. Wainhouse Research, October 2015

## About Polycom

Polycom helps organizations unleash the power of human collaboration. More than 400,000 companies and institutions worldwide defy distance with video, voice and content solutions from Polycom. Polycom and its global partner ecosystem provide flexible collaboration solutions for any environment that deliver the best user experience and unmatched investment protection.

Polycom, Inc.  
1.800.POLYCOM  
[www.polycom.com](http://www.polycom.com)

Polycom Asia Pacific Pte Ltd  
+65 6389 9200  
[www.polycom.com.sg](http://www.polycom.com.sg)

Polycom EMEA  
+44 (0)1753 723282  
[www.polycom.co.uk](http://www.polycom.co.uk)

