

# Co-working brings diverse professionals under one roof

The culture of co-working spaces fosters entrepreneurship, helps people network, nurtures creativity and exchange of ideas without huge investment

ASHOK KUMAR  
JAIDEEP DEO BHANJ  
GURUGRAM/NEW DELHI

When IT professional Riya Sharma quit her job to start her own venture to become a website developer and started working from home, she found that the charm and comforts of working from home were not the ideal atmosphere to get the work done.

"I realised that my work ethic had gone for a toss as I did not have fixed timings and it was tough to set up meetings with prospective clients at coffee shops. It was then that I signed up for a free one-week trial at a co-working space in a flat in Kailash Colony [in Delhi]. I saw the wonders it did to my productivity," said Ms. Sharma.

## Work discipline

She said the discipline of fixed timings and a space of her own did wonders for her freelance job at a price that was quite affordable, besides the safe environment.

However, co-working spaces are no longer the informal set-ups that they were a few years back, when they attracted mostly start-up firms and freelancers. The facilities being provided at some of the bigger work-spaces have changed the way offices look and feel.

QX Limited, which is an

over one-decade-old business process outsourcing company providing finance, accounts, recruitment, payroll, IT software and corporate advisory services, decided to open its subsidiary office in the National Capital Region (NCR). The high cost involved in having a self-occupied office space was one of its major concerns. However, it was soon addressed, thanks to the ample variety of co-working spaces available in Delhi-NCR. The hunt for an "ideal" office space within budget ended for "QX" at Innov8's co-working space in Gurugram's Cyber City, with the company beginning its operations in July this year.

The company's Gurugram team leader, Junaid N.V., said the self-occupied office space involved several expenditures, including furniture and equipment, and therefore, the company opted for a co-working space.

After hunting for co-working office spaces in Delhi, they finally settled for Gurugram since they were allowed to work in multiple shifts. The company occupies a 20-seat space at Innov8.

"Though the company incurs extra transport cost as all its employees are based in Noida, we can work in multiple shifts in Gurugram. Despite charges for the space being on the higher



The Apeejay Business Centre opened at Cyber City earlier this year. — MANOJ KUMAR

side, they were evened out due to running of the company in three shifts," he explained.

## Pros and cons

With a space for around 500 seats on the third floor of DLF Tower 8B in DLF Cyber City, Innov8 offers a lounge area along with an amphitheatre, and a green ideation space, which features round seating and a mix of contem-

porary and classic design language.

Santosh Kumar, a manager at Cvent, a cloud-based enterprise event management platform, said the experience of the co-working space was a mixed bag with its own pros and cons.

Here, said Mr. Kumar, he has the opportunity to interact with people from different professions and fields. He said he met a few journal-

ists from "News Mobile", but missed the culture and ambience of his own office. He also claimed that his own office had a better infrastructure.

An employee with another company said they had a concept of 30-minute "fun Friday", during which they interacted and played games with other employees to increase interaction among themselves. However, peo-

ple from other companies objected to the activity saying they got disturbed since the cubicles are not sound-proof.

Apeejay Business Centre (ABC), country head, operations and business development, Praveen Prabhat Peter said they opened at Cyber City earlier this year and were "very well-received". He added that they achieved 100% occupancy

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within eight weeks of opening.

On reasons behind an upward trend in co-working spaces like ABC, Mr. Peter said such spaces were popular because "they fostered entrepreneurship, brought together diverse professionals under one roof where they can network, nurture creativity and exchange ideas, and opened doors to possibilities and exposure to a vast network of professionals, start-ups and entrepreneurs".

## Less paperwork

"To top it all, there is lack of huge investment and less paperwork as compared to setting up one's own office. Since it is a plug-and-play system, entry and exit are equally smooth and effortless unlike a traditional office lease procedure," he added.

Vatika Hotels managing director Gourav Bhalla said:

"Significant factors like plug-and-play offices at prime locations, flexibility to upsize and downsize, and cost-efficient arrangements are encouraging the rise of serviced offices and co-working spaces."

Besides co-working spaces, serviced offices have their own market and cater to a different segment. While co-working is preferred by freelancers, start-ups and small-sized enterprises, serviced offices are preferred by medium-sized to multinational companies. Companies that provide co-working spaces and serviced offices in Delhi-NCR include Apeejay, Vatika, Wework, CoWrks, Regus and Awfis.

## New partnerships

Co-working spaces also do wonders to sourcing new businesses and forging new partnerships, said app developer Anirudh Roy.

"It is an ecosystem that benefits all. When you need a person with a specific skill to help you with a current project, there are enough people working with you in the same space who can offer recommendations that are usually reliable," he said, adding that has been able to convince several people working in fields different from his own on how apps can help their business grow — all done over coffee breaks.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Delhi/co-working-brings-diverse-professionals-under-one-roof/article25471014.ece>

DELHI

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Ashok Kumar



Jaideep Deo Bhanj

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