THE RIGHT STUFF

You would not believe how many work spaces I scoped out before finally deciding on one.

I'm not an especially picky person, but I am very sensitive to my physical environment. Always have been. Too noisy? Forget it. Too cluttered? Stress! Too stark or sterile? Ew, how uninspiring. When it comes to my workspace, it has to look and feel a certain way.

I like my space to feel like a hug – warm and welcoming and calming, with a touch of nature. Gimme some exposed brick, some unfinished wood, good light, lots of plants, and a big plush chair and I'm a happy camper. I'm a better coach, better writer, better businesswoman, better *everything* in that space.

Get me in the wrong space and I'm frustrated, brain fried, and distracted. But get me in the right space and it's like MAGIC. Why? Because my physical environment happens to be one of the most important things for *creating my ideal work conditions*. In choosing the right space, I'm creating conditions for feel-good work.

Choosing the right work conditions - that's worth thinking about.

The right conditions (and physical environment is just the tip of the iceberg) can raise the quality of your work and elevate your level of happiness and fulfillment.

Think about your ideal work environment. I'm talking about physical space, here. What might it look like? What would it feel like? And how much does your work environment impact you? Are you a sensitive little Goldilocks like me, or are you as cool as a cucumber no matter where you are?

What might your ideal work space look like?

How do you want to feel in your ideal work space? Chill? Creative? Inspired? Relaxed? Focused? Calm? Bursting with energy? Get specific.

This is how I want to feel in my ideal work space...

How important is your work environment to you? Plot yourself somewhere along the spectrum.

**DOESN'T
MATTER MUCH**
(I'm as cool as a
cucumber in any
space)

**IT'S VERY
IMPORTANT**
(I'm a sensitive little
Goldilocks)

Consider your work schedule in your current job. Even if you work a rigid nine-to-five schedule, you probably have some autonomy in how you split up your work tasks, how you group various work activities, and how you manage your time.

I only recently discovered my ideal work schedule and it has made a huge difference. I realized I don't like task switching. I like to work long and deep, so I schedule long stretches of time doing one activity. That lets me get in the zone. Some people prefer the opposite. They like to switch things up and keep everything fresh. Your schedule is definitely one of the ways you can create ideal conditions for successful work.

Are you a frequent task switcher or do you like to stay focused on one thing for a long time? Plot yourself somewhere along the spectrum.

Stay focused on one thing for a long time   **Switch it up, baby!**

In an ideal work scenario, how often would you like to take breaks?

Do I really have to?   **Lots of breaks, please!**
Breaks pull me out of the zone (but I guess I should eat lunch at some point)   They help me recharge and stay fresh.

What about your ideal level of interaction at work? How much do you like connecting with and working with others? A little or a lot? And how many people do you like working with at once?

I like solitary work   **I like collaborative work**

When you work with other people, what size of group do you prefer?

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Ugh, please just leave me alone.

I like 1-on-1 interactions or small groups.

Go big or go home! Big groups! Large audiences! Bring it on!

Some other things to consider when creating your ideal conditions for feel-good work:

Do you like to work using digital tools (i.e., your computer) or kick it old school analog-style with paper and pen? Do you like to work with your hands? Do you want to make something? Be creative? How? Indoors or outdoors? Use your imagination? Use logic? Problem solve? Help others? In what way? How much structure do you like? How important is flexibility to you? What kind of people do you like to work with? Do you like novelty or routine? How do you feel about commuting? Working from home? Do you like mental work or physical work or a combination of both? What kind of office culture do you like? Do you want to work for a big company or a small one or a startup or your own business? How important is salary? Commission? Benefits? Security? Mentorship? Creative freedom? Flexibility? The list goes on and on and on. You can plot a few of these things out here…

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Tech for the win!   **Paper and pen, please!**

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I'm logical   **I'm dreamy**

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Structure please!   **Flexibility please!**

I love novelty.   **I love routine.**

You see where I'm going with this. Write down anything else that comes to mind as it relates to creating your ideal conditions for feel-good work.

More of my ideal conditions for feel-good work...

When we think about work we often think only about the work tasks themselves, and not the actual conditions we're working in – things like physical environment, scheduling, interaction, and everything else we've explored here. But this stuff – your ideal work conditions – is just as important as the work itself. Make sure you keep that in mind as you navigate your way to feel-good work.

Up next: We'll take a look at your skills, your desires, and the magical place where they intersect.